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Trump struggles with Ukraine peace talks, considers sanctions on Russia



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US President Donald Trump has said that dealing with Ukraine is proving “more difficult” than engaging with Russia in efforts to mediate peace between the two nations. Speaking to reporters in the Oval Office on Friday, Trump commented that the US is handling Russia “very well,” suggesting it might be easier to deal with Moscow than Kyiv.

Earlier that day, Trump had expressed his consideration of imposing significant sanctions and tariffs on Russia until a ceasefire with Ukraine is reached. This comes after the US temporarily suspended Ukraine’s access to some satellite imagery. Maxar, a space technology company, confirmed this decision to the BBC, following a previous halt in military aid to Ukraine.

This situation follows a public exchange last week when Trump criticized Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for being “disrespectful” to the US. The fallout from that incident saw Trump suspend US military assistance and intelligence-sharing with Kyiv.

In response to Russia’s large-scale missile and drone attacks on Ukraine’s energy infrastructure on Thursday, Trump said he was considering imposing further sanctions on Russia. However, he also noted that President Vladimir Putin was simply acting in line with the position he is in, and suggested that he believes Putin wants to end the war—though he remains uncertain about

Ukraine's willingness to settle.

Trump's direct approach with Putin has raised eyebrows, particularly as NATO allies have largely cut ties with Moscow since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Despite tensions with Zelensky, Trump's foreign policy team has shown a more conciliatory tone toward Ukraine, hoping for a truce and a significant role in Ukrainian mineral resources. Trump also mentioned that security guarantees for Ukraine could be discussed later, labeling them as the "easy part" of the negotiations.

Meanwhile, Maxar revealed that the US has temporarily suspended Ukrainian access to high-quality satellite imagery under the Global Enhanced GEOINT Deliver program, a tool vital for intelligence gathering during the war. The suspension was made in line with the US administration's directive to reduce support for Ukraine.

Amid these developments, Trump's officials are set to meet with Zelensky's team in Saudi Arabia next week, with pressure mounting on the Ukrainian president to agree to Trump's terms.

Zelensky has shown a willingness for peace, proposing "concrete steps" to achieve it, and has expressed regret over the clash with Trump, signaling his intent to mend relations.

As Ukraine continues to endure Russian strikes, the international community remains divided, with about 20 countries considering joining a “coalition of the willing” to support Ukraine, while the US and European leaders discuss increased military aid.