

Putin Signals openness to talks with Ukraine amid continued Strike



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Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed a willingness to engage in direct talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for the first time since the war's early stages, even as Russian strikes continued across Ukrainian cities. In a Monday statement on Russian state TV, Putin indicated that Russia has always been open to peace initiatives, particularly regarding the avoidance of targeting civilians.

“We have always looked positively on any peace initiatives, and we hope that the representatives of the Kyiv regime will feel the same way,” Putin said. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov clarified that these remarks suggested potential discussions with Ukraine over avoiding civilian-targeted strikes.

However, violence persisted on Tuesday, as Russian forces launched new attacks across Ukraine. In Zaporizhzhia, a strike on an apartment block killed one woman and injured 20, including four children. A drone attack in Kharkiv left at least seven people wounded, while additional strikes occurred in Odesa, Sumy, Donetsk, and other southern regions. Ukrainian President Zelensky condemned the assaults as “deliberate Russian terror,” reiterating that a ceasefire could be achieved with a single order.

Zelensky also reiterated his proposal for a 30-day ceasefire on attacks targeting civilian infrastructure and long-range missiles. He called for a clear response from Moscow, warning that failure to agree would demonstrate Russia’s intent to continue its destructive actions.

Putin’s remarks were interpreted as a response to Zelensky’s ceasefire proposal, though direct talks have not occurred since the conflict began in February 2022. Putin acknowledged a recent attack on a civilian building in Sumy, where 35 people were killed, and stated that the Kremlin would “analyse” Ukraine’s proposal.

As diplomatic efforts continue in London and Paris, Zelensky called for an unconditional ceasefire, stressing it as a key objective moving forward.