



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on April 23, 2025

Americans Abandon Russia-Ukraine Peace Talks in London

An American-brokered peace deal between Ukraine and Russia is becoming more unlikely by the day.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff [bailed](#) on a major meeting Wednesday in London set up to bring about peace in Eastern Europe. This happened after Ukraine had just rejected a U.S. proposal for a deal that recognizes Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea. "Ukraine will not legally recognize the occupation of Crimea," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Tuesday. "There's nothing to talk about here. This is against our constitution."



AP Images
Steve Witkoff and Marco Rubio

The White House has grown increasingly frustrated as efforts to end the war "on Day 1," as candidate Trump repeatedly vowed, have advanced into the third month with little promise on the horizon. During an interview with NBC News in March, Trump said he was "pissed off" at Russian President Vladimir Putin and threatened to level secondary tariffs against Russia. The Kremlin refused to ink a U.S.-brokered, 30-day full ceasefire agreement that Ukraine had agreed to. Witkoff's three visits to Russia have only yielded a 30-day ceasefire on Ukraine's energy infrastructure and a partial ceasefire in the Black Sea. And now, it seems like the Americans are ready to walk away.

Negotiations at a Crossroads

Echoing [earlier comments](#) from Rubio and Trump, Vice President J.D. Vance said on Wednesday that negotiations are coming to a crossroads. Talking to reporters during a visit to Agra, India, Vance said, "We've issued a very explicit proposal to both the Russians and the Ukrainians, and it's time for them to either say yes or for the United States to walk away from this process." During his time as an Ohio senator, Vance was among the few Republicans opposed to Ukraine aid. He is also on record admitting Ukraine's fate is of little concern to him. During an interview with Steve Bannon just days before Russia invaded in 2022, Vance told the one-time Trump advisor, "I don't really care what happens to Ukraine, one way or the other. We did not serve in the Marine Corps to go and fight Vladimir Putin because he didn't believe in transgender rights."

Trump told reporters on Friday that if the two sides don't come to terms "soon," the United States is "going to take a pass." Rubio said, the same day, "We're not going to continue to fly all over the world and do meeting after meeting after meeting if no progress is being made. We're going to move on to other topics that are equally if not more important in some ways to the United States."

Russian Demands

Among Russia's demands for a peace deal are recognition of its "new borders." In addition to Crimea, Russia already occupies the eastern border regions of Ukraine. There's no indication Putin has any



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plans to relinquish territory that cost his army three years and hundreds of thousands of soldiers to capture. And given that the two nations have been embroiled in intense fighting all this time, short of intervention from other nations, there is little chance of Ukraine gaining that territory back. In fact, it seems the longer the war continues, the more advances Russia makes. Ukraine has been wholly dependent on arms and technology from Western nations the entirety of the war. It has also been experiencing a significant manpower problem for quite some time now.

The NATO Issue

U.S. officials have also agreed Ukraine should be kept out of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), aligning with a key Russian demand. Ukraine's Parliament passed legislation in 2019 to codify the pursuit of NATO membership, a main trigger of Russian aggression. While Western mainstream media has insisted Russia's invasion was completely unprovoked, Russia has been complaining about NATO's eastward expansion for decades. It views NATO as a hostile alliance. None other than U.S. diplomat George Kennan, who authored the U.S. policy of containment of the Soviet Union back in 1947, warned that NATO expansion would trigger a violent Russian reaction. In 1997, Kennan said that "expanding NATO would be the most fateful error of American foreign policy in the entire post-Cold War era."

Kennan [wrote](#) in a February 5, 1997, *New York Times* op-ed that in 1996 Western leaders decided "somehow and somewhere" to expand NATO up to Russia's borders. He said this would be a terrible foreign policy move:

The view, bluntly stated, is that expanding NATO would be the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-cold-war era.... [Russia] would, of course, have no choice but to accept expansion as a military fait accompli. But they would continue to regard it as a rebuff by the West and would likely look elsewhere for guarantees of a secure and hopeful future for themselves.

Given that Kennan predicted the 2022 invasion, it could also be argued that Russia's more recent chumminess with China and Iran prove him correct on his latter point.

Proxy War

On March 29, *The New York Times* admitted the conflict in Eastern Europe has been a proxy war between the U.S. and Russia all along. While it naively assumes America's role in Ukraine's military operations was "hidden," it confirms that the United States supplied the intelligence, strategies, technology, and weaponry — \$66.5 billion worth of it. As far as intelligence, military intel and the CIA drew up the plans.

The *Times* article was approved (and possibly commissioned) by the Pentagon with what the *Times* dubs "remarkable transparency." Nevertheless, for whatever reason, it confirms that the United States "was the backbone of Ukrainian military operations," which it claims have led to the death of 700,000 Russians and 435,000 Ukrainians. Casualty numbers vary depending on who's reporting them. In February, Zelensky [reported](#) a ridiculously unbelievable casualty toll of 46,000. Independent journalists and commentators report roughly one million casualties for the Ukrainians, and a few hundred thousand for the Russians. The Russians, for their part, haven't since 2022 even tried to broadcast casualty propaganda.



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In the *Times* [article](#), the Pentagon brags about how it continuously tracked and targeted “one of Russia’s most-feared battle groups, the 58th Combined Arms Army.” Perhaps this was an attempt by higher-ups in the U.S. military complex to so embarrass Russia’s leadership in front of the whole world that they would have no choice but to wage war against the United States.

According to the Pentagon, the war was going well until the Ukrainians insisted on making their own decisions:

The Ukrainians sometimes saw the Americans as overbearing and controlling — the prototypical patronizing Americans. The Americans sometimes couldn’t understand why the Ukrainians didn’t simply accept good advice.... As the Ukrainians won greater autonomy in the partnership, they increasingly kept their intentions secret. They were perennially angered that the Americans couldn’t, or wouldn’t, give them all of the weapons and other equipment they wanted. The Americans, in turn, were angered by what they saw as the Ukrainians’ unreasonable demands.

Strikingly, the Pentagon was aware the entire time that U.S. involvement risked nuclear escalation, yet it kept on. Trump, for his part, has cited the possibility of nuclear breakout as a key reason for the United States to pull back and attempt to broker peace.

Victory for Russia?

Meanwhile, the Russians are taking a victory lap. Having taken 20 percent of Ukraine and with Ukraine’s most powerful, and possibly only capable, military ally pulling out of the conflict, Putin is riding high. Speaking at a meeting of Russia’s Military-Industrial Commission Wednesday, he said all the world’s armies are taking notes on the Kremlin’s tactics and technology that it deployed against Ukraine. Among the nations paying attention is China, [according](#) to Russian state media organ RT:

China is also taking note, with a focus on deploying swarms of low-cost drones and creating AI-driven coordination systems.

Before concluding, Russia’s media mouthpiece takes a jab at the West:

Meanwhile, as the fighting in Ukraine rages on, Russia has captured large quantities of Western-supplied equipment — including tanks, armored vehicles, portable missile systems, and NATO-standard communications systems — which it is analyzing to extract technological insights and improve its own battlefield capabilities.



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