



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on March 18, 2025

Russia to Halt Attacks on Ukraine Energy & Infrastructure, Consider Middle East Cooperation With U.S.

America and Russia have taken a small step toward ending the bloodshed in Ukraine and another toward improving relations between the two major powers.

U.S. President Donald Trump's call with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday yielded an agreement that Russia will stop attacking Ukraine's energy and infrastructure. They also discussed potential cooperation in the perpetually volatile Middle East, where Trump recently ordered military strikes and recent Israeli airstrikes just ended a two-month ceasefire.



AP Images
Vladimir Putin

Tuesday's much-anticipated call between Trump and Putin did not result in the long-lasting peace deal the American president wanted and has vowed to bring about swiftly. But it was nonetheless an obvious step toward it.

"The process is now in full force and effect, and we will, hopefully, for the sake of Humanity, get the job done!" Trump bragged in a Truth Social post after the meeting.

My phone conversation today with President Putin of Russia was a very good and productive one. We agreed to an immediate Ceasefire on all Energy and Infrastructure, with an understanding that we will be working quickly to have a Complete Ceasefire and, ultimately, an END to this...

— Donald J. Trump Posts From His Truth Social (@TrumpDailyPosts) [March 18, 2025](#)

Ceasefire Details

A White House [statement says](#), in part:

The leaders agreed that the movement to peace will begin with an energy and infrastructure ceasefire, as well as technical negotiations on implementation of a maritime ceasefire on the Black Sea, full ceasefire and permanent peace. These negotiations will begin immediately in the Middle East.

A [statement from the Kremlin](#) indicates the partial ceasefire was immediately implemented. "Vladimir Putin responded positively to this initiative and immediately gave the Russian military the



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corresponding command,” the statement said.

In order to get to a lasting ceasefire deal, Russia wants more concessions from Ukraine, including a halt to the rearming of the Ukrainian military, the Kremlin said in its statement. Russia also once again stressed the need to “eliminate the root causes of the crisis, Russia’s legitimate security interests,” a reference likely to NATO’s eastward encroachment and building up of the Ukrainian military, which Putin has cited as one reason for his 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Russia also announced that there will be a prisoner exchange between the two countries on Wednesday. The countries will swap 175 prisoners from each side, and an additional 23 “seriously wounded Ukrainian military personnel who are being treated in Russian medical institutions will be transferred as a goodwill gesture,” according to the Kremlin’s statement.

The tone from the White House indicates this is but one step to further negotiations that will lead to a “full ceasefire and permanent peace.”

Tuesday’s talks came about after Putin [rejected](#) a proposal for an immediate ceasefire last Thursday. Russia’s leader indicated he wanted a more Russia-friendly agreement. Ukraine, whose president was once again missing in Tuesday’s talks, had already agreed to the proposal.

Middle East Tensions

Trump and Putin discussed a number of other crucial issues, according to White House and Kremlin statements. One of the most pressing is the Middle East, where tensions are once again heating up. Trump and Putin spoke “broadly about the Middle East as a region of potential cooperation to prevent future conflicts,” the White House said. The Kremlin statement reinforces that the two leaders discussed “the situation in the Middle East.”

Over the weekend, Trump ordered a series of airstrikes on Houthi-held areas in Yemen and swore to use “overwhelming lethal force” until the Iranian-backed terrorists halt their attacks on shipping vessels along a maritime corridor. Trump, like U.S. presidents have unfortunately become accustomed to doing, ordered these strikes without congressional approval. On Tuesday, the president made a statement indicating the United States is open to a full-fledged military attack Iran. He said:

Let nobody be fooled! The hundreds of attacks being made by Houthi, the sinister mobsters and thugs based in Yemen, who are hated by the Yemeni people, all emanate from, and are created by, IRAN. Any further attack or retaliation by the “Houthis” will be met with great force, and...

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Foreign Affairs, the publication of the globalist Council on Foreign Relations, noted in its May/June 2024 issue that Russia’s campaign against Ukraine, while isolating the country from the West, brought it closer to member nations of the “Axis of Upheaval,” which includes Iran. By then, Russia had deployed more than 3,700 Iranian-designed drones. Iran and Russia had also worked together to keep Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in power, attempts which recently failed. The report also said that Russia “has been among Tehran’s top suppliers of weapons over the past two decades and is now its largest source of foreign investment; Russian exports to Iran rose by 27 percent in the first ten months of 2022.”

Perhaps Washington and Moscow can cooperate in such a way that prevents full-blown military



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intervention in the Middle East and a war with Iran.

Israeli Interest

One nation not opposed to a U.S. attack on Iran is Israel, which has had to deal with attacks from Iran-backed proxy groups for some time.

On the same day the two leaders spoke, Israeli forces launched deadly air strikes on Gaza, ending a two-month ceasefire. Health authorities in Gaza claim hundreds were killed. Given the nature of the attacks, there's little doubt people were killed. But considering that civilians in Gaza openly cheered the barbaric parading of Israeli civilian prisoners covered in blood after the October 7 attack, there is no rational reason to believe authorities in Gaza are telling the truth.

The reason Israel attacked, according to the office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, is because Hamas has refused to release the rest of the hostages it took on October 7, 2023. Israeli foreign minister Gideon Saar reinforced that message, saying that the ceasefire talks were at a dead end and that Israel had "no alternative but to give the order to reopen fire."

Improved Russia-U.S. Relations

Trump's arrival into the White House has reversed a years-long Western approach of treating Russia as an enemy. In its statement, the White House said Trump and Putin "stressed the need for improved bilateral relations between the United States and Russia," and concluded with an emphasis on this aspect of the talks:

The two leaders agreed that a future with an improved bilateral relationship between the United States and Russia has huge upside. This includes enormous economic deals and geopolitical stability when peace has been achieved.

The United States has had a checkered relationship with Russia. Before the Cold War, the two were allies against the Axis Powers. But after the war, and for about half of the 20th century, the two had nuclear weapons pointed at each other. But that ended with the official fall of the Soviet empire, which left the United States as the world's lone superpower.

Today, the United States faces a new juggernaut of an enemy, China, which Russia has a friendship with. Some argue that as U.S. international financiers helped fuel the buildup of the Nazis and the Bolsheviks, so too have they created the China threat.

Is the Trump administration trying to forge a relationship with Russia as part of a larger strategy to prevent it from getting closer to China, and perhaps even in preparation for open conflict with China?



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