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# Victoria Nuland Admits US Discouraged Ukraine From Signing Peace Deal With Russia in 2022

Her comments are the latest confirmation that a peace deal was on the table in the early days of the war

by Dave DeCamp / September 9, 2024 at 12:47 pm ET / News / Russia, Ukraine

Former US State Department official Victoria Nuland has acknowledged that the US discouraged Ukraine from signing a peace deal with Russia during the early days of the Russian invasion.

Nuland, who recently resigned from her post as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, made the comments in an interview [that was published on YouTube on September 3](#).

Mikhail Zygar, an exiled Russian journalist, asked Nuland about [former Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennet's claim](#) that the US and its allies blocked his efforts at mediation and reports of former [British Prime Minister Boris Johnson](#) urging Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky not to sign a deal.

Zygar also mentioned that David Arakhamia, a Ukrainian official who led negotiations with Russia at a meeting in Istanbul in March 2022, [acknowledged last year](#) that a deal was on the table at the time and that Russia's main demand was for Ukrainian neutrality.

**Ivan Katchanovski** @I\_Katchanovski · [Follow](#)

Wow! Nuland basically admits that Ukraine-Russia peace deal, which was close to being finalized in spring 2022, “fell apart” because US, UK & other Western governments “advised” Zelensky government that it was not “good deal” even though even members of Ukrainian delegation... [Show more](#)

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Nuland claimed the US took a hands-off approach to the negotiations when they first started and said it wasn't until “relatively late in the game” that the Ukrainians started seeking the advice of the US and its allies.

“The Ukrainians began asking for advice on where this thing was going, and it became clear to us, clear to us and the Brits, clear to others, that Putin's main condition was buried in an annex to this document that they were working on. And it included limits on the precise kinds of weapons systems that Ukraine could have after the deal,” Nuland said.

She said the deal would make Ukraine “neutered” as a military force and said there were no similar constraints on the Russian military. “People inside Ukraine

and people outside Ukraine started asking questions about whether this was a good deal, and it was at that point that it fell apart,” Nuland said.

Boris Johnson traveled to Ukraine on April 9, 2022, and, [according to Ukrainska Pravda](#), told Zelensky that even if Ukraine was ready to sign a deal with Russia, the “collective West” was not. Arakhamia confirmed this account in November 2023, saying that when the negotiators returned from Istanbul, Johnson visited Ukraine and “said that we would not sign anything with them at all, and let’s just fight.”

On April 20, 2022, around the time the talks broke down, [then-Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said](#) Turkey thought a deal could be reached following the Istanbul talks, but then it got the impression that some NATO members wanted to prolong the war to weaken Russia.

“After the talks in Istanbul, we did not think that the war would take this long ... But, following the NATO foreign ministers’ meeting, it was the impression that... there are those within the NATO member states that want the war to continue, let the war continue and Russia gets weaker. They don’t care much about the situation in Ukraine,” Cavusoglu said.

On April 25, 2022, after visiting Kyiv, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin declared that one of the US’s goals in the war [was to see a “weakened” Russia](#).

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