

**US foreign policy**

# Trump speaks with Putin and advises him not to escalate Ukraine war – report

In phone call, Trump reminds Putin of US's 'sizeable military presence in Europe', Washington Post reports



📷 Donald Trump, left; and Vladimir Putin. Photograph: Elijah Nouvelage/alexander Nemenov/AFP/Getty Images

**Maya Yang in New York**

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Donald Trump spoke on the phone with Vladimir Putin on Thursday and discussed the war in Ukraine, the Washington Post **reported** on Sunday, citing people familiar with the matter.

The US president-elect advised the Russian president not to escalate the war in **Ukraine** and reminded him of “Washington’s sizeable military presence in Europe”, the Post reported.

It added that Trump expressed interest in follow-up conversations on “the resolution of Ukraine’s war soon”.

During the election campaign, Trump said he would find a solution to end the war “within a day”, but did not explain how he would do so.

According to one former US official who was familiar with the call and spoke to the Washington Post, Trump probably does not want to begin his second presidential term with an escalation in the Ukraine war, “giving him incentive to want to keep the war from worsening”.

In a statement to the outlet, Trump’s spokesperson, Steven Cheung, said: “President Trump won a historic election decisively and leaders from around the world know America will return to prominence on the world stage. That is why leaders have begun the process of developing stronger relationships with the 45th and 47th president because he represents global peace and stability.”

Trump had also spoken to the Ukrainian president, **Volodymyr Zelenskyy**, on Wednesday, according to media reports.

Biden has invited Trump to come to the Oval Office on Wednesday, and on Sunday, the national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, said that Biden’s top message will be his commitment to ensure a peaceful transfer of power. He will also talk to Trump about what’s happening in Europe, in Asia and the Middle East.

“President Biden will have the opportunity over the next 70 days to make the case to the Congress and to the incoming administration that the United States should not walk away from Ukraine, that walking away from Ukraine means more instability in Europe,” Sullivan told CBS.

Washington has provided tens of billions of dollars’ worth of US military and economic aid to Ukraine since it was invaded by [Russia](#) in February 2022, funding that Trump has repeatedly criticised and rallied against with other Republican lawmakers.

Ukraine’s foreign ministry disputed a claim in the Washington Post article that Kyiv was informed of the call and did not object to the conversation taking place. “Reports that the Ukrainian side was informed in advance of the alleged call are false. Subsequently, Ukraine could not have endorsed or opposed the call,” a foreign ministry spokesperson, Heorhii Tykhyi, told Reuters.

On Friday, the Kremlin said Putin was ready to discuss Ukraine with Trump but that it did not mean that he was willing to alter Moscow’s demands.

On 14 June, Putin set out his terms for an end to the war: Ukraine would have to drop its Nato ambitions and withdraw all its troops from all the territory of four regions claimed by Russia.

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Ukraine rejected that, saying it would be tantamount to capitulation, and that Zelenskyy had put forward a “victory plan” that includes requests for additional military support from the west.

Also on Sunday, Trump spoke to the German chancellor, Olaf Scholz. “The chancellor emphasised the German government’s willingness to continue the decades of successful cooperation between the two countries’ governments. They also agreed to work together towards a return to peace in Europe,” a German government spokesperson said.

In a call last week with the South Korean president, Yoon Suk Yeol, Trump said the US was interested in working with Seoul in the shipbuilding industry, particularly in naval shipbuilding, as well as “promoting genuine peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region”, the South Korean leader said.

Trump’s call with Putin comes just a day after Bryan Lanza, a senior political adviser to Trump, [told](#) the BBC that Ukraine should focus on achieving peace instead of “a vision for winning”.

“When Zelenskyy says we will only stop this fighting, there will only be peace, once [Crimea](#) is returned, we’ve got news for President Zelenskyy: Crimea is gone,” Lanza told the BBC.

After his comments, a Trump spokesperson said Lanza “was a contractor for the campaign” and that he “does not work for President Trump and does not speak for him”.

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