

Crisis summit at White House over Ukraine war riven by divisions

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The leaders of the most powerful imperialist states in the world, including France, Germany, Italy and the UK, along with the heads of the EU and NATO, flew to Washington Monday on less than 24 hours' notice for crisis talks over the war in Ukraine.

The unprecedented summit was prompted by the meeting Friday between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump in Alaska, where the American president invited the Russian leader onto American soil for the first time in a decade, in a sharp reversal of prior US efforts to isolate Moscow.

The immediate context of the crisis talks is a series of major military setbacks for Ukraine, which is armed and funded by the NATO alliance in a proxy war against Russia. Ukraine, facing a major manpower shortage and growing domestic opposition, is on the brink of military collapse.

While going out of their way to display an image of unity, the plans outlined by the European and American leaders remained sharply at odds. The meeting abruptly ended before 7:00 p.m., and a scheduled dinner was unexpectedly cancelled.

Behind the scenes, the *New York Times* described the atmosphere as one of “panic.” A European diplomat told the *Times* that he “had not seen a meeting like the one set for Monday come together so quickly since just before the Iraq War.”

The summit took place in a Washington under effective military occupation, with National Guard troops patrolling the streets. Trump’s approval rating has fallen to the lowest level of his term, and all of the NATO leaders are unpopular in their own countries.

The greater the divisions, the more the European leaders sought to paper them over by flattering the reality TV star-turned-American president as the great

peacemaker of the age. The European leaders attempted to conceal the atmosphere of panic and crisis—and the vast differences that have arisen between the United States and its imperialist allies over the war against Russia in Ukraine—with obsequious flattery.

One after another, they effusively thanked and praised the American president, all but bowing and scraping to kiss Trump’s ring. The atmosphere was reminiscent of a scene from *The Godfather* or *The Sopranos*.

After lavishing praise on Trump, they turned to their real demands, including the deployment of NATO troops to Ukraine and the provision of “Article 5-like” security guarantees that would effectively commit NATO members to war against Russia if conflict were to break out again.

French President Emmanuel Macron added in remarks prior to the meeting, “If at the end this process is met by refusal, we are also ready to say that we need to increase sanctions.”

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz also chimed in, saying, “Let’s try to put pressure on Russia, because the credibility of this effort, these efforts we are undertaking today, are dependent on at least a ceasefire.”

In other words, while mouthing platitudes about peace, the European powers were pushing for a significant escalation of NATO involvement in the war.

Following these statements, Russia’s foreign ministry issued a declaration calling the demand to deploy NATO troops to Ukraine a “sharp escalation” that is “categorically unacceptable to Russia.” It added that such action could lead to “an uncontrolled escalation of the conflict with unpredictable consequences.”

Despite these seemingly unbridgeable divisions, Trump wrote on Truth Social following the meeting:

“Everyone is very happy about the possibility of PEACE for Russia/Ukraine.”

For his part, Macron said after the meeting, “I am not convinced that President Putin also wants peace. His ultimate goal is to gain as much territory as he can and weaken Ukraine.”

The crisis summit in Washington concluded with no concrete agreements or policies, only vague statements that negotiations will continue in the form of a trilateral meeting between Trump, Putin and Ukrainian President Zelensky.

Significant factions within the Trump administration, facing a military debacle in Ukraine, are seeking to scale back US involvement in the war against Russia in order to redirect resources toward a military buildup in the Pacific targeting China. This shift has intensified divisions not only with Washington’s European allies but also within the American state itself. These internal and external fractures are producing increasingly unpredictable consequences.



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