

As Ukraine faces military and political crisis, White House proposes negotiated settlement of war

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With the Ukrainian government of Volodymyr Zelensky facing a deepening corruption scandal and military crisis, the Trump administration submitted to Kiev on Thursday a 28-point plan for a negotiated settlement of the war with Russia.

The proposal was submitted by a US military delegation led by Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll.

The plan, as published in full by *Axios*, marks a significant departure from earlier US positions and is a testament to the deepening crisis facing the US-NATO proxy war against Russia.

The document declares that “NATO will not expand further” and that “Ukraine agrees to enshrine in its constitution that it will not join NATO, and NATO agrees to include in its statutes a provision that Ukraine will not be admitted in the future.” It also declares that “NATO agrees not to station troops in Ukraine.”

The 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest declared that Ukraine and Georgia “will become members of NATO.” Russian President Vladimir Putin cited the moves by Ukraine to integrate itself into NATO as the main justification for the Russian invasion in 2022.

The document declares that “Crimea, Luhansk and Donetsk will be recognized as de facto Russian, including by the United States.”

Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, and a major aim of the NATO powers in provoking the war with Russia in 2022 was to reconquer the territory. In 2023, Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley declared that NATO would assist Ukraine to “go on the offensive to liberate Russian-occupied Ukraine.” Russia currently occupies much, but not all, of Luhansk and Donetsk.

The agreement also stipulates that “Ukraine will hold elections in 100 days,” all but guaranteeing the fall of

the Zelensky regime, which currently rules by emergency decree.

The Trump administration’s plan also stipulates that “Russia will be reintegrated into the global economy” and that “Russia will be invited to rejoin the G8,” from which it was expelled in 2014.

European officials told US newspapers that they had not been consulted about the plan and made barely-veiled condemnations of the proposal in public. “Peace cannot be capitulation. We do not want the capitulation of Ukraine,” said French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot Thursday.

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski added, “Europe’s security is at stake, so we expect to be consulted.” Asked whether any European officials had been consulted in drafting the proposal, Sikorski added, “Not to my knowledge.”

Kaja Kallas, the European Union’s foreign policy chief, stated, “Different peace plans cannot work if Ukrainians and Europeans do not agree to this,” adding that she did not see “any concession from the Russian side.”

A Ukrainian official told the *New York Times* that the Trump administration had “not sought Kyiv’s input” into the talks and that “the terms in the plan were unacceptable to Kyiv.” Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Ukrainian President Zelensky, called the proposal “unconditional capitulation,” adding that accepting the proposal would be “submission.”

Ukrainian politician Roman Kostenko declared that the deal “means capitulation, for Ukraine, for Europe and for America.”

While Zelensky’s advisers bluntly condemned the proposal, the Zelensky government officially accepted

it as a starting point for discussions. Zelensky said in a statement on Telegram, “Our teams—Ukraine and the USA—will work on the points of the plan to end the war. We are ready for constructive, honest and prompt work.”

The *Financial Times* reported that US officials are seeking an extremely rapid timetable for the implementation of the agreement:

The Ukrainian officials said the Trump administration had told Zelensky and other people in his team that the White House was working to an “aggressive” timeline to finalize the proposal in order to bring the war to an end before the close of the year. They added that U.S. officials expect Zelensky to sign the agreement “before Thanksgiving” on Thursday next week, with the aim of presenting a peace deal in Moscow later this month and concluding the process by early December.

The Zelensky government is facing a spiraling corruption scandal over a multimillion-dollar kickback scheme headed by Zelensky’s closest associates. Ukraine’s National Anti-Corruption Bureau alleged last week that Timur Mindich, Zelensky’s business partner, had organized a scheme to steal over \$100 million over 15 months from the state’s nuclear power company.

The scandal has forced the resignation of Ukraine’s justice minister, Herman Halushchenko, and the energy minister, Svitlana Hrynychuk.

The political party of Petro Poroshenko, Ukraine’s former president, called the conduct of Zelensky’s government “unprofessional and corrupt” in a statement this week.

The *New York Times* quoted Kostiantyn Yelisieiev, a former presidential foreign policy adviser, as saying, “Ukraine’s position right now is not strong, and this is seen not only inside the country but also by our partners, including the United States, and of course by the aggressor.”

Russia is making regular, steady advances on the battlefield, including in the city of Pokrovsk, which is expected to fall imminently.

On Thursday, Putin received a briefing from Chief of Russia’s General Staff Valery Gerasimov, who said that Russian troops had taken control of the Ukrainian city of Kupiansk, as well as large portions of the city of Pokrovsk.

The US officially estimates that 1.2 million men have been killed or injured in the war, which is the deadliest conflict in Europe since the Second World War. The real figure, however, is likely to be significantly higher.



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