

Putin, U.S. Envoy Meeting Ends With No Compromise Plan for Ukraine



Russian President Vladimir Putin attend talks with U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff at the Senate Palace of the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Dec 2, 2025.

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - A five-hour meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and U.S. presidential special envoy Steve Witkoff that ended after midnight on Wednesday failed to produce a compromise plan for settling the Ukraine crisis.

Russian presidential aide Yuri Ushakov on Wednesday described the conversation as “extremely useful, constructive and highly informative,” saying that the two sides reviewed documents previously conveyed by the United States and agreed not to disclose the essence of the talks.

Russia had received a U.S.-proposed 28-point plan, along with four additional documents concerning a long-term peaceful resolution of the Ukraine crisis, Ushakov said, noting that Russia could agree to some of the U.S. proposals while remaining critical of a number of others.

He added that both parties declared

their readiness to continue working towards a long-term peaceful settlement in Ukraine.

Ushakov said that the two sides discussed specific territorial issues and prospects for future economic cooperation between the two countries.

Without territorial issues, “we see no resolution to the Ukraine crisis,” he noted.

The official said that Putin had assessed what he called the “destructive actions” taken by European states in relation to the Ukraine settlement.

As for the possibility of a new meeting between the Russian and U.S. presidents, he said it would depend on progress made by aides and foreign ministry representatives.

He stressed that Russia and the United States were “no further from each other” on the Ukrainian settlement, though “much work remains to be done” in both

Washington and Moscow.

Putin has previously said the U.S.-proposed list of points on Ukraine could form a basis for future agreements.

The U.S.-proposed 28-point “peace plan” was unveiled last month. The plan was later revised during talks among the United States, Ukraine and Europe in Geneva on Nov 23, though the changes remain unclear.

Zelensky on Tuesday urged transparency in ongoing efforts to end the Ukraine crisis, noting “What matters is ... that there are no games played behind Ukraine’s back, that nothing is decided without Ukraine.”

During his visit to France on Monday, Zelensky said Ukraine sought to end the conflict “in a dignified manner”, calling for “solid” security guarantees. He also acknowledged that territorial issues would be “the most difficult” aspect in future negotiations.

The latest meeting with Putin marked Witkoff’s sixth visit to Moscow this year. His previous visit was on Aug 6, shortly before the United States announced plans for a Trump-Putin summit in the U.S. state of Alaska.

In the battlefield, Ukraine has hit the Druzhba oil pipeline in Russia’s central Tambov region, a source in Ukraine’s GUR military intelligence said on Wednesday.

It was the fifth Ukrainian attack on the pipeline which supplies Russian oil to Hungary and Slovakia, according to Reuters calculations.

Hungary and Slovakia continue to buy energy supplies from Russia, even after other European Union nations cut ties following its invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Ilhan Omar Denounces Donald Trump for Calling Somali Immigrants ‘Garbage’



Congresswoman Ilhan Omar

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Progressive United States Congresswoman Ilhan Omar has hit back against Donald Trump after the president criticized her and renewed his attacks on the Somali community in Minnesota.

During a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, Trump embarked on a racist and xenophobic tirade, describing Omar and other Somali immigrants as “garbage” and calling for them to leave the U.S.

Trump made the provocative remarks, claiming that Somali immigrants are “contributing nothing” to the United States and that they should be sent back to their home country in Africa which he described as

“stinking” and “no good for a reason.”

“They contribute nothing. I don’t want them in our country, I’ll be honest with you. We’re going to go the wrong way if we keep taking in garbage into our country,” he said, referring to Somali immigrants.

The U.S. president also attacked Ilhan Omar, a Somali-born congresswoman representing Minnesota’s 5th congressional district since 2019, calling her “garbage” and arguing that accepting more Somali immigrants would send the U.S. “the wrong way.”

Trump also claimed that Somalis “complain” despite coming from “hell” and insisted they should “go back” and fix their country.

“These are people who do nothing but complain. They complain, and from where they came from, they got nothing ... When they come from hell and they complain and do nothing but bitch, we don’t want them in our country. Let them go back to where they came from and fix it,” he added.

The New York Times reported on Tuesday that the Trump administration is escalating immigration enforcement in the Minneapolis–St Paul area—home to the nation’s largest Somali community—by deploying “strike teams” of roughly 100 ICE and federal agents focused on Somalis with final deportation orders.

Other outlets, including the Associated Press, confirmed the plan. The push follows right-wing attention on several fraud cases involving some Somali residents accused of falsely obtaining reimbursements for services such as meals, medical care, housing, and autism support.

The White House has previously threatened to end temporary protected status for Somali nationals, calling Minnesota a “hub” of fraudulent financial activity.

On Monday, U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said his department would investigate claims that Minnesota taxpayer funds were diverted to the militant group al-Shabaab, which is active in Somalia, citing a right-wing media report.

Kenyan Lawmakers Accuse British Army of Murder, Sexual Assault

NAIROBI (Reuters) - A parliamentary inquiry in Kenya has accused British troops training there of a pattern of sexual misconduct and environmental harm that has led the forces from the former colonial power to be seen as an “occupying presence”.

The findings of the investigation by a parliamentary committee focused on defense and foreign relations highlight rising frustrations in the East African country at the conduct of soldiers from the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK), who have faced a raft of highly-publicized accusations in recent years.

Thousands of British troops can pass through Kenya for training missions in any given year.

The most prominent allegation relates to the 2012 murder of 21-year-old Agnes Wanjiru near the British forces’ training camp in the town

of Nanyuki. The suspect, a British soldier named Robert Purkiss, was arrested in Britain last month after years of campaigning by Wanjiru’s family and Kenyan rights groups, who said her killers were being shielded by a defense cooperation agreement between the two countries.

Purkiss, who now faces extradition hearings, has denied any involvement in Wanjiru’s death.

The committee’s report, which was dated November 25 but published on parliament’s website on Tuesday, said it had “uncovered a disturbing trend of sexual misconduct by BATUK personnel, marked by rape, assault, and abandonment of children fathered by soldiers”.

It said public hearings in areas where BATUK trains had brought to

light evidence of numerous injuries and deaths to Kenyans employed by British forces to clear unexploded ordnance without protective equipment, as well as environmental damage caused by the illegal dumping of toxic materials.

“BATUK is increasingly seen as an occupying presence rather than a development partner,” it said.

In a statement it provided to the parliamentary committee, BATUK said it has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse and takes any allegations very seriously. It added that environmental audits showed high levels of compliance with Kenyan regulations.

The current defense cooperation agreement between Britain and Kenya was signed in 2021 and expires next year.

Trump Floats Drug Strikes Against Colombia, Petro Warns of War



Colombian President Gustavo Petro addresses supporters during a rally in Ibague, Colombia, Oct. 3.

BOGOTÁ (Dispatches) – U.S. President Donald Trump said he would not rule out land attacks in any drug producing country on Tuesday, moments after alleging cocaine production in Colombia.

“I hear Colombia, the country of Colombia, is making cocaine. They have cocaine manufacturing plants, OK, and then they sell us their cocaine. We appreciate that very much. But yeah, anybody that’s doing that and selling it into our country is subject to attack,” Trump told reporters at the White House on Tuesday afternoon.

In response, Colombian President Gustavo Petro warned that such an attack “would be a declaration of war,” telling Trump not to damage “two centuries of diplomatic relations.”

Trump’s comments come amid mounting tensions in the Caribbean, where the U.S. has amassed forces since September. While Washington has so far only attacked alleged drug boats, killing at least 80 people, Trump said on Tuesday he plans to expand the campaign to land strikes “very soon.”

While Venezuela and the Nicolás Maduro government have been the primary focus of the pressure campaign, Petro’s criticism of the strikes exposed already tense relations between Bogotá and Washington. In October, the White House sanctioned Petro after he said the U.S. had killed a Colombian fisherman in a September boat strike, accusing the South American leader of being “an illegal drug dealer.”

“I think the U.S. has been very clear that they have a problem with Petro, but that they have a very productive relationship with Colombian institutions and particularly the security forces,” explained Elizabeth Dickinson, Deputy Director for Latin America at International Crisis Group.

“For that reason, I think it would be extremely unlikely that there would be a strike on Colombian soil,” Dickinson told The Bogotá Post.

It is not the first time Trump has floated strikes on Colombian territory, with the president in November saying he would be “proud” to destroy cocaine factories in Colombia.

On Tuesday, a family in Colombia filed a petition with the Washington DC-based Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, alleging that the Colombian citizen Alejandro Carranza Medina was illegally killed in a U.S. airstrike on September 15.

The petition marks the first formal complaint over the airstrikes by the administration of President Donald Trump against suspected drug boats, attacks that the White House says are justified under a novel interpretation of law.

The complaint was filed by Pittsburgh-based human rights lawyer Dan Kovalik.

On Tuesday, U.S. lawmakers who have tried repeatedly to rein in President Donald Trump’s aggression against Venezuela said they would file a new resolution to force a congressional vote on the issue if the administration carries out a strike within the country.

“Unauthorized military action against Venezuela would be a colossal and costly mistake that needlessly risks the lives of our service-members,” Democrats Tim Kaine of Virginia, Chuck Schumer of New York and Adam Schiff of California and Republican Rand Paul of Kentucky said in a joint statement.

“Should a strike occur, we will call up a War Powers Resolution to force a debate and vote in Congress that would block the use of U.S. forces in hostilities against or within Venezuela,” they said.

China Urges U.S. to Stop Official Exchanges With Taiwan



Lin Jian, spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, speaks at a regular press conference in Beijing.

BEIJING (Xinhua) -- China firmly opposes any form of official exchanges between the United States and China’s Taiwan region, and urged the United States to stop official exchanges with Taiwan and refrain from sending any wrong signals to “Taiwan independence” separatist forces, a foreign ministry spokesperson said here Wednesday.

It was reported that U.S. President Donald Trump had signed into law an act which called on the Department of State to regularly review interactions between the United States and Taiwan, and look for ways to deepen interactions with Taiwan.

In response, spokesperson Lin Jian told a regular press briefing that China firmly opposes any form of official exchanges between the United States and China’s Taiwan region, and this position is consistent and clear. The Taiwan question is at the core of Chi-

na’s core interests, and is the first red line that cannot be crossed in China-U.S. relations.

He said the one-China principle is the political foundation of China-U.S. relations, and the U.S. government made a clear commitment in the joint communique on the establishment of diplomatic relations that “the United States of America recognizes the Government of the People’s Republic of China as the sole legal government of China. Within this context, the people of the United States will maintain cultural, commercial and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan.”

China urged the U.S. side to earnestly abide by the one-China principle and the three China-U.S. joint communiqués, handle the Taiwan question with extreme caution, stop official exchanges with Taiwan, and stop sending any wrong signals to “Taiwan independence” separatist forces, Lin said.

News in Brief

BEIJING (AP) — China on Wednesday blasted the UK government’s latest delay in deciding whether to approve the construction of a huge Chinese Embassy in London. British authorities said Tuesday that a planned decision by Dec. 10 would be pushed back to Jan. 20, following mounting security concerns. “The UK’s repeated delay in granting approval is completely unjustified and the reasons they cited are untenable,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said, when asked about the development. The government is “strongly dissatisfied,” he added.

MOSCOW (TASS) - The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) will become a meaningless organization if the West abolishes the consensus rule, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said. “The attack on the consensus rule - the key OSCE principle that guarantees the rights of all participating states - has been ongoing for years,” the minister said. “The Finnish Chairmanship-in-Office has also ‘excelled’ in this unseemly endeavor. Those who undermine consensus should understand that without it, the OSCE will lose its reason for existence.”

BRUSSELS (Xinhua) - EU member states and the European Parliament reached a deal on Wednesday to ban all imports of Russian gas by autumn 2027. According to a European Council statement, the agreement outlines a phased ban on imports of Russian liquefied natural gas and pipeline gas. LNG imports will face a full ban starting at the end of 2026, while the ban on pipeline gas imports will take effect in the fall of 2027. The statement said the move aims “to end dependency on Russian energy following Russia’s weaponization of gas supplies with significant effects on the European energy market.”

SOFIA (Reuters) - Bulgaria’s President Rumen Radev has called on the minority government of Prime Minister Rosen Zhelezkov to resign following mass protests this week against its 2026 budget. The government on Tuesday withdrew the budget, following nationwide demonstrations against planned tax hikes to finance higher spending. It is the first budget drafted in euros before the European Union member state adopts the currency on January 1. The budget crisis is the latest sign of political instability in the Balkan country, which has held seven elections in four years as a series of weak coalitions have fallen apart. The latest election was in October 2024, but the parliament only approved the cabinet in January after months of negotiations.

THESSALONIKI, Greece (AP) — Farmers in northern Greece disrupted traffic at border crossings on Wednesday in an escalating protest over delayed European Union-backed subsidy payments linked to an investigation into a corruption scandal. Convoys of tractors blocked routes to North Macedonia, Bulgaria and Turkey forcing drivers into lengthy detours. At the weekend, hundreds of farmers took to the streets, blocking roads with tractors in several areas. Protests by farmers are common in Greece, but the latest unrest erupted over delays in subsidy payments following revelations of widespread fraudulent claims for EU funds.

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) - The search for the wreckage of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 will resume on 30 December, over a decade after the aircraft with 239 people on board vanished, Malaysian authorities have said. This fresh search, which will run for 55 days, had begun in March but was suspended shortly after because of poor weather conditions. “The latest development underscores the [Malaysia’s] commitment to providing closure to the families affected by this tragedy,” the transport ministry said Wednesday, according to local media. Flight MH370, a Boeing 777, disappeared in 2014 while travelling from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing and sparked the largest search in aviation history.