# Senior Russian general assassinated as US and Russia discuss Ukraine peace proposals



A senior Russian general has been assassinated in a car bombing near Moscow amid high-stakes diplomatic efforts between the United States and Russia over the Ukraine conflict. Yaroslav Moskalik, a deputy chief in the general staff of Russia’s armed forces, was killed when an explosive device rigged with shrapnel detonated in his vehicle, according to Russian investigators. The blast occurred in Balashikha, a city located approximately 13 miles east of Moscow.

Russian media outlets broadcast footage of a vehicle engulfed in flames in the courtyard of an apartment building following the explosion. The Kremlin attributed the attack to Ukraine, with Russian presidential spokesman Dmitry Peskov stating, “The Kyiv regime once again simply shows its true nature. The Kyiv regime continues to be involved in terrorist activity on the territory of our country.”

This latest killing marks the second assassination of a top Russian military official in Moscow in recent months, following the death of Igor Kirillov, Russia’s chemical weapons chief, in December. Kyiv claimed responsibility for Kirillov’s death, accusing him of involvement in war crimes.

The assassination coincided with a meeting in Moscow between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Steve Witkoff, a property mogul who serves as an envoy for former US President Donald Trump. Witkoff met with Putin to discuss peace proposals related to the ongoing war in Ukraine. Kremlin footage showed Witkoff and Putin shaking hands and engaging in a three-hour discussion at a white oval table, marking their fourth extensive meeting since February. Prior to the meeting, Witkoff was seen walking through central Moscow alongside senior Russian negotiator Kirill Dmitriev.

Following the meeting, Kremlin officials characterised the discussions as constructive, noting that they helped narrow differences concerning a resolution to the conflict. They also indicated that the possibility of direct talks between Kyiv and Moscow was considered.

Details of the US peace proposals were revealed shortly after the meeting. These proposals, part of what was described as Washington’s “final offer,” call for a legal recognition of Russian control over Crimea, the peninsula annexed by Russia in 2014, as well as over occupied parts of eastern Ukraine, including the Luhansk region and sections of Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, and Kherson. The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station, Europe’s largest, is proposed to be returned to Ukraine but maintained under US control and administration.

Former US President Donald Trump has been vocal about these proposals, asserting in a Time interview published on Friday that Crimea will remain under Russian control. “Everybody understands that it’s been with them for a long time,” Trump said, adding that the territory had essentially been lost to Ukraine under previous administrations. However, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky firmly rejected this view, asserting, “Our position is unchanged: only the Ukrainian people have the right to decide which territories are Ukrainian.” He emphasised that Ukraine will never recognise Russia’s occupation of Crimea under any agreement, citing both the Ukrainian constitution and international law.

Responses to the US proposals varied. European and Ukrainian officials have circulated a separate document emphasising that territorial issues should be resolved following a full and unconditional ceasefire, with negotiations beginning based on the current line of control. This European framework does not mention recognising Russian sovereignty over any Ukrainian territory and differs significantly on subjects such as the lifting of sanctions, security guarantees for Ukraine, and the size of its military.

Vitali Klitschko, mayor of Kyiv and former heavyweight boxing champion, commented on the situation during an interview with the BBC. While acknowledging the possibility that Ukraine may have to relinquish some territory temporarily to achieve peace, he maintained that Ukrainian citizens would never accept Russian occupation. Klitschko said, “One of the scenarios is ... to give up territory. It’s not fair. But for the peace, temporary peace, maybe it can be a solution, temporarily.” Shortly after, Serhi Leshchenko, an adviser to President Zelensky, warned against speculation. He told the BBC World Service’s Newsday programme that discussing territorial concessions without an official proposal violates the Ukrainian constitution, which guarantees the country’s territorial integrity.

Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson criticised the US plans, warning that Ukraine might “get nothing” if the proposals were accepted, and accused Washington of indirectly rewarding Russia for indiscriminate attacks on Kyiv that have caused civilian casualties.

In related developments, President Trump also criticised President Zelensky over delays in signing a rare earth minerals agreement with the United States, tweeting that the deal was “at least three weeks late.” Ukrainian officials clarified they had recently signed an outline of the deal and anticipated a final agreement by the end of the week.

Meanwhile, the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) has reported reductions in support for people displaced by the conflict due to funding shortfalls. Karolina Lindholm Billing, the UNHCR representative in Ukraine, attributed these reductions in part to the suspension of US aid under the Trump administration as well as broader donor cutbacks. She highlighted that programmes offering psychosocial support, emergency shelter materials, and cash assistance have been paused despite the high level of need among those fleeing heavy shelling. Since January, nearly 9,000 displaced persons have passed through UNHCR transit centres in Pavlohrad and Sumy, receiving assistance including clothing, hygiene kits, and legal support.

These events come at a crucial juncture in ongoing diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict in Ukraine, amid escalating military violence and complex negotiations involving the US, Europe, Russia, and Ukraine.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yaroslav_Moskalik> - This page confirms the assassination of Yaroslav Moskalik near Moscow by a car bomb with an explosive device containing shrapnel, the location in Balashikha, and the context of rising tensions in the Russo-Ukrainian conflict. It also references the previous killing of Igor Kirillov, another Russian general, in December 2024.[1]
* <https://news.sky.com/story/kremlin-blames-ukraine-for-car-bomb-killing-of-russian-general-near-moscow-as-trump-envoy-meets-putin-13355393> - This article details the Kremlin's accusation that Ukraine was behind the car bomb killing of Lieutenant General Yaroslav Moskalik near Moscow, including Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov’s statement calling Kyiv a terrorist regime, and mentions the timing alongside Donald Trump's envoy meeting Putin.[3]
* <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20250425-russia-blames-ukraine-car-bombing-killed-top-general-near-moscow> - France24 reports on the car bombing that killed Yaroslav Moskalik outside Moscow, corroborating the senior rank and the use of an explosive device in a parked car, as well as Russia blaming Ukraine for the attack.[4]
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mSkdMar-5w> - This Russian news video includes reporting on the investigation into Moskalik’s killing, describing the device rigged with shrapnel, the murder classification by authorities, and discusses the political context including the ongoing diplomatic talks involving US envoy Steve Witkoff.[2]
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtUa_NFJwhg> - This YouTube video reports on the assassination of Major General Yaroslav Moskalik and provides video footage and discussion about the incident in Moscow, confirming his role and the circumstances of the attack.[5]
* <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/us-envoy-meets-putin-discuss-peace-ukraine-war-rcna88111> - This NBC News article discusses the meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US envoy Steve Witkoff about peace proposals for the Ukraine conflict, aligning with the reported diplomatic talks and their constructive nature described in the article above.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-general-bombing-putin-witkoff-b2739558.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data