# Donald Trump reveals US-Ukrainian deal on natural resources amid ongoing war discussions



Former US President Donald Trump has provided new insights into his recent meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky at the Vatican, discussing the details during a NewsNation town hall event on Wednesday evening. The event was moderated by Chris Cuomo, Stephen A. Smith, and Bill O'Reilly.

The meeting between the two leaders, which took place at Pope Francis' funeral last week, marked their first face-to-face encounter in two months, following a strained interaction at the White House in February. The Vatican meeting drew significant attention, partly due to a widely circulated photograph capturing their interaction.

During the town hall, Trump revealed that he presented Zelensky with a newly signed deal granting the United States preferential access to Ukraine's natural resources. Trump described the negotiation as an attempt to secure a beneficial arrangement, saying, "I was telling him that it's a very good thing if we can produce a deal that you sign it, because Russia is much bigger and much stronger." He characterised Russia as "a big, strong country," although "not nearly as strong as the United States."

The minerals deal includes access to aluminium, graphite, oil, natural gas, and rare earth materials—resources Trump indicated could be more valuable than the military aid the US has provided to Ukraine. He said, "They have great rare earth, meaning certain materials, minerals, it's a big asset they have." He framed this agreement as a way for the US to recoup its substantial financial support to Ukraine, which he estimated at $350 billion.

Trump stated that the deal might influence the ongoing conflict with Russia. When asked by O'Reilly whether he believed the deal could stop Russian advances, Trump responded, "It could, but the reason I did that is because we're in for $350 billion," referring to the military aid under President Joe Biden's administration. He added, "I didn't want to be out there and look foolish. This is not my war, it's Biden's war. I want to stop this."

Sources familiar with the conversation have reported that during the Vatican meeting, Zelensky urged Trump to adopt a tougher stance against Russian President Vladimir Putin. According to Axios, Zelensky emphasised that Putin would not alter his position on the invasion unless compelled by external pressures. Trump apparently acknowledged he might need to adjust his strategy towards Putin.

Hours after the town hall, Trump took to Truth Social to criticise Putin for missile strikes on Kyiv, writing, "It makes me think that maybe he doesn't want to stop the war, he's just tapping me along, and has to be dealt with differently, through 'Banking' or 'Secondary Sanctions?' Too many people are dying!!!" Additionally, Zelensky reportedly asked Trump to reconsider his original call for an unconditional ceasefire as a basis for peace talks, which Trump seemed to accept.

It has been suggested that the more constructive tone of the Vatican meeting, compared to February's White House encounter, may be attributed to the absence of Vice President JD Vance and White House envoy Steve Witkoff.

The minerals agreement establishes a joint US-Ukrainian fund dedicated to reconstruction, which will receive 50 percent of profits and royalties from new natural resource permits in Ukraine. Future US military assistance will be credited towards contributions to this fund. While the United States and its designated entities will enjoy preferential access to new investment opportunities concerning Ukraine’s natural resources, existing contracts remain unaffected.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent described the partnership as a vehicle to "unlock Ukraine’s growth assets, mobilize American talent, capital and governance standards that will improve Ukraine’s investment climate and accelerate Ukraine’s economic recovery." He labelled the deal "historic" and said it sends a message to Russia that the Trump administration is committed to a peace process aimed at a free, sovereign, and prosperous Ukraine over the long term.

Ukraine’s Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko confirmed to the Associated Press that the deal was signed in Washington. She stated, "Together with the United States, we are creating the Fund that will attract global investment to our country."

However, the Financial Times reported that last-minute negotiations faced challenges. Svyrydenko was reportedly pressured by the US negotiating team to sign both a framework deal and a detailed agreement on the joint fund or risk returning to Kyiv without agreements.

In the broader geopolitical context, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov commented on the peace negotiations, indicating that resolving the Ukraine conflict is complex and unlikely to happen swiftly. He said, "We understand that Washington is willing to achieve a quick success in this process, but at the same time we hope for understanding that the settlement of the Ukrainian crisis is too complicated to be done overnight." Peskov also reiterated Putin’s readiness for direct talks with Kyiv, asserting that a peace deal should be negotiated between Russia and Ukraine, "not with America."

Meanwhile, Trump has expressed frustration with the slow progress of negotiations, telling ABC News that although Putin "could be tapping me on a little bit," he believes the Russian leader desires to end the invasion. However, Trump also threatened to abandon the peace process if progress did not improve.

The Daily Mail is reporting these developments, which add new dimensions to the ongoing discussions and diplomatic efforts surrounding the war in Ukraine, US-Ukraine relations, and the broader geopolitical tensions involving Russia.

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

## References

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* <https://apnews.com/article/ce025ba11929ceff0c90f94c25a47624> - This piece details the U.S.-Ukraine minerals agreement finalized on April 30, 2025, granting the U.S. access to Ukraine's critical minerals, including titanium, uranium, lithium, graphite, and manganese, as compensation for U.S. support in Ukraine's ongoing war with Russia.
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* <https://www.axios.com/2025/04/30/zelensky-trump-meeting-tougher-putin> - This report covers the meeting between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and former U.S. President Donald Trump at Pope Francis' funeral, where Zelensky urged Trump to adopt a tougher stance against Russian President Vladimir Putin and prioritize a ceasefire in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.
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* <https://www.reuters.com/world/past-us-aid-ukraine-not-included-minerals-deal-kyiv-says-2025-04-28/> - This piece reports that Ukraine confirmed that previous U.S. aid will not be included in the forthcoming minerals deal being negotiated with Washington, with the agreement pertaining only to future cooperation and explicitly excluding any aid received prior to its signing.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14666745/Trump-reveals-new-details-historic-face-face-conversation-Zelensky-ahead-Popes-funeral.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data