As the war continues and with the trilateral talks on hold, American & Ukrainian officials talk in Florida

UK Defence Intelligence update on battlefield situation in Ukraine as of March 24, 2026.

As last Tuesday's British Defence Intelligence map of the battlefield situation in Ukraine indicated, last week the Russian forces continued to attack in the area south of Sudzha toward Sumy and at a number of points along the contact line between the Russian and Ukrainian forces in eastern and southeastern Ukraine from the area southeast of Kupiansk to the area south of Siversk toward the cities of Sloviansk and Kramatorsk in the northern portion of Donetsk region, toward the area around Pokrovsk in the western portion of that region, and at several locations along the contact line between the forces in the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions of southeastern Ukraine. And as they did, the Ukrainian forces attacked the Russian forces at the southeastern corner of the region of Dnipropetrovsk adjacent to the northeastern corner of the region of Zaporizhzhia.

While the Russian forces continued to attack the Ukrainian forces defending the cities and towns of northeastern and eastern Ukraine, Russia also continued its air war against the people of Ukraine this week. Last Monday night from 6 p.m. until 9 a.m. the next morning, for example, Russia fired 392 drones and 34 missiles, including 12 Iskander ballistic missiles and 22 cruise missiles, at targets in Kyiv, Lviv and other cities, in process hitting many apartment buildings and killing or injuring a number of civilians. The air attack continued throughout the day on Tuesday from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. with another 556 drones being fired from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

While Russia's war against Ukraine continued both on the ground and in the air last week, there was an effort over the weekend of March 21-22 to resume the talks between the delegations of American, Ukrainian, and Russian officials that had taken place in Abu Dhabi in January and February. In late February, a delegation of Ukrainian officials headed by Rustem Umerov, the Secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, had met in Geneva with an American delegation headed by presidential envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner and discussed the details of a possible postwar recovery plan for Ukraine as well as preparations for another trilateral meeting of the American, Ukrainian, and Russian negotiating teams. A trilateral meeting was planned for Abu Dhabi but that meeting was postponed because of the ongoing war in the Middle East.

Following a conversation with President Trump two weeks ago, President Zelenskyy said there was some reason to believe that Russia would like to resume the trilateral format of negotiations in the near future and considers the current pause in the talks temporary, and he was sending part of the Ukrainian negotiating team to the U.S. for discussions in Florida. Those discussions took place in Miami on March 21 and 22. The American delegation included, as in previous meetings, presidential envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, White House Senior Advisor Josh Gruenbaum and State Department Senior Policy Advisor Chris Curren. As in previous meetings, Umerov headed the Ukrainian delegation.

Following the meeting on Mar. 21, Witkoff said in a post on X that "Today in Florida, U.S. and Ukrainian delegations held constructive meetings as part of ongoing mediation efforts, with discussions focused on narrowing and resolving remaining items to move closer to a comprehensive peace agreement. We welcome the continued engagement toward resolving the outstanding issues, recognizing its importance in broader global stability, and thank the President of the United States for his continued leadership in advancing the efforts."

The meeting continued for a second day last Sunday, after which Umerov said in a post on Telegram, "Another stage of talks with the American side has concluded in Florida as part of the process aimed at achieving sustainable peace. During the meetings, the main focus was on reliable security guarantees and the humanitarian track, in particular the exchange and return of our citizens. We have made progress in aligning positions and further narrowing the circle of unresolved issues." In his evening address last Sunday, President Zelenskyy said he had received a report on the discussions and added, "There are signals that a continuation of (POW) exchanges is possible, and this would be really very good news and confirmation that diplomacy is working."

That is, of course, good news. But the war still goes on – and probably will continue to go on until Russia and Ukraine reach an agreement on the territorial issue – that is, how much (if any) of the Ukrainian territory Russia now holds will be returned to Ukraine – or at least reach an agreement on how to resolve that issue.

David R. Cameron
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