In phone call, Trump & Putin discuss possible ceasefire in Ukraine

Yesterday's UK Defence Intelligence update on the battlefield situation in Ukraine.

Yesterday, Presidents Trump and Putin spoke by phone for more than an hour and a half. While the White House Press Office didn't release a summary of the conversation, President Putin's foreign policy aide Yury Ushakov did post a summary of the conversation on the presidential site. According to the summary, the conversation "was conducted in a friendly manner and was frank and businesslike." After discussing at some length the ongoing war involving Iran and neighboring countries, the presidents turned to the current situation in Ukraine: "Regarding a settlement in Ukraine, the US President emphasized the importance of an early cessation of hostilities and his readiness to do everything in his power to facilitate this. His authorized representatives will continue contacts with both Moscow and Kiev. Donald Trump said he believes that an agreement that would bring the conflict in Ukraine to an end is close. Replying to a question from Trump, Vladimir Putin described the current situation along the line of contact, where Russian forces retain the strategic initiative and are pushing back the opposing side…. Both Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump expressed broadly similar views on the behavior of the Kiev regime led by Zelensky, which, incited and supported by Europeans, is pursuing a course aimed at prolonging the conflict. The Russian leader stated plainly that Kiev is resorting to overtly terrorist methods, targeting exclusively civilian facilities on Russian territory. The President of Russia reaffirmed that the goals of the special military operation will be achieved in any event. At the same time, he noted that this outcome would preferably be reached through negotiations, for which Zelensky must respond constructively to the proposals that have been put forward repeatedly, including by the US side. It is notable that Donald Trump expressed a positive view on the Easter ceasefire recently declared by Russia. In this connection, Vladimir Putin informed his American counterpart of Russia's readiness to declare a ceasefire for the period of the Victory Day celebrations. President Trump actively supported this initiative, noting that the holiday marks the shared victory over

Nazism in World War II. When discussing Russia-US relations, both leaders pointed to the great potential for mutually beneficial cooperation in the economic and energy spheres. The presidents stated that their representatives are already engaged in substantive discussions on a number of large-scale economic projects. The presidents agreed to maintain contacts going forward, both directly and at the level of their aides and representatives. They concluded the conversation on a warm note, wishing each other all the best." When asked on whose initiative the telephone conversation was held, Ushakov said, "I would like to note that it was initiated by the Russian side, by the President of Russia."

In a White House press conference yesterday after the phone call, Trump said in regard to Putin and Russia's war in Ukraine, "I think he'd like to see a solution. I can tell you. And that's good." He added, "I suggested a little bit of a ceasefire, and I think he might do that. He might announce something having to do with it. There're so many people being killed, it's so ridiculous." According to TASS, the Russian state media organization, in the phone call Putin told Trump about plans to call a temporary ceasefire to mark Russia's May 9 celebration of Victory Day.

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