After Witkoff & Kushner go to Moscow and Kyiv, Presidents Trump & Putin have an hour-long phone call

Last Tuesday, Presidents Trump and Putin spoke by telephone for an hour about the visits made by President Trump's envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Moscow on Sept. 5, where they spoke with President Putin, and to Kyiv on Sept. 6, where they spoke with President Zelenskyy. Russian presidential aide Yury Ushakov subsequently posted the following summary of the Trump-Putin conversation on Putin's presidential site:

"President Vladimir Putin had another telephone conversation with US President Donald Trump. In their customary respectful and business-like manner, the leaders exchanged opinions on the trips made by US special envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Moscow and Kiev on September 5–6. The telephone conversation lasted exactly one hour. It was constructive and quite frank. As you understand, the conversation itself is confidential, so I am not at liberty to share with you many important details and nuances. The outcome of the visit by said US representatives was assessed as positive. The work through this channel and some others will continue."

"Clearly, the conversation centered on Ukrainian settlement. Donald Trump directly communicated the desirability of bringing the conflict to an end as soon as possible, as it would immediately open up prospects – impressive and far-reaching ones at that – for the full restoration of relations between the U.S. and Russia. In his view, this would have a particular impact on trade and economic ties, promising huge benefits for both nations. Donald Trump is keen to see a breakthrough achieved during his presidency. President Putin supported this approach in the context of potentially building a constructive partnership between the two great powers and praised the mediation efforts by the US and Donald Trump personally with respect to finding solutions to the Ukrainian conflict. An objective and extensive analysis of the current

developments in the special military operation was provided, along with our vision of the overall progress on the battlefield and achieving the goals and objectives of the special military operation. Speaking of which, actual tangible actions that the Americans could take to expedite the cessation of the hostilities were outlined."

"In view of the speculations regarding Russia's alleged hostile intentions against European states, it was stressed that no aggressive plans against Europe have ever entered our minds. The circulated myths about the Russian threat serve as a pretext for Europeans to ramp up their support for Ukraine and their own military expenses. Notably, during the telephone conversation, the leaders agreed to continue the work on resolving humanitarian issues, including detainee and prisoner exchanges. Our President noted the efforts made by US First Lady Melania regarding the return of both Russian and Ukrainian children to their families. Overall, colleagues, I will reiterate that the conversation proceeded in an upbeat tone. The presidents agreed to stay in touch and speak to each other by phone if the need arose."

Last Wednesday, President Trump posted the following on Truth Social: "Ukraine has agreed not to hit Russian Energy targets. Russia has agreed to do, likewise! The World's Diesel price rise is mostly caused by the Russia/Ukraine War, not Iran. President DJT." Speaking of his phone conversation with Putin, he said, "We had a great conversation. He is wanting to make a deal. And if Zelenskyy is wanting to make a deal, that would be very nice." When a reporter asked what was blocking a deal, he said, "The holdup is two people that hate each other. I think more than anything else, it's two people that hate each other." On Sunday, Trump, who was in Ireland and watching the Irish Open, was asked if he had spoken with Zelenskyy following his conversation with Putin. He responded by saying, "Mr. Zelenskyy has to do one thing. He has to stop knocking out diesel fuel in Russia. We spoke to Mr. Zelenskyy about it. There are plenty of other targets. Don't hit diesel fuel, because that's hurting, that's hurting the world."

David R. Cameron
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