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## Zelenskyy Urges Direct Talks as Trump Sets Firm August 8 Peace Deadline in Ukraine War

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is calling for direct negotiations with Russian President Vladimir Putin, as former United States (U.S.) President Donald Trump imposes a clear deadline of August 8 for a resolution to the ongoing Russia–Ukraine conflict. The development has intensified international focus on diplomatic efforts and raised the stakes with recent escalations on the battlefield.

On Friday, Trump used the social media platform *Truth Social* to announce that he had ordered the repositioning of two U.S. nuclear submarines in response to what he called

“highly provocative statements” from former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who now serves as Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. “Words are very important, and can often lead to unintended consequences,” Trump stated. “I hope this will not be one of those instances.”

Later that day, Acting U.S. Representative to the United Nations (UN), John Kelley, confirmed at a UN Security Council briefing that both Ukraine and Russia must aim to achieve a ceasefire and lasting peace agreement by Trump’s specified date. “President Trump has made clear this must be done by August 8. The United States is prepared to implement additional measures to secure peace,” Kelley said.

Kelley reiterated America’s firm support for Ukraine’s sovereignty and self-defense, contrasting it with what he described as growing international military support for Russia. He urged UN Member States to end their backing of Moscow’s war efforts, explicitly calling out North Korea, Iran, and China. While China has not been accused of directly supplying weapons, Kelley noted Beijing’s role as a “decisive enabler” for providing industrial materials that benefit Russia’s defense production.

Despite the heightened diplomatic pressure, Russia’s stance remains unmoved. The Russian Mission to the UN maintained that its objective is not to destroy Ukraine but to promote cultural coexistence between Russians and Ukrainians. However, recent military activity paints a more violent picture. In the early hours of Thursday, Russian forces carried out the year’s deadliest airstrike on the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, launching over 300 drones and eight missiles. According to Reuters, 31 people were killed, including five children, one just two years old and more than 150 others were wounded, among them 16 children.

As the August 8 deadline set by Trump draws closer, the international community is closely watching whether meaningful diplomacy can halt the conflict or if events on the ground will drive it further toward escalation.