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Putin Signals Shift on Ukraine Security Guarantees Deal

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Russian President Vladimir Putin has indicated for the first time that Moscow could accept U.S. and European-led security guarantees for Ukraine as part of a future peace settlement, according to American officials who attended a summit with former President Donald Trump last week.

Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff, who participated in the talks at a U.S. military base in Alaska, described the development as a major breakthrough. He said Putin agreed that Washington

and its allies could provide Ukraine with NATO-style protections, an idea long rejected by the Kremlin.

“This was the first time we had ever heard the Russians agree to that,” Witkoff said in a television interview, calling the shift “game-changing.”

The proposed arrangement would not make Ukraine a NATO member but could mirror Article 5 of the alliance’s charter, which treats an attack on one member as an attack on all. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who also took part in the summit, said the framework for such guarantees will be a central focus in upcoming meetings at the White House.

“What needs to be discussed is how it’s built, what guarantees are enforceable, and what role the United States and Europe would play,” Rubio explained. He cautioned, however, that Trump had not yet fully committed to the proposal.

The issue is expected to dominate talks Monday when Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and several European leaders meet with Trump in Washington. Trump has praised progress made with Putin but suggested that Zelensky must consider concessions, reiterating his opposition to Ukraine’s NATO membership.

European leaders responded cautiously but welcomed Washington’s openness. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Brussels supported security guarantees “that work in practice like Article 5,” while French President Emmanuel Macron stressed that the effectiveness of such commitments would matter more than the specific wording.

Zelensky expressed appreciation for U.S. support but noted that the details remain uncertain. “We need security to work in practice, not just in principle,” he said.

Witkoff also revealed that Russia agreed to draft legislation pledging not to seize further territory in Ukraine or violate European borders after a peace deal is reached. Such a move, if enacted, would mark a significant shift in Russia’s stated position since the start of the conflict.

Trump’s team has pivoted away from pushing for an immediate ceasefire, focusing instead on a broader settlement. Rubio defended the approach, saying that progress in Alaska justified aiming for a full peace agreement. Still, he cautioned that the outcome will depend on Ukraine’s participation.

The Alaska summit shed new light on potential paths toward ending the nearly four-year conflict. While many obstacles remain, the talks revealed an unexpected opening for a security framework involving both the United States and Europe, potentially reshaping the future of Ukraine's defense.