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## UK, European Leaders Join Zelenskyy at White House Talks

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European leaders, including UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, joined Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the White House on Monday for a high-stakes meeting with former US President Donald Trump. The gathering in Washington was seen as a show of European solidarity and support for Ukraine amid mounting geopolitical pressures.

The summit followed Trump's recent meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska, where Ukraine had not been invited. In contrast, the White House talks brought together leaders from France, Germany, Finland, Italy, and the European Commission alongside Ukraine.

European officials expressed concern that Trump could support a plan conceding parts of the Donbas region to Russia, a move they fear would undermine Ukrainian sovereignty. Leaders have stressed that territorial decisions must remain Ukraine's alone, and that international borders cannot be changed by force.

The European Commission presidency said the goal was to pursue a "fair and lasting peace that safeguards Ukraine's vital interests and Europe's security." In preparation, the UK, France, and Germany held a joint video call with other European allies to align positions before the Washington talks.

Zelenskyy emphasised that any just peace must protect civilians, ensure the safety of infrastructure, and guarantee the return of prisoners of war and abducted children. He also warned that pursuing a peace agreement without a prior ceasefire could complicate matters if Moscow failed to honour its commitments.

European leaders, including France's Emmanuel Macron and Germany's Friedrich Merz, also held separate discussions with Zelenskyy ahead of the summit to refine strategy. Analysts said the Ukrainian delegation faced the difficult task of pursuing peace while safeguarding the country's territorial integrity and long-term security interests.

The White House meeting underscored Europe's determination to present a united front alongside Ukraine, ensuring Kyiv remains central in any negotiations and that international support does not weaken. European backing is regarded as essential to counterbalance geopolitical pressure and to sustain Ukraine's defence in the face of Russian aggression.