

## Trump Confirms U.S. Envoy Witkoff to Visit Russia Next Week

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President Donald Trump confirmed on Monday that special envoy Steve Witkoff will travel to Russia next week, as the United States continues diplomatic efforts to reach a ceasefire in Ukraine. The announcement comes as a self-imposed ten-day deadline for Moscow to agree to a truce approaches, with the U.S. threatening further sanctions if no agreement is reached.

Witkoff is currently in Israel but is expected to depart for Moscow in the coming days. His visit will mark the second time he travels to Russia in his role as special envoy, following a prior trip in April during which he held direct talks with President Vladimir Putin and helped broker prisoner exchanges. Kremlin adviser Yuri Ushakov confirmed Moscow is preparing for the upcoming discussions.

Though no specific agenda has been released, the White House indicated the trip is intended to convey the urgency of U.S. demands and explore options for halting hostilities. The mission is part of a broader diplomatic strategy, with Trump stating that if no ceasefire is reached by August 8, Washington will impose additional economic sanctions on Russia.

Trump sharply criticized Russia's recent actions in Ukraine, especially missile strikes on Kyiv, calling them "disgusting" and "a disgrace." However, he acknowledged that further sanctions may not immediately alter the Kremlin's course but insisted the U.S. would not remain passive.

Witkoff has served as Trump's envoy to the Middle East since January but has increasingly played a role in handling U.S.-Russia engagement over Ukraine. His return to Moscow is seen as a last diplomatic push before the administration considers expanding punitive measures.

Observers note that the trip signals Washington's preference to exhaust diplomatic avenues before escalating pressure. However, the effectiveness of Witkoff's visit remains uncertain amid ongoing military aggression and limited signs of compromise from Moscow.

The Biden-era conflict in Ukraine has continued to test U.S. foreign policy across multiple administrations. Trump's team is now navigating a critical moment where diplomacy, military posture, and economic policy converge. Whether Russia responds to Witkoff's upcoming visit with meaningful engagement could shape the administration's next steps as the deadline draws near.