

Fear of Trump's Return Forced Kiev Regime to Change Its Rhetoric on Peace Talks. The Role of China

By [Ahmed Adel](#)

Global Research, July 27, 2024

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

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The departure of Joe Biden and the possible victory of Donald Trump in the American presidential elections forced Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Foreign Minister Dmitry Kuleba to change their rhetoric and adopt a more favourable position, but the reality is that the Kiev regime is not ready for peace negotiations with Moscow.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmitry Kuleba signalled for the first time during his visit to Beijing on July 24 that his country is ready to negotiate directly with Russia and that these talks should achieve a “just and lasting peace.”

“I emphasized two principles that must be steadfastly upheld. First, no agreements about Ukraine without Ukraine,” he said during his three-hour meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. “Second...full respect for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. If these two principles are adhered to, we can engage in any discussions and seek any solutions.”

It is recalled that Russian President Vladimir Putin said last month that Moscow would immediately end combat operations if Kiev retreated from Donetsk, Lugansk, Kherson, and Zaporozhye, dropped its NATO ambitions, and recognized Russia’s sovereignty over Crimea, ideas that the Kiev regime rejected as an absurd ultimatum. This suggests that Ukraine is not actually seeking a realistic peace deal and is still holding onto absurd demands but without the military capabilities to fulfil them if Moscow disagrees.

China is clearly advocating for a political solution to this conflict and for negotiations to begin, which is also why Kuleba chose Beijing to announce Kiev’s supposed new position. Although Zelensky recently said Russia might be invited to the second peace summit in November, Kuleba expressed a slightly different point of view, mentioning bilateral negotiations because China is encouraging it.

The first peace conference in Switzerland on Ukraine, which was mainly attended by Kiev’s Western allies, occurred without Russia’s participation. This was the first time in history that so-called peace negotiations were conducted without one side in the conflict and with an illegitimate president, Zelensky, whose mandate expired in May. Zelensky initially opposed Russia’s participation in that conference, even though China, among other countries like India and Brazil, stressed that this issue would not be peacefully resolved without Russia’s involvement.

It is recalled that Beijing invited Kuleba right after Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán visited the Asian country as part of his “peace mission,” which included meetings with Zelensky in Kiev, Putin in Moscow, Xi Jinping in Beijing, and Donald Trump in Florida. It is not a mistake that Orbán met with Trump since he is the only presidential candidate in the US willing to push Kiev towards the negotiation table.

Another problem is that Kiev does not express consistent rhetoric. Take, for example, the recent speech of Valery Zaluzhny, the current ambassador of Ukraine to the UK and the former commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, who said that it is impossible to reach any agreements and that the war must continue until Ukraine achieves victory.

Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Secretary Maria Zakharova highlighted that Zelensky’s rhetoric is related to the US election. In other words, Kiev fears it will be left without support and financial and military assistance if Trump comes to power. For this reason, the regime is changing its rhetoric, even if some figures like Zaluzhny continue promoting war.

The Kiev regime has been following Trump’s position, who said that he would try to end the war in Ukraine after winning the November elections. Zelensky cannot do anything about this development. Therefore, it is no coincidence that he will invite Russia to the second peace summit, which, he says, will be held in November, the same month as the US election.

Despite Kiev saying it is open to the possibility of negotiations, which Moscow has repeatedly expressed an interest in, Kiev introduced a ban on negotiations at the legislative level. Russia has always favored negotiations, as seen with the Minsk and Istanbul Agreements, which were destroyed by Ukraine with the help of the West, notably Biden and now former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, and not by Russia. This leaves Russia no other option but to continue fighting on the battlefield until Ukrainian forces capitulate entirely.

The Kremlin understands that if Trump returns to the White House, support for Ukraine will completely dry up, forcing the Kiev regime to negotiate with Moscow. But if the Democrats remain in power, support will not halt but will continue to decline as the US simply does not have the resources to save the Ukrainian military from its predicament short of direct intervention.

Zelensky and Kuleba are likely betting that if they appear to be willing to negotiate with Russia, but make no effort and blame Russia for not achieving it, Trump will continue providing weapons and funds to Ukraine. In this way, as the countdown towards the US election begins, we will likely hear more rhetoric of a willingness to negotiate from Kiev but with no serious efforts made.

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This article was originally published on [InfoBrics](#).

Ahmed Adel is a Cairo-based geopolitics and political economy researcher. He is a regular contributor to Global Research.

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