

Trump Could Make a Deal with Russia to Not Offer NATO Membership to Ukraine If Elected

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US presidential candidate Donald Trump is reportedly wanting to make a deal with Moscow to not expand NATO into Ukraine and Georgia. At the same time, citing a senior US State Department official, The Telegraph reported that the Kiev regime would be notified at a NATO summit in Washington on July 9 that Ukraine will not join the bloc due to corruption concerns, putting further doubt that the Eastern European country could ever become an alliance member.

The Telegraph reported on July 3 that at the NATO summit, alliance members are expected to ask Kiev for "additional steps" to combat corruption ahead of accession talks. The official said this position will be set out in writing in a NATO communiqué that will be signed at the summit on July 9.

"We have to step back and applaud everything that Ukraine has done in the name of reforms over the last two-plus years," the official told [The Telegraph](#). "As they continue to make those reforms, we want to commend them, we want to talk about additional steps that need to be taken, particularly in the area of anti-corruption. It is a priority for many of us around the table."

It is recalled that US President Joe Biden acknowledged in an interview with Time magazine earlier this year that he had witnessed "significant corruption" in Ukraine during his visits to the country as vice president.

In late September 2022, Zelensky said his country was applying for accelerated NATO membership. Russian President Vladimir Putin reiterated that Moscow considers Ukraine's non-aligned status vital to ending the years-long conflict. Kiev's stated goal of joining the

US-led alliance was one of Russia's reasons for launching its special military operation in February 2022.

A US defence official told The Telegraph that NATO diplomats and officials have given Kiev a list of reforms it must carry out before its membership ambitions can be realised.

"That's something NATO has been doing quietly under the radar that helps them get closer to membership," the source added.

However, even if corruption is reduced, Ukraine faces a litany of issues in achieving NATO membership. In fact, NATO members disagree on whether they should promise Kiev an "irreversible" path to membership, with Washington preferring to use the term a "well-lit bridge."

Another issue for the Kiev regime is the prospect of Trump's return to the White House. According to Politico, the former president is considering making a deal with Moscow not to expand NATO into Ukraine and Georgia if he is re-elected in November.

His campaign has not yet named a national security team or released a new NATO agenda, but the magazine outlined a possible plan.

"As part of a plan for Ukraine that has not been previously reported, the presumptive GOP nominee is mulling a deal whereby NATO commits to no further eastward expansion — specifically into Ukraine and Georgia — and negotiates with Russian President Vladimir Putin over how much Ukrainian territory Moscow can keep, according to two other Trump-aligned national security experts," the article [said](#), citing two national security experts close to billionaire.

An anonymous source reportedly familiar with Trump's thinking said he was "open to something foreclosing NATO expansion and not going back to the 1991 borders" but did not rule out any other options, "including supplying large amounts of weapons" to Kiev.

While Trump is unlikely to withdraw from NATO immediately, he could potentially reshape the US-led bloc to require its European members to take on more responsibility—something the magazine's sources fear they are not capable of.

"The United States does not have enough military forces to go around," Elbridge Colby, Trump's deputy assistant secretary for strategy, told Politico. "We can't break our spear in Europe against the Russians when we know the Chinese and Russians are collaborating, and the Chinese are a more dangerous and significant threat."

Following Biden's humiliating performance at the recent presidential election debate, Trump, according to the latest polls, now has a 3-point lead over the current president across the battleground states collectively and a 2-point edge nationally. There is a very real prospect that Trump will be re-elected, meaning that even if corruption is reduced to a level satisfactory to the Europeans, any prospect for Ukraine's NATO membership path could be sacrificed so that the new US administration can reach a deal with Russia and focus on challenging China.

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