

Russia and Ukraine Launch Biggest Drone Attacks of War Yet

By [AFP](#)

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Russia and Ukraine both launched record drone attacks on each other overnight, as the Kremlin said it saw "positive signals" from U.S. President-elect Donald Trump over his desire to strike a deal to end the conflict.

Trump's election to the White House has the potential to upend the almost three-year conflict and has thrown into question Washington's multi-billion-dollar support for Kyiv, crucial to its defense.

The Republican said on the campaign trail that he could end the fighting within hours and has indicated he will talk directly with Russian President Vladimir Putin — a major break from the approach adopted by President Joe Biden.

Trump will not be inaugurated until January and for the moment on the battlefield and in the

skies, the conflict shows no signs of subsiding.

Russia fired 145 drones at Ukraine overnight, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said — more than in any single night-time attack of the conflict so far.

"Last night, Russia launched a record 145 Shaheds and other strike drones against Ukraine," Zelensky said on social media, urging Kyiv's Western allies to do more to help Ukraine's defense.

Russia also said it had downed 34 Ukrainian attack drones targeting Moscow on Sunday, the largest attempted attack on the capital since the start of the offensive in 2022.

'Positive signals'

While having publicly claimed to be backing Kamala Harris in the U.S. election, the Kremlin is widely believed to have actually wanted to see Trump return to the White House, welcoming his skepticism over American aid to Ukraine and his chaotic leadership style.

"The signals are positive. Trump during his election campaign talked about how he perceives everything through deals, that he can make a deal that can lead to peace," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in an interview with state media published Sunday.

"At least he's talking about peace, and not about confrontation. He isn't talking about his wish to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia — that distinguishes him from the current administration," Peskov added.

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But he warned about Trump's unpredictability, and said time would tell whether his victory could bring about an end to the Ukraine conflict.

"What will happen next, it's hard to say," Peskov said, adding that Trump was "less predictable" than Harris and Biden.

"It's also less predictable to what extent he will stick to the statements that he made on the campaign trail," Peskov added.

Trump has not said how he intends to strike a peace deal or what terms he is proposing.

Putin has demanded Ukraine withdraw from swathes of its eastern and southern territory as a precondition to peace talks.

Following Trump's election, Zelensky warned there should be "no concessions" to Putin, saying ceding land or giving in to any of his other hardline demands would only embolden the Kremlin and lead to more aggression.

Zelensky has also previously warned that without U.S. aid Kyiv would lose the conflict.

'Massive' attack

Talk of a U.S.-brokered deal comes with Russia advancing on the battlefield.

Moscow's troops made their largest territorial gains in October since March 2022, according to AFP analysis of data from the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War (ISW).

Moscow's Defense Ministry claimed Sunday to have captured another village in Ukraine's east.

In his evening address, Zelensky alluded to Ukraine's attempted barrage of Moscow, the largest attack targeting the Russian capital since the start of the conflict.

Thanking his forces responsible for drone combat he said: "Everyone can see how it works — drones on the frontline, as well as our long-range drones deep in the Russian rear. Russian military objects are becoming more and more accessible to our soldiers."

Moscow region Governor Andrei Vorobyov called it a "massive" attempted strike.

It forced the temporary closure of three airports, wounded a 52-year-old woman and set two homes on fire in the village of Stanovoye in the Moscow region, officials said.

While the Ukrainian capital Kyiv is frequently targeted by massive Russian drone and missile strikes, attacks on Moscow are much less frequent.

The Defense Ministry said Russia's air defense had downed a total of 70 Ukrainian drones, including 34 over the Moscow region between 04:00 GMT and 07:00 GMT across six regions.

In May 2023, two drones were destroyed near the Kremlin and in the same year there were several drone attacks on the Moscow City business district.

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