

Macron Says Trump 'Can Restart Useful Dialogue' With Putin

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Tatyana Makeyeva / AFP

French President Emmanuel Macron announced on Tuesday that he will host another meeting on Ukraine after the talks between the new U.S. administration and Russia, adding that Donald Trump "can restart a useful dialogue" with Vladimir Putin.

In an interview with French regional newspapers, Macron again appeared open to the idea of sending troops to Ukraine but emphasised this could take place only in the most limited fashion and away from conflict zones.

His wide-ranging comments came after President Trump stunned Europe by upending U.S. policy almost three years into Russia's invasion of Ukraine with a resumption of diplomacy with the Kremlin aimed at agreeing an end to the conflict.

Trump is "recreating strategic ambiguity for President Putin" by using "very firm words" and

creating "uncertainty" that "can help to exert pressure," Macron said.

The French president, who once spoke regularly to Putin but has held no talks with him since 2022, added that he himself is ready to speak to his Russian counterpart "when it is appropriate in the cycle of upcoming negotiations."

He said Paris was not "preparing to send ground troops, which are belligerent to the conflict, to the front" in Ukraine.

But France was considering, with its ally Britain, sending "experts or even troops in limited terms, outside any conflict zone".

Such a move would "boost the Ukrainians and show a solidarity. This is what we are thinking about with the British," he said.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, burnishing his European credentials even after Brexit, has said London would be prepared to send troops.

But Macron emphasised Washington's support was needed for future security guarantees to Kyiv. "Given that Russia is a state with nuclear capacity, for European partners, this is a key point," he said.

Macron also evoked the idea of "deciding within the framework of the negotiations to have under a United Nations mandate a peacekeeping operation, which would be held along the front line."

He said the new talks would take place on Wednesday "with several European and non-European states", after an emergency meeting on Monday in Paris which brought together a small number of key European countries.

The previous meeting aimed at showing unity but was shadowed by tensions over the idea of sending troops to Ukraine, with Germany and Italy expressing firm objections to such a move.

Several smaller European countries including Romania and the Czech Republic were also reportedly aghast at not being invited despite being strong supporters of Ukraine.

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