
IS PUTIN READY FOR A CEASEFIRE OR PLAYING FOR TIME?

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Laura Gozzi and Paul Kirby

Russia is ready for a halt in fighting, says Vladimir Putin, but "there are nuances". Those nuances that he laid out ahead of talks with US envoy Steve Witkoff at the Kremlin on Thursday are so key to his thinking they could scupper any hope of a 30-day ceasefire.

They are demands that he has had throughout Russia's full-scale invasion, and before. And for Ukraine and its Western partners, many of them are going to prove unacceptable or impossible to fulfil.

"We agree with the proposals to cease hostilities," he started positively, only to add: "This cessation must be such that it would lead to long-term peace and eliminate the root causes of this crisis."

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