

Putin Rejects U.S. Proposal: "No NATO for Ukraine"

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The conflict in Ukraine has reached a **dramatic turning point**, becoming a formidable **political, diplomatic, and military short circuit**. While Washington is sketching out bold moves — offering Volodymyr Zelensky the prospect of NATO membership in exchange for ceding the Donbass — the Kremlin is freezing all hope and raising the stakes with an **unacceptable ultimatum**. In recent hours, Vladimir Putin's leadership has made clear that Moscow does not intend to stop: the entire uncompromising June 2024 plan is back on the table, demanding a Ukrainian withdrawal not only from Donetsk and Lugansk, but also from **Zaporizhzhia and Kherson**, with Ukraine strictly **kept out of NATO forever**.

At the same time, tensions along the Baltic flank have reached alert levels: **Estonia has announced the complete closure of its borders with Russia from December 1°**, after narrowly foiling an arson attack on a drone facility orchestrated by Russian military intelligence services (GRU).

The Kremlin's plan: a return to 2024, spheres of influence, and contempt for Europe

Official statements by Sergey Lavrov and Dmitry Peskov leave no room for illusions and **make Moscow's imperialist design explicit**:

- Russia demands that **NATO forces completely withdraw from countries that joined the Alliance after 1997**, reducing Poland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to a **gray zone devoid of credible guarantees**.
- The Kremlin dismisses the American proposal and brands Zelensky's "game" as irrelevant, while using **contemptuous language toward the European Union**, accusing it of being slow and divided, reduced to "trying to jump onto the steps of the last car" of a negotiating train slipping from its grasp.
- The positions of Ursula von der Leyen and Kaja Kallas are rejected outright, described as lacking effectiveness and diplomatic logic.
- The threat is explicit and stark: if no agreement is reached on a new European security architecture modeled on a new Yalta and the old Warsaw Pact, **Russia will have to "use force"** to achieve the objectives set at the beginning of the special operation.

The cynicism of endless war and the shadow of domestic failure

Behind the harshness of this blunt blackmail lies confirmation that Putin is fleeing any genuine agreement: for him, only the **regime's existential fear** matters.
According to Abbas Gallyamov, Putin's former speechwriter and now a political analyst in exile, the Kremlin leader **is no longer fighting to win, but to avoid being held accountable for the failure of his initial objectives**:

- As long as the war continues, devastating human losses and defeats can be justified as **contingencies at the front**.
- The day a truce is reached without a clear victory, the Russian people will ask the fatal question: **what was all this for?**
- Continuing hostilities therefore has an **independent political value** for Moscow's despot, who uses the conflict as a shield to postpone his reckoning with his own country.

A fragmented Europe and the test of history

While Rome, through Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani, reiterates that on borders and NATO **only Ukrainians can decide**, the international picture remains marked by a **dangerous marginalization of Brussels**. America is engaging with Moscow on pragmatic terms, and Europe risks paying the highest price in a **historic reckoning**.

The test facing the West allows no hesitation: either it rediscovers **firm strategic unity** and the ability to defend its fundamental principles, or it will succumb to the blackmail of brute force and imperial restoration.