

War in Ukraine

Trump dispute over Greenland derails Ukraine postwar deal

Signature of 'prosperity plan' expected at Davos has been postponed amid transatlantic rift



A planned announcement of an \$800bn 'prosperity plan' to be agreed between Ukraine, Europe and the US at Davos has been delayed © 24th Mechanized Brigade of Ukrainian Armed Forces/AFP/Getty Images

Henry Foy and **Paola Tamma** in Brussels, **Christopher Miller** in Kyiv and **Mercedes Ruehl** in Davos

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European opposition to Donald Trump's attempt to acquire Greenland and his proposed "Board of Peace" initiative has derailed plans for an economic support package for postwar Ukraine, stoking concerns that a widening transatlantic rift could undermine western unity behind Kyiv.

A planned announcement of an \$800bn 'prosperity plan' to be agreed between Ukraine, Europe and the US at the World Economic Forum in Davos this week has been delayed, according to six officials, amid deep disagreements between European capitals and Washington over Greenland and the proposed Trump-chaired board to oversee Gaza and other global conflicts.

“No signing as of now,” said one of the officials. Another said European capitals could not simply ignore the US president’s actions on Greenland while trying to make progress on other Trump-related matters such as Ukraine.

“Nobody is in any mood to stage a grand spectacle around an agreement with Trump right now,” said a third official, adding that Greenland and the Board of Peace controversy had “eclipsed” a previously intended focus on Ukraine at the Alpine meeting.

The US president has threatened to impose tariffs on eight European Nato allies in response to their decision to send troops to the Danish Arctic island of Greenland for a military exercise, triggering what European officials describe as the most serious transatlantic crisis in decades. He has also unsettled European capitals by inviting them to join a proposed Board of Peace, which many in Europe fear is designed to sideline the UN as a forum for mediating global conflicts.

The majority of EU states have rejected the invitations, with a decision to invite Russian President Vladimir Putin to the board deepening existing concerns about the proposal, said people briefed on the decisions.

French President Emmanuel Macron has said he would not participate because of concerns about the board’s remit, while the German government said a “prerequisite” for its involvement was that the body be “compatible with existing international legal frameworks”.

Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Tuesday said it was “very difficult for me to imagine” participating in any body alongside Putin. “I am concerned about any loss of focus during a full-scale war,” he added when asked about the shift in focus at Davos. “I do not see [Greenland and Ukraine] as interchangeable [topics].”



Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy has decided not to travel to Davos © Sergey Dolzhenko/EPA/Shutterstock

The prosperity plan — the economic strand of a wider peace proposal being negotiated by the US, Ukraine and European capitals to end Russia's nearly four-year invasion — is intended to provide Kyiv with long-term support for reconstruction and recovery after any ceasefire.

Tensions between the US and European capitals over Greenland disrupted negotiations on the document between senior national security officials this week, three people briefed on the discussions said. The US did not send a representative to the talks on Monday evening, they added.

"There has been a shift in the mood," said one senior EU diplomat, referring to the Greenland crisis, which has prompted the bloc to vow retaliation should Trump follow through on his threat. "He crossed a line and we can't pretend that it is business as usual."

The 'prosperity plan' was not being indefinitely shelved, the six officials said, and could be signed at a later date.

Zelenskyy on Tuesday said the plan was “very important”. However, he decided not to travel to Davos as Kyiv was reeling from a massive aerial attack that left large parts of the city without water, heat and electricity during a cold winter spell. According to two people close to the president, the Ukrainian leader had also decided against travelling to Switzerland as long as there was no guarantee of a meaningful meeting with Trump at which the prosperity plan would be signed.

“We are at the final mile of completing these documents. If the documents are ready, we will have a meeting and there will be a trip [to Davos],” Zelenskyy said.

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