

British prime minister says UK ready to send troops to Ukraine amid shock over U.S. policy shift on war



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer leaves 10 Downing Street, February 12, 2025 . (Photo by AFP)

London, February 17 (RHC)-- For the first time since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer has said he is "ready and willing" to deploy troops to the Eastern European country to help guarantee its security.

In an article published on Sunday in the Daily Telegraph, Starmer offered British troops to help guarantee Ukraine's security as part of any peace deal. He made the announcement hours before the European leaders' meeting in Paris on Monday to address Washington's shock policy shift on the war.

U.S. President Donald Trump called his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin last week to talk about beginning negotiations to end the Ukrainian conflict, sidelining Kiev and its European supporters.

After Trump said he could meet Putin "very soon," European leaders hastened to the French capital for talks on the continent's security. Washington also warned its NATO allies Europe will no longer be its top security priority.

Starmer wrote: "I do not say that lightly. I feel very deeply the responsibility that comes with potentially putting British servicemen and women in harm's way." "But any role in helping to guarantee Ukraine's security is helping to guarantee the security of our continent, and the security of this country," he added.

French President Emmanuel Macron called the emergency meeting after European leaders and Ukraine had not been apparently invited to early Ukraine peace talks between the US and Russia.

When asked if Europeans would participate in the peace talks, General Keith Kellogg, Trump's Envoy for Russia and Ukraine, told a global security conference in Munich that "the answer to that last question, just as you framed it, is no."

The exclusion of Europe from the peace talks has created unease among European diplomats, with certain European politicians seeing the exclusion as indicative of the power imbalance between the US and Europe.

The foreign ministers of Russia and the U.S. will reportedly meet in Saudi Arabia on Monday to start talks over a peace agreement in Ukraine.

According to Starmer, Ukraine must be at the table in these negotiations, because anything less would only result in a temporary solution.

"The end of this war, when it comes, cannot merely become a temporary pause before Putin attacks again" the UK prime minister claimed in his article.

In response to years of military and political provocations by the US and Western European countries, Russia began its special operations in Ukraine in 2022.

Russia has managed to gain control of a fifth of Ukraine and has been slowly advancing in the east for months.

Ukraine's military, supported by the US and Western European countries, grapples with manpower shortages and tries to hold to a chunk of territory in western Russia.

Russia has demanded an end to the West's military and political provocations on its borders and Ukraine's permanent neutrality under any peace deal. Ukraine on the other hand has demanded Russia's withdrawal from the captured lands and wants NATO membership.

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