

WAR IN UKRAINE

COUNTRIES REPORT
PROGRESS ON ENDING WAR



MARTIAL TREZZINI, KEYSTONE

U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff, second from left, and U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, right, sit at the beginning of talks with the Ukrainian delegation Sunday at the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland.

US, Ukraine officials offer few details from Geneva meeting

MARK CARLSON, KATIE MARIE DAVIES
AND WILL WEISSERT
Associated Press

GENEVA — Top U.S. and Ukrainian officials said Sunday they’d made progress toward ending the Russia-Ukraine war but provided scant details after discussing the American proposal to achieve peace that has sparked concerns among many of Washington’s European allies that the plan is too conciliatory to Moscow.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said high-stakes talks in Geneva were “very worthwhile” and constituted the most productive day in “a very long time.”

“I feel very optimistic that we can get something done,” Rubio said.

But he offered little information on what was discussed. He also downplayed a Thursday deadline set by President Donald Trump for Ukraine to respond to the plan,

saying simply that officials want to see fighting stop as soon as possible and that officials could keep negotiating Monday and beyond. He said that higher-level officials may eventually have to get involved.

“This is a very delicate moment,” Rubio said of what still needed to be worked out. “Some of it is semantics, or language. Others require higher-level decisions and consultations. Others, I think, just need more time to work through.”

The 28-point blueprint drawn up by the U.S. to end the nearly four-year war has sparked alarm in Kyiv and European capitals. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said his country could face a stark choice between standing up for its sovereign rights and preserving the American support it needs.

The proposal acquiesces to many Russian demands that Zelenskyy has categor-

ically rejected on dozens of occasions, including giving up large pieces of territory.

Concerns intensified after a bipartisan group of U.S. senators said Rubio told them Saturday that the plan originated with Russia and was actually a “wish list” for Moscow, rather than a serious push for peace.

The Ukrainian leader vowed that his people “will always defend” their home.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said he spoke to Trump and made clear there were some parts of the plans key European nations could agree on but others where they could not.

“I told him that we are fully in line with Ukraine, that the sovereignty of this country must not be jeopardized,” Merz said in an interview with DW.

Please see **UKRAINE**, Page A2

Trump pushes to eliminate federal disaster relief program

White House calls 9/11-era fund ‘wasteful,’ but both red and blue states rely on it

DON THOMPSON
KFF Health News

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — President Donald Trump’s push to eliminate a federal disaster preparedness program threatens a fund used by state health systems from Republican-led Texas to the Democratic stronghold of California.

The Hospital Preparedness Program was created more than two decades ago in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York City’s World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and the deadly anthrax attacks that began days later. The fund has provided

nearly \$2.2 billion to states, territories, major cities and other entities over the past 17 years to ready health care systems for the next pandemic, cyberattack or mass-casualty event.

Recently, that money has been used to combat the bird flu that has sickened at least 70 people in the United States, killed at least one, and remains a threat. The funds also have been used to respond to crises such as hurricanes, tornadoes, mass shootings, floods and heat waves.

But the budget request sent to Congress by Trump’s budget director, Russell Vought, proposed eliminating the program, saying the effort “has been wasteful and unfocused” and that cutting it would allow states and cities to “properly” fund their own preparedness plans.

Please see **RELIEF**, Page A2



GERALD HERBERT, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Homeowner Daniel Olivas hugs Lorrie McMillan, a chaplain with Texans on Mission Disaster Relief, as he clears debris from his home, which was heavily damaged from flash floods July 10 along the Guadalupe River in Kerrville, Texas.