

AUUC statement Seizing the Moment for a Negotiated Peace

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For more than three years, Ukraine has been the victim of war—longer if you include the internal conflict that began in 2014 with the Maidan protests and the subsequent toppling of Yanukovich.

On Friday, February 28, 2025, the world witnessed an extraordinary meeting in the Oval Office between U.S. President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. This meeting was nothing less than an open confrontation between Zelensky and Trump over the prospect of ending the war through a negotiated settlement.

The shocking frankness of their exchange suggested that the U.S. might make a complete break from its past policy of providing military and economic aid to Ukraine. Some sources report that the U.S. suspended certain financial and military assistance soon after President Zelensky left Washington.

If there is to be peace for Ukraine, what is key at this moment is to avoid the same abandonment of diplomacy that occurred in January and February 2022—an abandonment that could have prevented the war in the first place.

There is a very real and serious danger that the war may now escalate further, as Europe and Canada are expected to offer new military commitments to President Zelensky. Europe is already discussing "doing the heavy lifting," with troops on the ground and increased military support for Ukraine.

The U.S. abandoning the peace process for Ukraine would not necessarily close the door to ending the war. Other countries have previously offered to mediate a peace agreement between Ukraine and Russia. China, Brazil, the African Union, and Turkey have all stepped forward in the past, offering their assistance without conditions—unlike the U.S., which has linked its role in negotiations to Ukraine's surrender of its raw materials.

Past opportunities to end this war have been lost. The time to act is now. If Ukraine is to have peace, Canadians must demand that Canada play a constructive role by urging true international cooperation to end the war. We certainly owe that to the many Ukrainians who fled their homeland and made Canada their new home.