



What key players want from Ukraine war talks



This could prove a defining week for the war in Ukraine, with two sets of hastily arranged talks taking place in Paris and Riyadh. European leaders are meeting in France as they scramble for a response to Donald Trump's plan to open negotiations with Vladimir Putin for an end to the conflict. On Tuesday Russia's foreign minister Sergei Lavrov and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio are due to meet in the Saudi capital.

Ukraine is not attending either set of talks. Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and currently controls more than a fifth of its territory, mainly in the south and east. Starmer's offer to put UK troops on the ground in Ukraine is part of that role he wants to play.

The government used to say the terms of any peace deal was up to Ukraine. That has shifted with the new US administration signalling that a return to 2014 borders was "unrealistic".

Instead Sir Keir will be hoping more European nations in Paris join him in offering their forces to secure a deal – and prevent Russia invading again. It is also a loud voice arguing that Russia cannot be allowed to win the war it launched – because the whole of Europe's security is at stake. So there is consternation that the US looks like it is conceding to Moscow's key demands, even before talks begin, when Poland very clearly sees Russia as the aggressor and as dangerous.