

Zelensky ‘strongly thanks’ Albanese for backing Ukraine



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[Vasyl Myroshnychenko](#), *Ukraine's Ambassador, Australian Financial Review, Mar 5, 2025*

With every day, the global geopolitical settings are rapidly changing, be it following [Oval Office](#) meetings or after the latest statement by US President Donald J. Trump.

They seemingly changed yet again on Tuesday with the US announcing a so-called pause and review of military aid to Ukraine whose details are as yet unclear.



Volodymyr Zelensky (left), Donald Trump and J.D. Vance in the Oval Office over the weekend. **Bloomberg**

Regardless, my government remains very grateful for the aid it has received from the US to this point, and we hope this move is not a total shift away from the international rules-based order and historic alliances that have long been supported by Australia, New Zealand and many other liberal democracies.

As monumental as that may sound, we are not surprised by this development. It is essentially in line with statements and positions that Trump and members of his administration took throughout his election campaign.

Speculating about the drivers of this development is not useful while Ukraine must every day hold a 1200-kilometre front against invading Russian forces.

From Stalin to Putin

The reality is that Ukraine has prepared for, is ready for, and will survive any number of geopolitical scenarios, just as my country has survived imperialism for hundreds of years.

It should always be remembered that Stalin's Russia tried to literally exterminate the entire Ukrainian nation by forced famine in the 1930s. That genocide killed millions; yet, we Ukrainians are still here and we will still be here tomorrow and thereafter.

With millions of innocent Ukrainian lives now under threat from an equally genocidal Putin's Russia, we have needed to be ready for all potential eventualities.

Central to preparation has been to ground our defence against Russia's unilateral full-scale invasion and our pursuit of a just and sustainable peace in key principles. It's through the prism of such principles that we need to view transpiring world events.

The first principle is that, as Ukrainians, we fully believe in ourselves. What was billed as a three-day war is now in its third year.

Against the expectations of many in foreign capitals, we won successive battles at Kyiv, Kharkiv and Kherson; we have reclaimed 7 per cent of the 27 per cent of Ukraine initially occupied by Putin's military.

No one should ever underestimate Ukrainians' will to fight for their democracy and sovereignty. That will is sustained despite near daily bombings of our civilians and cities by Putin. That will has as much or even more worth than the materiel needed to fight a war.

“We will never forget Australia's meaningful mateship.”

The second principle is that we know our strategic strengths and we relentlessly press them.

In Kursk, we have taken and have now held for more than six months a part of Russia as leverage; Russia's vast vulnerabilities have been duly exposed. Our land forces are advancing in eastern Ukraine while Russia's daily casualties are at record highs.

Very significantly, Ukraine has technologically re-made modern warfare. It is now the world-leading manufacturer and innovator in military drones and their deployment; we know more about drone war than any superpower.

As a result, Ukraine has destroyed Russia's Black Sea Fleet and 20 per cent of the oil industry that sustains Putin's war machine. This week, Ukraine hit and destroyed oil production targets 1300 kilometres inside Russia. A total of 80 per cent of Russian casualties are now inflicted by combat drones.

Thirdly, Ukraine has systematically built an international coalition of nations that support democracy and oppose authoritarianism.

We have purposely fostered resilience – on the battlefield or in the hallways of power – through many multilateral relationships. As one example, Europe's combined contribution of military and other aid, for example, exceeds that of the US.

This hard work came to fruition this week when the leaders of Europe – including all the major members of NATO – gathered in London as a new Coalition of the Willing to reaffirm and plan their future support of Ukraine, including peacekeeping.

Europe has stood by us from the beginning and, thankfully, is now further standing up.

The Coalition's consensus would be impossible without shared values, such as the territorial integrity of sovereign states, the universality of human rights, and the liberal democratic model of government. That is a bedrock of beliefs that my president is the leading champion of.

Australia's help

In this respect, I join [President Volodymyr Zelensky](#) in strongly thanking Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and his government for re-affirming Australia's support for Ukraine.

The willingness the prime minister has now stated to consider options for Australian involvement in future peacekeeping is very welcome, very timely and very significant. We will never forget Australia's meaningful mateship, including the hopefully imminent delivery of 49 pledged M1A1 Abrams tanks.

It is also important to assure my Australian friends that, as my president said on Tuesday, no one wants peace more than the Ukrainian people, and we are ready to come to the negotiating table to bring it closer.

A key part of that peace is Ukraine's ability to defend itself going forward and there are several ways that Australia can help.

In line with the government's response to the recent Senate inquiry on Ukraine aid, it could take the form of meeting Ukraine's request for 200 additional Bushmasters and 250 M113 armoured personnel carriers.

Or, the government could further enact its now official policy of prioritising the assignment to Ukraine of redundant military equipment, such as Tiger helicopters (which are being replaced by Apaches) or M1A1 Abrams tanks (which are being replaced

by M1A2s). It could also be a specific budgetary allocation for Ukraine aid, as opposed to drawing down on Defence's standing expenditure.

As a new order with democrats on one side and dictators on the other swiftly solidifies, I know from all my discussions with your prime minister and other leaders where Australia stands.

Going forward, as the Coalition, as well as other negotiations, evolve, I am optimistic that Australia will continue to invest in our defence and, ultimately, peace through strength.

Renewed commitment at this time will show that, in a world where some would have us ignore them, Australia remains steadfastly on the side of values.

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