



Calm before the storm

Ukraine's attack on Russia's bomber fleet took place just days ago. Ukraine and its allies have maneuvered themselves into a situation that leaves them politically bare.

René Zittlau

Sun 08 Jun 2025

Russian diplomacy against Ukrainian drones

With the terrorist attacks and drone strikes on Russia's nuclear forces, which are protected by international treaties, the Kiev regime tried to bring the Istanbul talks to a halt. Without success.

Russia was hit hard, although it is not so much the number of aircraft that hurts. On the other hand, its prudent behavior has shown what sophisticated diplomacy can achieve in times of crisis. It did not allow itself to be provoked, stuck to the

meeting agreed with Ukraine in Istanbul and presented the prepared memorandum to the other side professionally during the negotiations and not - like Ukraine - days in advance via the media.

The content of the memorandum, which became public, demonstrates Russia's serious interest, as it focused on humanitarian, i.e. solvable, aspects in addition to the well-known tough demands that no one expected to be resolved on June 2. Aspects that Ukraine cannot ignore on the one hand and, on the other hand, that pose practically unsolvable domestic problems.

Ukraine was caught on the wrong foot with the latter in particular. The return of the mortal remains of 6,000 mostly identified fallen Ukrainian soldiers brings clarity for the relatives. However, this clarity also enables the bereaved to claim the [financial compensation stipulated by law](#). This amounts to 365,000 euros per fallen soldier. With six thousand fallen soldiers, the total amount comes to almost 2.2 billion euros. This sum represents more than five percent of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense's expenditure. Money that Ukraine does not have.

This background explains Zelenski's cries in the wake of Russia's proposal. It is important for the relatives to finally get clarity about the "disappeared without trace". But [their president made the following statement](#):

"As far as I know, 15% of these 6000 people have been identified. It is very important to check everything, all our people must be picked up."

[\(PRESIDENT\) ZELENSKY](#)

But he did not stop there. [He added](#):

"We already had a situation once where we carried out such an exchange and the Russians gave us the bodies of their own killed soldiers."

[\(PRESIDENT ZELENSKY\)](#)

As usual, he does not provide any evidence for this crude claim. He also rejects a 2-3 day ceasefire on certain sections of the front to recover the dead and wounded and calls those who proposed it "idiots".

[Former Rada deputy Vladimir Olejnik describes](#) what Zelensky is actually talking about:

"As practice shows, almost all relatives of killed soldiers in Ukraine are denied compensation and demand a court decision."

VLADIMIR OLEJNIK

The relatives have to prove that the person killed was not under the influence of alcohol or drugs, had not deserted and had not refused to carry out an order.

"The payout procedures take a long time. In view of the fact that Ukraine cannot repay 600 million dollars to foreign creditors, it is not planning to pay its citizens the full amount."

VLADIMIR OLEJNIK

The announcement by the head of the Russian delegation in Istanbul to publish the list of names of the dead who were handed over is also unlikely to help brighten the mood among the Ukrainian leadership.

The Ukrainian parliament's latest contribution to this issue is the introduction of a draft law that does not provide for the recognition of a soldier as missing until two years after the end of the war. It speaks for the character of this House that this bill was drafted immediately after the Istanbul talks on June 2.

But this is not the height of cynicism. In Istanbul, it was agreed to first exchange the remains of 1,200 of 6,000 soldiers at the Belarusian-Ukrainian border on June 6 and then to carry out the agreed prisoner exchange there on June 7/8. The order is due to the behavior of the Ukrainian side in previous exchanges, in which they did everything they could to avoid taking over the fallen soldiers.

Given this history, it is hardly surprising that on June 6 - the day of the agreed handover - Ukraine refused to accept the dead without explanation. And this was after these 1,200 dead had been transported from Rostov-on-Don in southern Russia to the site of the planned exchange in Belarus. In doing so, the Ukrainian authorities also made the planned prisoner exchange impossible.

The silence of Donald Trump

The American president is not known for his media restraint. This made his droning silence on the Ukrainian drone attacks and the terrorist attacks on Russian railroad bridges all the more conspicuous. Until June 4, the American president

said practically nothing about an attack that the attacked Russian Federation could have interpreted as an attack on its existence, which, according to its own doctrine, not only entitles but obliges it to launch a nuclear counter-attack on the attacker.

He did not comment on the press reports according to which his Defense Minister Pete Hegseth is said to have followed the drone attacks live online. There was not even a media attempt to credibly refute the palpable suspicion of the involvement of American agencies and those of other NATO countries.

This is not changed by the fact that White House spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said on June 3 that Trump had not been informed in advance about the drone attacks on Russian bombers in Ukraine.

Although the US Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, condoled with his counterpart Sergei Lavrov over the railroad attacks, he did not say a word about the drone attacks.

Such reports and behavior are usually registered very closely by Russian officials and are likely to have fueled Russian mistrust.

On the evening of June 4, it was then reported that Donald Trump had had a telephone conversation with the Russian president. His subsequent announcement on [Truth Social](#) was remarkably defensive by Donald Trump's standards.

Once again, no personal clarification on his part as to whether or not he was informed as American president. This makes the Russian President's advisor Ushakov's account of Trump telling the Russian President that the US was not informed of Ukrainian intentions seem like a diplomatic attempt to save the day. Rescue for an American president who clearly seems to have no control over his country's secret services and army.

Based on the overall situation surrounding the phone call, statements that Trump has given the Russian leadership the green light for a retaliatory strike seem rather strange.

As is well known, the Russian president has told him that Russia must respond. Given the situation, Trump will have had no other option than to agree to what the Russian leadership would do even without him.

It is simply inconceivable that the CIA, DIA and MI6 were not involved in the planning of the drone attacks. Intelligence logistics and securing communications across a huge area of Eurasia in real time are probably beyond Ukraine's capabilities. According to the official statement by the Russian investigative

commission, remnants of "Western explosives" were found at all crime scenes during the terrorist attacks on the Russian railroad on the same day. According to unofficial sources, these were American C4 explosives.

It seems that Tulsi Gabbard, as director of all US intelligence services, was "overplayed" as was her employer.

Time to decide

In one hour and 15 minutes - the duration of the phone call - there isn't too much that can be discussed. Due to the translation, the pure speaking time shrinks to a maximum of half. Both sides will therefore have concentrated on the most pressing issues. Whether Iran had the importance that Trump gave it in his post is for everyone to answer for themselves.

When he took office, Trump promised the blue sky and the distribution of the same within a few days. Russian diplomats knew how to take the new man in the White House seriously and treated him with respect and appreciation. Actually unspectacular basics in human and thus also diplomatic dealings. In Western politics, this is now so rare that people can become heads of state, foreign ministers and even chairmen of the UN General Assembly who seem to have never heard of it.

Since then, and especially in the last few days, Trump is likely to have laid to rest any illusions about the possibilities of an American president reforming the system from the top down. It is certainly not impossible, but.... This Herculean task cannot be accomplished with a policy in the spirit of the donors, as the American presidential system has embodied for a long time.

Not only does around 50 percent of the American political class oppose Trump, the vast majority of EU politicians are also openly against him. This constellation leads to the actually absurd situation that Trump could find more understanding in talks with the Russian president than in the "trusted circle" of the American and European political business and including their own secret services.

The Russian military response to the Ukrainian drone attacks will come, including future attacks. Russia will use it to make it clear to the West beyond Ukraine that it will not tolerate political provocations from Ukraine, NATO and the EU that are translated into military attacks. Not today and not tomorrow.

Russia will also have the NATO summit in June 2025 in mind. There, Trump will have to make a decision: with NATO and the EU at his feet against Russia with all the consequences that this entails, or not to exert a belligerent influence on NATO and thus try to help preserve at least a chance of peace for humanity in the future in perhaps hitherto unusual constellations with others.

A time of decisions is beginning. For politicians, but also for citizens.

ARTICLE TAGS:

Analysis Lavrov, Sergey Rubio, Marco Trump, Donald Zelensky, Vladimir Olejnik, Vladimir
Leavitt, Karoline Ushakov, Yuri Russia Ukraine Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) MI-6
NATO Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) Gabbard, Tulsi