

Why Is Trump Demanding a New President in Ukraine?

(Translated)

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On October 10, 2026, during a meeting with journalists, Trump made a striking statement: "I think it's time for Ukraine to get new president." He expressed his presidential request to Ukraine with the following words: "We said you could do whatever you want to Russia, don't hit the refineries, because that's a world problem that's caused. And [Zelenskyy] wants to make problems for the world," Trump said. "He can do whatever he wants. But you can't do that because we have a world problem. And the problem is caused by the lack of refineries for diesel fuel. So what does he do? He goes and hits refineries...So, he better well stop."

Thus, Trump claims that Ukrainian drone strikes on Russian oil refineries are causing a fuel shortage in the global market and leading to a rise in global diesel prices.

Kyiv asserts that attacks on Russian refineries are among the most effective ways to deprive the Kremlin of export revenues and restrict fuel supplies to the Russian army. Therefore, despite American warnings—and following a two-day pause—Ukraine resumed its attacks on Russian oil refineries, citing ongoing Russian strikes as justification, which has further provoked Trump's displeasure.

When examining the reasons behind Trump's new round of attacks on Ukraine, and Zelenskyy in particular, the following aspects must be considered: If Trump truly wanted to stand by Russia in this conflict and end it, he could have used more effective tools to crush the Ukrainian president's position by taking harsher measures such as:

- Imposing a complete ban on American weapons to Ukraine, meaning a total prohibition on the sale of any American components or missiles, even by intermediary European countries.
- Imposing a complete intelligence blackout, meaning Ukraine would be completely cut off from all US satellite data, targeting systems, and coordination.
- Imposing secondary sanctions on Ukraine or European companies, which are sanctions on third countries for funding the Ukrainian defense industry.
- Completely halting Starlink services throughout Ukraine, both military and civilian. Currently, a strict speed limit for military stations remains in place—up to 161 km/h—which prevents the direct use of stations against fast-attack aircraft and medium- to long-range jet drones.

All these pressure tools—or more accurately, the fact that they are not being used—succinctly and expressively summarize Trump's words to Zelenskyy: "We said you could do whatever you want to Russia, don't hit the refineries..."

The latest pressure tool—restricting the operation of the military version of Starlink so that Ukraine becomes technically incapable of launching long-range strikes on oil refineries deep within Russian territory—indicates that the goal of Trump's recent activity is not to end the war, but to achieve other gains.

When questioning the interpretation of Trump's behavior, the closest answer to the truth is that America is on the verge of holding its midterm congressional elections on November 3, 2026. For American presidents, midterm elections serve as a kind of test—a review of their performance over the previous two years of their term. But for Trump, the 2026 midterm elections represent nearly everything: control of both houses of Congress, and with it, his ability to push through his chaotic policies unimpeded.

Republicans are not in a good position ahead of these elections. Like Americans everywhere, Republican voters are concerned about the cost-of-living crisis and diesel prices. According to opinion polls, Americans' optimism about the state of the economy has fallen to less than 30%. And about 96% of Republican voters believe the country is experiencing a cost-of-living crisis.

As for the Democrats, they are actively exploiting the issue of fuel prices and inflation, accusing Trump and the Republicans of failing to protect the average American.

Therefore, it is essential for Trump and his campaign to find someone outside America to blame for the rise in fuel prices and to show that Trump is taking urgent measures to save America's budget.

In light of this, Ukraine's strikes on Russian refineries became an ideal target to serve as justifications for Trump's campaign. Thus, Trump attempted to shift the focus from the consequences of his own foreign policy (including the war on Iran, which also led to rising oil prices) to Zelenskyy's actions.

The desire to lower prices before Election Day is what drove Trump to strike a prominent deal with Putin to purchase hundreds of thousands of tons of Russian diesel fuel, defying sanctions.

This is also the reason for the swift announcement of a "ceasefire in the energy field" and the public demand that Ukraine "change its president" or accept a deal. All this aims to create the impression among the American people that Trump is forcefully imposing order, while Ukraine's leadership is preventing it. Trump needs at least a short-term ceasefire during the elections to shield the Republicans from defeat.

Here, it is also necessary to point out important factors that prevent Trump from using all pressure tools against Ukraine, including:

- A full withdrawal of American support would hand the initiative to Europe, which is increasingly building independent supply systems for Ukraine; losing control over these would cause Trump to lose his role as the "primary peacemaker" who sets the terms of the agreement.

- A complete ban on arms sales through European procurement would deprive American military companies of contracts worth billions of dollars—a move opposed by Congress and lobbying groups in America.

- A complete withdrawal of support could lead to a chaotic military defeat for Ukraine, which even Trump's supporters in America might consider a catastrophic geopolitical failure for America itself, similar to the withdrawal of its forces from Afghanistan.

- It is also worth noting that America wants to grant Russia additional funds to continue this war, because this war weakens all of its geopolitical rivals (Europe, Russia, and China), and it is essentially the goose that lays the golden egg for America.

The continuation of the war in Ukraine is a strategic interest for America; therefore, this policy cannot be affected even by overrated presidents like Trump, nor by threats of shifting power in Congress and the Senate from one party to another.

Therefore, the current tension in Ukrainian-American relations is temporary, and after the congressional elections, regardless of the Republicans' results, we are likely to witness a shift in Trump's rhetoric and his return to the policy he has followed over the past eighteen months since assuming his second term in the White House. Specifically, this means continuing the war in Ukraine while systematically shifting the economic burden of that war onto the Europeans.