

# India supports territorial integrity of Ukraine, Modi says in Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy hosts Indian Premier Narendra Modi in Kyiv

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Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (L), Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (R)

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Pushing back criticism over India's "silence" on Russia's war, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday said New Delhi "supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty" of Ukraine.



"We are not neutral," Modi told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy about Russia's war on Ukraine, which started in February 2022.



Modi added: "Our aim is peace and I have come here with a message of peace."



He is the first Indian prime minister to visit Ukraine since the two sides established diplomatic ties in 1991.

Expressing "deep pain" over civilian casualties due to the war, Modi told Zelenskyy: "India stands with Ukraine."

Ever since Moscow launched its war on Ukraine, India has stopped short of condemning Russia's war on its neighbor.

A key ally to the US, India has also had relations with Russia since the Cold War era.

Modi's trip to Kyiv comes weeks after he visited Russia to meet President Vladimir Putin.

"For peace, as a friend, I am ready to contribute," Modi told Zelenskyy, adding that dialogue and diplomacy are the way forward.

Modi said India had adopted two perspectives on the war on Ukraine.

First, he told Zelenskyy, India takes the humanitarian view on the needs of Ukrainians.

Modi said, seeking to justify India's silence since the war began over 2 1/2 years ago.

Stressing New Delhi's position, Modi said: "This is our conviction and our commitment that we respect the support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity" of Ukraine.

Citing his previous statement that "this is not an era of war," Modi reiterated: "Problems cannot be resolved on the battlefield, and only way is dialogue and diplomacy."

"Both sides will have to sit together to look for ways to come out of this crisis," he told Zelenskyy.

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