



Pope urges Ukraine to negotiate

Description

WORLD : The Ukrainian government should find the courage to end the conflict with Russia through negotiations, Pope Francis told Switzerland's RSI news agency in an interview published on Saturday.

Host Lorenzo Buccella asked the pontiff about those "calling for the courage of surrender and the white flag" and those arguing that surrendering would legitimize the use of force on the international arena.

"It is one interpretation," the pope said. "But I think that the strongest one is the one who sees the situation, who thinks about the people and has the courage of the white flag, and the one who negotiates."

"When you see that you are defeated, that things are not going well, you have to have the courage to negotiate," Francis argued, adding that "negotiation is never about surrendering, but the courage of not leading the country to suicide."

The later the negotiations, the worse the result for Ukraine – Hungary

"You may be ashamed, but how many deaths will there be in the end? Negotiate in time, look for countries to mediate."

[The pontiff](#) added that many countries want to help end the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which entered its third year in February.

Ukraine and its Western backers insist that a peace settlement can only be achieved on Kiev's terms and have vowed to continue to deliver weapons to Ukraine for "as long as it takes." Russia, meanwhile, has stressed that no amount of foreign aid will change the course of the fighting.

Meaningful peace negotiations between Moscow and Kiev effectively broke down in the spring of 2022, with both sides accusing each other of making unrealistic demands.

[Russian President](#) Vladimir Putin subsequently said the Ukrainian delegation had initially agreed with some of Russia's terms during the talks in Istanbul in March 2022, but then abruptly reneged on the deal.

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