

# Ramaswamy pitches way to end Russia-Ukraine war

## Candidate suggests block to membership in NATO

**Phillip Sitter**

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INDIANOLA, Iowa — On the day Russia launched its biggest aerial attack against Ukraine since the start of its invasion, Republican presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy detailed to re-

porters during his Iowa Caucuses campaign how he would negotiate an end to the war.

Ramaswamy has long opposed continued military aid to Ukraine as it fights to eject Russian forces, and he favors a resolution that would allow Russia to keep seized parts of eastern Ukraine it has illegally annexed.

Ramaswamy said his “laser focus is on pulling Russia apart from its alliance with China. That’s the top threat we face.” That means ending Russia’s war

on Ukraine “on reasonable terms that weakens if not ends that Russia-China alliance,” he said.

Russia launched 122 missiles and dozens of drones against Ukrainian targets, officials said Dec. 29, killing at least 30 civilians in six cities across the country. Casualties included children and people who were patients at a maternity hospital and at home in residential buildings.

Polish officials said the same day that what was likely a Russian missile en-

tered their airspace during the attack and then left, the Associated Press reported. Poland is a member of NATO, the joint-defense alliance that includes the U.S.

Leaders including President Joe Biden decried the attacks on Ukraine and called for further aid.

Biden has requested \$60 billion for Ukraine, as well as \$14 billion for Israel, \$10 billion for humanitarian assistance

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**In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, firefighters work in ruins of a mall damaged in Russia's most massive missile attack in Dnipro, Ukraine, Friday, Dec. 29, 2023.** UKRAINIAN EMERGENCY SERVICE VIA AP

## Ramaswamy

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and \$14 billion for the U.S. border. The package has stalled in Congress as Republicans hold it hostage over tougher border policies to stem the flow of migrants into the the U.S.

On the same day as the Dec. 29 attack by Russia, Ramaswamy said in Indianola, “It’s another step in the war. But, I mean, (if) we’re going to have a blow-by-blow commentary, you could be going back for the last two years. The strategic question for the U.S. is how do we end this war on reasonable terms.”

Russian President Vladimir Putin has been privately signaling that he is open to a cease-fire in Ukraine, the New York Times reported Dec. 23, despite publicly saying he won’t back down from the conflict that has been ongoing since early last year.

More than 10,000 Ukrainian civilians have been killed and more than 18,500 injured since the war began, according to the United Nations, in addition to tens of thousands of troops.

Even before Friday’s mass aerial attack against civilians, Ukraine’s leaders have made it clear they do not trust their nation being able to survive next to Russia without security guarantees and ongoing support from international partners.

The attack follows almost two years of well-documented allegations and evidence of possible war crimes by Russian forces against Ukrainians, including bombardment of cities and civilian infrastructure, torture, rape, execution and abduction of children — the latter of which has prompted an arrest warrant for Putin by the International Criminal Court.

In July 2023, NATO leaders present-

ed a plan for Ukraine to join the military alliance on what Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said was an “absurd” and vague timeline.

“For Russia, this means motivation to continue its terror,” he said.

Ramaswamy said Friday that reaching an agreement with Russia on an end to the war could include “a hard conversation about the future of NATO, an honest conversation to say that we’re willing to say that NATO won’t admit Ukraine,” but Russia would also need to cease joint military exercises with China.

Ramaswamy said he might make the offer of “reopening economic relations with Russia,” but that Russia would also need to remove nuclear weapons from the strip of territory tucked between Poland and Lithuania and that Russia would have to withdraw any military presence from the Western hemisphere, including from Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba.

“I’m not gonna trust Putin, just as he’s not going to trust us,” Ramaswamy said. “But we can trust each side to follow their own self-interest,” he said.

Ramaswamy’s positions on support for Ukraine and Israel have been criticized by other GOP candidates including Nikki Haley and Chris Christie, who support U.S. aid and say any efforts to appease Russia will only endanger the U.S. by encouraging him to invade other parts of Europe.

*Phillip Sitter focuses for the Des Moines Register on reporting on suburban growth and development in the western metro areas. Phillip also is helping cover Republican presidential campaigns ahead of the 2024 Iowa Caucus. He can be reached via email at [psitter@gannett.com](mailto:psitter@gannett.com). Phillip is on X, formerly known as Twitter, at [@pslifeisabeauty](https://twitter.com/pslifeisabeauty).*