



Biden Readies Approval Of Long-Range Rockets To Ukraine – Russia Warns Over “Red Line”

Description

USA: The Biden administration is said to be intensely debating providing long-range missiles to Ukraine, in what would mark a massive escalation given their ability to reach inside Russian territory. Fresh reports suggest the White House is about to pull the trigger.

CNN [reports Friday](#) that “The Biden administration is preparing to step up the kind of weaponry it is offering Ukraine by **sending advanced, long-range rocket systems that are now the top request from Ukrainian officials**, multiple officials say.” It’s expected likely part of the next large package of military assistance to Ukraine, which will be announced next week.



Image: Defense Visual Information Distribution Service

The system in question which Washington is mulling over is the Multiple Launch Rocket System, or MLRS, capable of firing rocket barrages **up to hundreds of kilometers** in range.

Within the first few months of the war, which is now in its fourth, President Biden publicly voiced a desire to avoid direct escalation with Russia by sending in larger, more advanced weapons systems that would be capable of hitting Russia. The fears are that such systems would lead to a rapid spiraling toward a direct NATO-Russia shooting war.

But that apparently is becoming less of a concern as week by week there's been escalation, in what's increasingly openly acknowledged as a de facto proxy war. What's more is that reports of **Ukrainian forces being encircled in the Donbas**, and perhaps increasingly in key places south, appears to have US defense planners scrambling to **keep the prospect of "victory" alive for Kiev** – but without weighing consequences of escalation.

As *Sky News* points out, Russian state media has issued fresh warnings to the West that long-range missiles supplied to Ukraine forces will [mark a "red line"](#):

So when hosts on news shows respond to recent developments in the war, the content of their statements can offer an insight into the thinking of Vladimir Putin's administration.

*Given this, the threatening nature of one host's reaction to reports the US was considering sending long-range missile systems to Ukraine (see 7.32 and subsequent posts) will be of some interest to observers. **"If the Americans do that, they will clearly be crossing a red line,"** she warned. **"We'll have witnessed an attempt to provoke a very harsh response from Russia."***

But according to [CNN](#), the White House also has its own DoD stockpiles to worry about, which are becoming depleted given the rate at which weapons are being shipped out the door to Kiev.

"Another major concern inside the Biden administration had been whether the US could afford to give away so many high-end weapons drawn from the military's stockpiles, the sources said," writes CNN.

*Russia has of late **stepped up its attacks on suspected Western weapons transfers in Ukraine...***

[#UPDATE](#) Moscow's forces have destroyed a large shipment of Western-supplied weapons in northwestern Ukraine with long-range missiles, the Russian defence ministry said on Saturday <https://t.co/3ym6vxDQ9D>

? A delivery of anti-tank missiles provided by the US in Kyiv in February
pic.twitter.com/VF3Ft7PpZ3

— AFP News Agency (@AFP) [May 21, 2022](#)

Already longer range Howitzers began heading to Ukraine from the US starting last month. At the start of this week Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin refused to comment on whether long-range missiles would be added to the mix.

This as on Friday the UK's Boris Johnson has begun to call for sending long-range systems to Ukraine. He [told Bloomberg](#) that "more military support for Ukraine is needed, **including providing multiple launch rocket systems.**" He noted the urgency is due to the Russians making observable albeit slow **progress in the Donbas.**

Using some bizarre imagery, Johnson further encouraged Ukraine's Zelensky to resist negotiations with Moscow: **"How can you deal with a crocodile when it's in the middle of eating your left leg?"** Johnson said in a Bloomberg Television interview in reference to Putin. "The guy's completely not to be trusted."

by Tyler Durden

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