



Biden Warned Xi Of “Consequences” If China Materially Supports Russia During Call

Description

USA/CHINA/RUSSIA: Update(1500ET): Shortly before the afternoon press briefing, the White House belatedly issued its call readout summary. The Chinese side had called for direct talks between NATO and Moscow to solve the Ukraine crisis, while the fresh White House readout says Biden warned Xi over the “**implications and consequences if China provides material support to Russia** as it conducts brutal attacks against Ukrainian cities and civilians.”

Here’s the full White House [text below](#):

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. spoke today with President Xi Jinping of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). The conversation focused on Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. President Biden outlined the views of the United States and our Allies and partners on this crisis. President Biden detailed our efforts to prevent and then respond to the invasion, including by imposing costs on Russia. He described the implications and consequences if China provides material support to Russia as it conducts brutal attacks against Ukrainian cities and civilians. The President underscored his support for a diplomatic resolution to the crisis. The two leaders also agreed on the importance of maintaining open lines of communication, to manage the competition between our two countries. The President reiterated that U.S. policy on Taiwan has not changed, and emphasized that the United States continues to oppose any unilateral changes to the status quo. The two leaders tasked their teams to follow up on today’s conversation in the critical period ahead.

Importantly, it appears the two leaders agreed that their teams would follow-up on further discussions toward pursuing agreed upon aspects of the talk.

President Biden spoke today with President Xi Jinping of the People’s Republic of China about Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

pic.twitter.com/SnpgobFiPz

— The White House (@WhiteHouse) [March 18, 2022](#)

President Biden, who just passed me in the West Wing, tells me his nearly two hour call with President Xi “went well.”

— Kaitlan Collins (@kaitlancollins) [March 18, 2022](#)

The Chinese readout had said Xi told Biden, “The Ukraine crisis is something we don’t want to see. Relevant events once again show that state-to-state relations cannot go to the point of confrontation. Conflict and confrontation are not in anyone’s interests.”

And according to the latest [from FT](#):

Xi Jinping warned Joe Biden against imposing “sweeping and indiscriminate sanctions” during a lengthy call on Friday as China’s leader fended off the threat of retaliation from Washington over its stance on the Ukraine war.

Meanwhile defense officials say that Russia’s military still has a huge amount of troops to draw on, with the majority of forces still assembled near the border – said to be “still available” – a full three weeks after the initial invasion.

NEW: U.S. assesses that Russia still has approximately 90 percent of combat power arrayed on Ukraine’s border “still available” 3 weeks after invasion: senior U.S. defense official.

Russia assembled as many as 190,000 troops on Ukraine’s border before invading on Feb. 24.

— Jack Detsch (@JackDetsch) [March 18, 2022](#)

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Update(12:40ET): While the White House call readout has been slow to emerge, below is an outline of the call, now concluded, complied by Bloomberg:

- Both Xi and Biden think the video call exchange was “constructive”
- Xi reiterated China’s stance that it would like to provide humanitarian aid to Ukraine and other nations affected, and that all parties should jointly support dialogues and negotiations between Russia, Ukraine
- Biden said the U.S. is willing to keep communication open with China to avoid further escalation of the Ukraine crisis
- Xi said he values the reiteration of Biden that the U.S. will not seek new cold war, not seek to change China’s system, not to oppose China with allies, not to support “Taiwan independence”
- Xi said China-U.S. ties will see “subversive” impact if Taiwan issues aren’t handled properly

- Xi said he hopes U.S. will pay enough attention to Taiwan issues
- Separately Xi said the U.S. side has misjudged China's strategic intentions, and no actions have been taken from the U.S. side to enforce President Biden's positive remarks, leading to the current situation of China-U.S. relations

JUST IN from the [@WhiteHouse](#) – the Biden/Xi call concluded at 10:53am, after 1 hour and 50 minutes.

The Chinese side began releasing a summary of the call 20 minutes before it ended. The foreign ministry will publish the full readout.

— Kayla Tausche (@kaylatausche) [March 18, 2022](#)

Some further emerging details of the call via Reuters wire:

- XI TELLS BIDEN TOP PRIORITIES NOW ARE TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE, NEGOTIATION, AVOID CIVILIAN CASUALTIES, PREVENT HUMANITARIAN CRISIS, AND CEASE FIGHTING AND END 'WAR' AT SOON AS POSSIBLE – CHINESE STATE MEDIA
- XI TELLS BIDEN CHINA IS WILLING TO PROVIDE FURTHER HUMANITARIAN RELIEF- CHINESE STATE MEDIA
- XI TELLS BIDEN U.S., NATO SHOULD HOLD TALKS WITH RUSSIA TO RESOLVE FACTORS BEHIND UKRAINE CRISIS- CHINESE STATE MEDIA

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Update(10:41ET): Chinese state media has issued some initial statements to come out of the Friday Xi-Biden phone call, which the White House said is being held in the situation room after it started a few minutes after 9am.

State broadcaster CCTV cited Xi's initial words to Biden as stressing the relations between countries **"shouldn't resort to arms"** in reference to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Xi reportedly said that **"conflicts and confrontations are not in anyone's interest"** and further that all countries must "value peace and safety". Xi said the crisis in Ukraine "isn't what we want to see."

And importantly, Xi said, "We should not only steer China-U.S. relations forward on the right track, but should also shoulder our international responsibilities." Biden is expected to convey US concerns over reports Beijing is ready to supply military equipment to Russia amid the Ukraine invasion, something which China has rejected.

#BREAKING: President Xi Jinping has told the U.S. the conflict in Ukraine is something 'we don't want to see.' In a video call with U.S. President Joe Biden, China's President said that peace and security are the cherished treasures of the international community.
pic.twitter.com/7eCTStTC8F

— CGTN Europe (@CGTNEurope) [March 18, 2022](#)

CNN reviews of what's on the line amid [the ongoing call](#):

This call — which began at 9:03 a.m. ET, according to a White House official — comes at a potential turning point for ties between the United States and China. White House officials are watching with growing concern the budding partnership between Xi and Russian President Vladimir Putin, and China's response to [Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#) has proved troubling to western observers. [Beijing appears to be neither fully supportive nor directly opposed](#), making for an uncertain stance Biden hopes both to decipher and influence when he speaks to Xi on Friday.

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Ahead of their scheduled 9am (eastern) call this morning, President Joe Biden is expected to warn Xi Jinping that the US is **ready to retaliate** if Beijing is found to be actively supporting Russia in Ukraine, following a week of Washington allegations that China is mulling providing military equipment, including possibly drones, to replenish Moscow's supplies in Ukraine.

Previewing the conversation, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken emphasized Biden will “make clear that China will bear responsibility for any actions it takes to support Russia's aggression, and **we will not hesitate to impose costs**” in a [Thursday news conference](#). Blinken has charged that China is “considering directly assisting Russia with military equipment.”

Blinken said further “it appears that China is moving in the opposite direction by refusing to condemn this aggression, **while seeking to portray itself as a neutral arbiter**.” An example of this kind of mixed signaling is that China has so far withheld calling what kicked off on Feb.24 an “invasion” but has used the words “issue” or “crisis”. At the same time China's ambassador to Kiev this week affirmed Beijing's “friendship” with Ukraine, [vowing that it would](#) never undermine its sovereignty and that it would “never attack” it.



The last virtual summit was held between the two leaders on November 15, 2021. Image: Reuters

Jen Psaki described the call as a chance for Biden to assess “where President Xi stands.” There is also a widespread belief within the US administration that Beijing is prepared to assist Russia with evasion of Western sanctions related to Ukraine. Beijing has of course vehemently denied all of this, [blasting the allegations](#) as but the more Washington “misinformation” and “mudslinging”.

“The absence of denunciation by China of what Russia is doing . . . flies in the face . . . of everything China stands for, including the basic principles of the UN Charter, including the basic principles of respect for sovereignty of nations,” Psaki [said](#). **“The fact that China has not denounced what Russia is doing, in and of itself, speaks volumes.”** Going into the call, Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman said the administration hopes Xi “chooses the right side of history.”

Meanwhile, within 12 hours ahead of the call, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying issued some [choice words lashing out](#) at the US administration’s recent growing accusations: “If the US had truly abided by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, how could it have staged wars without remorse for the people of Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq & Syria...?”

The fiery statement pivoted to this...

“On the Ukraine issue, between the US and Russia, there are scores of countries besides China that are drawing independent conclusions, trying to deescalate the situation, encouraging peace talks in deeds as well as words, and protecting their legitimate rights and interests.”

“Ukrainian people need peace and security instead of weapons and ammunition” she added. And

more...

The claim that [#China](#) is on the wrong side of history is overbearing. It is the [#US](#) that is on the wrong side of history.

— Hua Chunying ??? (@SpokespersonCHN) [March 18, 2022](#)

Just ahead of the Friday morning call, one insightful market commentator [underscored](#) just how high the stakes are in the scenario that relations unravel further over the Russia-Ukraine crisis... “I cannot help myself but to editorialize here and say this is a profound diplomatic misstep, one that pushes China into the arms of Russia — creating an alliance between two Asian nations that are perfectly fit for one another — with Russia providing natural resources and materials and China manpower and technology. **The hubris of American diplomacy to demand China to heel before US policy in Ukraine could end up being a total disaster.**”

Perhaps entirely to be expected, hours before the Biden-Xi call state-run *Global Times* went on the attack over White House [“smear” tactics](#), writing the following scathing critique of Biden’s handling of China over Ukraine:

*Not surprisingly, before the phone talk, **some US officials have intensively made irresponsible remarks and spread disinformation to smear China and pressure it over the Ukraine issue.** Such deeds have become “common practices” of the US before high-level interactions, which are irresponsible and immoral, said the official.*

The English language op-ed [added](#), “China will never accept US threats and coercion, and if the US takes measures that harm China’s legitimate interests and the interests of Chinese enterprises and individuals, China will not sit idly by and will make a strong response, the official stressed, noting the US should not have any illusions or miscalculations about this.”

“Every damn thing I said...”

CHINA: President Biden jokes that President Xi Jinping “remembers every damn thing I’ve said, unfortunately” ahead of his call with the Chinese leader tomorrow.

pic.twitter.com/CcOKewSr5j

— Forbes (@Forbes) [March 18, 2022](#)

More from China state pundits...

You arrogant people underestimate China’s strategic determination. China will not follow the US and the West to sanction Russia. Stop your wishful thinking. China respects the US, and China’s independent foreign policy also needs to be respected.

— Hu Xijin ??? (@HuXijin_GT) [March 18, 2022](#)

Officially the White House has described the focus of the call as about “managing the competition

between our two countries as well as Russia's war against Ukraine and other issues of mutual concern." The last time Biden and Xi spoke was during their three-and-a-half hour virtual summit last November, which reportedly resulted in no breakthroughs on US-China issues, according to statements from both sides.

by Tyler Durden

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