



## Japan rejects US insistence it should sanction Russia based on ‘speculations’

### Description

JAPAN/USA: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and US President Joe Biden

Japanese Kyodo news agency reports that US officials have urged Japanese officials to consider introducing sanctions on Russia over an alleged “invasion” of Ukraine.

The US authorities are encouraging Japan to consider implementing economic sanctions against Russia in the event of an alleged “escalation” in Ukraine, yet the Japanese government speaks against rushing into such measures, media reported on Saturday.

*Kyodo* news agency reported, citing both US and Japanese diplomatic sources, that Washington urged Tokyo to toughen its criticism of Moscow over its buildup at the Ukrainian border.

In its turn, **Japan has reportedly shelved its response to the US request, cautious of possible implications for bilateral relations with Russia, including a protracted territorial dispute, in which Tokyo is “seeking a breakthrough,”** according to *Kyodo*.

At the same time, a government source told *Kyodo* that Tokyo would be forced to take appropriate measures in the event of an alleged Russian “aggression”, but **the government refrains from declaring its intentions on sanctions before an actual “invasion” occurs.**

**The Japanese officials repeatedly claimed that the issue of any particular steps against Russia, if the situation around Ukraine escalates, is speculative and would not be commented on.**

However, Japanese [Prime Minister Fumio Kishida](#) and US President Joe Biden concluded after holding talks in January that the sides have a shared intention “to work closely together to deter Russia aggression against Ukraine” and maintain close cooperation “on taking strong action in response to any attack.”

Tensions around Ukraine have intensified in recent weeks, with the United States and the European Union [raising concerns over Russian military](#) buildup at the Ukrainian border, and NATO urging allies

to enhance their military support for Kiev.

[The European Council](#) announced in January that Moscow would face “massive consequences and severe costs” if it invades Ukraine, with the European and US officials saying that an [unprecedented batch of sanctions](#) is being prepared to retaliate against an incursion.

Russia, in turn, has on many occasions [denied the accusations](#) of military buildup and aggressive intentions toward Ukraine, pointing to [NATO's military activity](#) near Russian borders, which it deems a [threat to its national security](#).

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