



US won't apologize for nuclear attack – White House

Description

US President Joe Biden does not intend to make an official statement while visiting the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, his national security adviser Jake Sullivan said on Wednesday.

Biden *“will be participating with the other G7 leaders in a wreath laying and a few other events, but this is not from his perspective, a bilateral moment,”* Sullivan told reporters aboard Air Force One, en route to Japan for the upcoming summit.

He explained that Biden will attend *“as one of the G7 leaders coming to pay respects”* to both history and the hometown of Japanese PM Fumio Kishida.

As part of the summit that starts on Friday, Kishida has scheduled a visit to the Hiroshima memorial with the leaders of the US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, and Italy. They are supposed to lay wreaths and participate in a tree-planting ceremony at the memorial, built around the only building left standing after the 1945 atomic bombing.

The US dropped two atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945. Hiroshima was struck on August 6, and Nagasaki three days later. President Harry Truman claimed the move saved millions of lives – mainly of US soldiers who would have died invading the Japanese home islands, but also Japanese soldiers and civilians. Critics have argued the bombings were entirely unnecessary, as Tokyo intended to surrender anyway.

In 2016, Barack Obama became the first sitting US president to visit Hiroshima. He did not apologize for the bombing. To this day, the US remains the only country to have used nuclear weapons in war.

Asked about Biden's intentions, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters on Tuesday that the president will pay *“respects to the lives of the innocents who were killed in the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima,”* but that the G7 trip is *“about the future.”*

Biden had planned to follow up the G7 meeting with a trip to Papua New Guinea, which was presented as the first-ever historic visit of a sitting US president to a Pacific island. Along with his meeting with

other leaders of the “Quad” – Australia, Japan and India – in Sydney, this got scrapped due to the ongoing standoff with Congress about the US national debt.

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Date Created

05/19/2023