



## [U.S. Intelligence Officials Warn That Russia May Be Planning a Military Offensive Against Ukraine in the Coming Months](#)

Findings from the U.S. intelligence community have warned that Russia's deployment of soldiers and weapons to areas along its border with Ukraine are indicative of a potential military offensive in the coming months. A National Security Council spokesperson in the Biden administration has stated that intelligence reports detailing Russia's plans involve 100 battalion tactical groups with 175,000 personnel and include armor, artillery, and equipment. Last month, Russia deployed its elite armored tank battalions to its border along Ukraine, and analysts have expressed concern with the risk that Russian aggression would pose to the future of a sovereign Ukraine and the greater stability of Eastern Europe. Based on the findings, some experts have contended that Moscow is likely evaluating how the United States and its European allies would respond to a military provocation and is testing the Biden administration's strategic pivot which includes a greater focus on Russia. This week, U.S. President Biden and Russian President Putin held a virtual meeting where they discussed, among other subjects, Russia's behavior at the Ukrainian border.

In his talks with Putin, President Biden reaffirmed U.S. and European support for Ukraine and expressed a desire for de-escalation and hopes for a diplomatic resolution. He did also, however, communicate to the Russian leader that the U.S. and Europe were prepared to respond to any military escalation with economic sanctions, an action that would be pursued in response to potential Russian military aggression against Ukraine. Not only has Russia deployed soldiers and equipment to the Ukrainian border, it has established capabilities there which would allow it to support an invasion force in a sustained, drawn-out military conflict. These capabilities include supply lines for food, medical units, and fuel. The U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General James McConville, has said that he is very concerned with Russia's posture. The military options available to Russia, according to General McConville, would have devastating consequences for the stability and security of Europe. Additionally, General Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said that there is enough evidence now to cause a lot of concern and U.S. Secretary of State Blinken added that Russia has made plans for possible significant aggressive moves against its democratic neighbor.

As Russia has continued to deploy personnel, equipment, and logistical support lines to the Ukrainian border, it has insisted that Washington provide guarantees that Ukraine will not be allowed to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Biden administration and the Secretary-General of NATO have rejected the notion that Russia, or any country other than a NATO member state, would be allowed to determine the expansion of the alliance. President Biden has declared his administration's "ironclad commitment" to Ukraine and its independence, something which President Obama did not do during Russia's previous aggression towards Ukraine back in 2014. The Biden administration has asserted the United States' support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and warned that military aggression by Russia could lead to severe consequences.

The recent developments along the Russian-Ukrainian border are worrying for issue experts and observers because they resemble those which led up to Russia's 2014 actions in Crimea and later Donbas. Back then, Russia organized a military force at the Ukrainian border, said it had no intention of attacking, and then invaded and annexed two regions of Ukraine. Analysts are hopeful that the specified repercussions for any aggressive behavior will deter potential similar actions this time around.