

# Opportunistic Diplomacy: Biden Embraces Rivals to Isolate Russia

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Global Research, March 17, 2022

Region: [Asia](#), [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

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*Today, the dangers of military escalation are beyond description.*

*What is now happening in Ukraine has serious geopolitical implications. **It could lead us into a World War III Scenario.***

*It is important that a peace process be initiated with a view to preventing escalation.*

*Global Research does not support Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.*

*The history of this war must be understood.*

*The bombing and shelling led by Ukraine’s Armed Forces directed against the people of Donbass started eight years ago, resulting in the destruction of residential areas and more than 10,000 civilian casualties.*

*A bilateral Peace Agreement is required.*

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*Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Anoosheh Ashoori, two British-Iranian nationals held in Iran since 2016 and 2017, respectively, were unexpectedly set free and were permitted [immediately to travel](#)[1] to the United Kingdom today. In return, the British government, in what gave the impression of a ransom payment, triumphantly announced it had settled a £400m debt owed to Iran from the seventies.*

The thaw in the frosty relations between the Western powers and Iran signals that a tentative understanding on reviving the Iran nuclear deal has also been reached behind the scenes, particularly in the backdrop of the Ukraine crisis and the Western efforts to internationally isolate Russia. After sanctioning Russia's 10 million barrels daily crude oil output, the industrialized world is desperately in need of Iran's 4 million barrels oil production to keep the already inflated oil price from causing further pain to consumers.

Last week, Venezuela [similarly released](#) [2] two incarcerated US citizens in an apparent goodwill gesture toward the Biden administration following a visit to Caracas by a high-level US delegation, despite the fact that Washington still officially recognizes Nicolas Maduro's detractor Juan Guaido as Venezuela's "legitimate president." Nonetheless, Venezuela is one of Latin America's largest oil producers and opening the international market to its heavy crude might provide a welcome relief in the time of global oil crunch.

Niftily forestalling the likelihood of strengthening of mutually beneficial bonds between China and Russia when the latter is badly in need of economic relief, the United States preemptively accused China of pledging to sell military hardware to Russia, when the latter, itself one of the world's leading arms exporters, arguably didn't even make any such request to China.

US **National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan** held an intense seven-hour meeting in Rome with his Chinese counterpart **Yang Jiechi** yesterday, March 15, and warned China of "grave consequences" of evading Western sanctions on Russia. Besides wielding the stick of economic sanctions, he must also have dangled the carrot of ending trade war against China initiated by the Trump administration.

The [Wall Street Journal reported](#) [3] last week the White House **unsuccessfully tried to arrange calls between President Biden and the de facto leaders of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates as the US was working to build international support for Ukraine and contain a surge in oil prices.**

"Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the U.A.E.'s Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan both declined U.S. requests to speak to Mr. Biden in recent weeks, the officials said, as Saudi and Emirati officials have become more vocal in recent weeks in their criticism of American policy in the Gulf.

"'There was some expectation of a phone call, but it didn't happen,' said a U.S. official of the planned discussion between the Saudi Prince Mohammed and Mr. Biden. 'It was part of turning on the spigot [of Saudi oil].'

"But the Saudis and Emiratis have declined to pump more oil, saying they are sticking to a production plan approved by OPEC. Both Prince Mohammed and Sheikh Mohammed took phone calls from Russian President Vladimir Putin last week, after declining to speak with Mr. Biden."

To add insult to the injury, Saudi Arabia has [reportedly invited](#) [4] Chinese **President Xi Jinping** for an official visit to the kingdom that could happen as soon as May, and is also considering pegging its vast oil reserves in yuan, a move that could spell end to the petrodollar hegemony.

Trump aptly observed: "Now Biden is crawling around the globe on his knees begging and

pleading for mercy from Saudi Arabia, Iran and Venezuela.” It appears quite plausible in its relentless efforts to internationally isolate Russia, the Biden administration is likely to unravel the whole neocolonial economic order imposed on the world after the signing of the Bretton Woods Accord following the Second World War in 1945.

[The Intercept reported](#) [5] March 11 that despite staging a massive military buildup along Russia’s border with Ukraine for nearly a year, Russian **President Vladimir Putin** did not make a final decision to invade until just before he launched the attack in February, according to senior current and former US intelligence officials. It wasn’t until February that the agency and the rest of the US intelligence community became convinced that Putin would invade, the senior official added.

“Last April, US intelligence first detected that the Russian military was beginning to move large numbers of troops and equipment to the Ukrainian border. Most of the Russian soldiers deployed to the border at that time were later moved back to their bases, but US intelligence determined that some of the troops and materiel remained near the border.

“In June 2021, against the backdrop of rising tensions over Ukraine, Biden and Putin met at a summit in Geneva. The summer troop withdrawal brought a brief period of calm, but the crisis began to build again in October and November, when US intelligence watched as Russia once again moved large numbers of troops back to its border with Ukraine.”

Extending the hand of friendship, Russia significantly drawdown its forces along the western border before the summit last June. Instead of returning the favor, however, the conceited leadership of supposedly world’s sole surviving super power turned down the hand of friendship and haughtily refused to concede reasonable security guarantees demanded by Russia at the summit that would certainly have averted the likelihood of the war.

In the 2001 census, a third of Ukraine’s over 40 million population registered Russian as their first language. In fact, Russian speakers constitute a majority in urban areas of industrialized eastern Ukraine and socio-culturally identify with Russia. Ukrainian speakers are mainly found in sparsely populated western Ukraine and in rural areas of east Ukraine.

Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian together belong to East Slavic family of languages and share a degree of mutual intelligibility. Thus, Russians, Byelorussians and Ukrainians are one nation and one country whose shared history and culture goes all the way back to the golden period of 10<sup>th</sup> century Kyivan Rus’.

In addition, Russians and Ukrainians share Byzantine heritage and together belong to the Greek Orthodox Church, one of the oldest Christian denominations whose history goes all the way back to the Christ and his apostles. Protestantism and Catholicism are products of the second millennium after a Roman bishop of the Byzantine Empire declared himself pope following the 1054 schism between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches.

In comparison, what do Ukrainians have in common with NATO powers, their newfound patrons, besides the fact that humanitarian imperialists are attempting to douse fire by pouring gasoline on Ukraine’s proxy war by providing caches of lethal weapons to militant forces holding disenfranchised Ukrainian masses hostage.

CNN's national security correspondent [Jim Sciutto tweeted](#) [6] today:

“US & NATO allies are sending several surface-to-air missiles systems to Ukraine. A senior US official tells me these systems include Soviet-era SA-8, SA-10, SA-12 and SA-14 mobile air defense systems, w/range higher than Stingers, giving capability to hit cruise missiles.”

Only in the last year, which was incidentally the maiden year of the purportedly “pacifist and noninterventionist” albeit manifestly Russophobic Biden presidency, the US has [reportedly provided](#) [7] over 600 Stinger surface-to-air missiles and approximately 2,600 Javelin anti-armor systems to Ukraine, along with an assortment of radar systems, helicopters, grenade launchers, guns and ammunition, and \$650 million worth military equipment.

One of Europe's supposedly “most progressive nations” since the fall of the Third Reich albeit still a US client, Germany alone has [proudly bragged](#) [8] of dispatching 500 US-made surface-to-air Stinger missiles and 2,700 Soviet-era, shoulder-fired Strela missiles to Ukraine's conscript military and allied irregular militias.

Although the mainstream media has publicly acknowledged NATO member states have provided a total of 2,000 surface-to-air missiles, including Stingers, and 17,000 anti-armor munitions, including Javelins and NLAWs, to Ukraine's security forces, the actual number of weapons sent to Ukraine is many times the number that has officially been admitted.

In an [interview with CBC News](#) [9] on March 8, NATO **Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg** warned that a Russian attack on the supply lines of allied nations supporting Ukraine with arms and munitions would be a dangerous escalation of the war raging in Eastern Europe. “Russia is the aggressor and Ukraine is defending itself. If there is any attack against any NATO country, NATO territory, that will trigger Article 5.”

Reminiscent of the Three Musketeers' motto “all for one and one for all,” Article 5 is the self-defense clause in NATO's founding treaty which states that an attack on one member is an attack on all 30 member nations.

“I'm absolutely convinced President Putin knows this and we are removing any room for miscalculation, misunderstanding about our commitment to defend every inch of NATO territory,” Stoltenberg said.

NATO chief said there's a clear distinction between supply lines within Ukraine and those operating outside its borders.

“There is a war going on in Ukraine and, of course, supply lines inside Ukraine can be attacked,” he said. “An attack on NATO territory, on NATO forces, NATO capabilities, that would be an attack on NATO.”

Besides deploying 15,000 additional troops in Eastern Europe last month, total number of US troops in Europe is now expected to reach 100,000. “We have 130 jets at high alert. Over 200 ships from the high north to the Mediterranean, and thousands of additional troops in the region,” NATO Secretary General Jens [Stoltenberg told CNN](#) [10].

The Russian military had not targeted weapons shipments once they entered Ukraine, a US official told CNN, but there was some concern Russia could begin targeting the deliveries as its assault advances.

On Sunday, March 13, Russian forces [launched a missile attack](#) [11] at Yavoriv Combat Training Center in the western part of the country. The military facility, less than 25 km from the Polish border, is one of Ukraine's biggest and the largest in the western part of the country. Since 2015, US Green Berets and National Guard troops had been training Ukrainian forces at the Yavoriv center before they were evacuated alongside diplomatic staff in mid-February.

The training center was hit by a barrage of roughly 30 cruise missiles launched from Russian strategic bombers, killing at least 35 people, though Russia's defense ministry claimed up to [180 foreign mercenaries](#) [12] and a large number of foreign weapons were destroyed at the training center. The Ukraine conflict is clearly spiraling out of control and has the potential of dragging NATO powers into direct confrontation with Russia, which could then lead to a catastrophic Third World War.

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## Notes

- [1] [Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Anoosheh Ashoori on way to UK:](#)
- [2] [Venezuela frees two Americans after talks with US:](#)
- [3] [Saudi, Emirati leaders decline calls with Biden amid Ukraine Crisis:](#)
- [4] [Saudi Arabia invites China's Xi to visit:](#)
- [5] [US intel says Putin made a last-minute decision to invade Ukraine:](#)
- [6] [NATO sending advanced surface-to-air missile systems to Ukraine:](#)
- [7] [US provided 600 Stingers and 2,600 Javelins to Ukraine:](#)
- [8] [Germany to ship anti-aircraft missiles to Ukraine:](#)
- [9] [NATO chief warns Russia away from attacking supply lines:](#)
- [10] [Pentagon shores up its NATO defenses in Europe:](#)
- [11] [Pentagon push to send more trainers to Ukraine was scrapped:](#)
- [12] [Russian airstrike killed 180 foreign mercenaries at Yavoriv:](#)

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