

Anti-war activists to rally in Washington to demand Biden avert conflict with Russia



Anti-war activists to rally in Washington to demand Biden avert conflict amid tensions with Russia?

Washington, February 1 (RHC)-- Anti-war activists will descend on Washington, DC, to demand U.S. President Joe Biden prioritize supporting American families instead of threatening military action and economic sanctions against Russia amid fears of conflict over Ukraine.

CODEPINK, a women-led grassroots organization dedicated to ending U.S. wars, will lead a coalition of anti-war groups in a demonstration on Monday, February 7th, to press the Biden administration to deescalate with Russia and instead divert the resources to provide much-needed support for working families and communities across the United States.

The groups, which also include SPACES In Action and Arm in Arm for Climate, will converge on Black Lives Matter Plaza to ask President Biden to “use the power of his office to pass the healthcare, child care, climate, and anti-poverty programs that our communities need.”

"Why does the president have a 'swift and severe' response only when it comes to war and the military industrial complex?" CODEPINK asked, according to the U.S.-based news website, Common Dreams.

The majority of Americans support diplomacy, not war, with Russia as tensions continue to escalate over Ukraine, a new poll has found. The demonstration comes days after Biden announced he would move American troops to Eastern Europe "in the near term" to bolster NATO allies unnerved by what Western officials claim could be an imminent invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

As many as 8,500 US troops have been placed on heightened alert to prepare to deploy to Eastern Europe -- including units with "combat formation."

The US and its allies accuse Russia of amassing an estimated 100,000 troops near Ukraine's border in preparation for an attack. Moscow denies this and insists on its right to move troops around within Russian territory in response to NATO's eastward expansion.

The drumbeat of war coming out of Washington is in contrast even to the message delivered by Ukraine itself, where President Volodymyr Zelensky has urged the United States to stop creating "panic" as if "tomorrow is the war."

In his first public comments on US and NATO responses to Russian security proposals, President Vladimir Putin said Friday that Russia's main demands had been ignored, including assurances that Ukraine will not be admitted to NATO and concerns about the military alliance's eastward expansion as well as the deployment of strike weapons near Russia.

Meanwhile, leaders of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee said on Sunday they were on the verge of an agreement to impose crushing sanctions against Russia, despite warnings that targeting an economy the size of Russia's will have far-reaching global consequences.

Senator Robert Menendez, Democratic chair of the committee, said the senators were closing in on a package for Russia including what he called "the mother of all sanctions." "There is an incredibly strong bipartisan resolve to have severe consequences for Russia if it invades Ukraine and in some cases for what it has already done," Menendez told CNN.

While Congress is moving quickly and decisively to punish Russia, anti-war activists and progressive voices in Washington wonder why negotiations have been stalled for weeks regarding the Build Back Better Act, President Biden's chief domestic policy agenda.

"Real people need real relief, not empty promises and unmet needs," CODEPINK said in its call for people to join the public action on Monday. "While it's still [a] compromise, there are elements of Build Back Better that ensure health for our families and our environment."

At the demonstration, the anti-war coalition will "be holding accountable the powerful actors who are blocking progress on the people's agenda" as they call on lawmakers to reject the push toward military action in Ukraine.

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