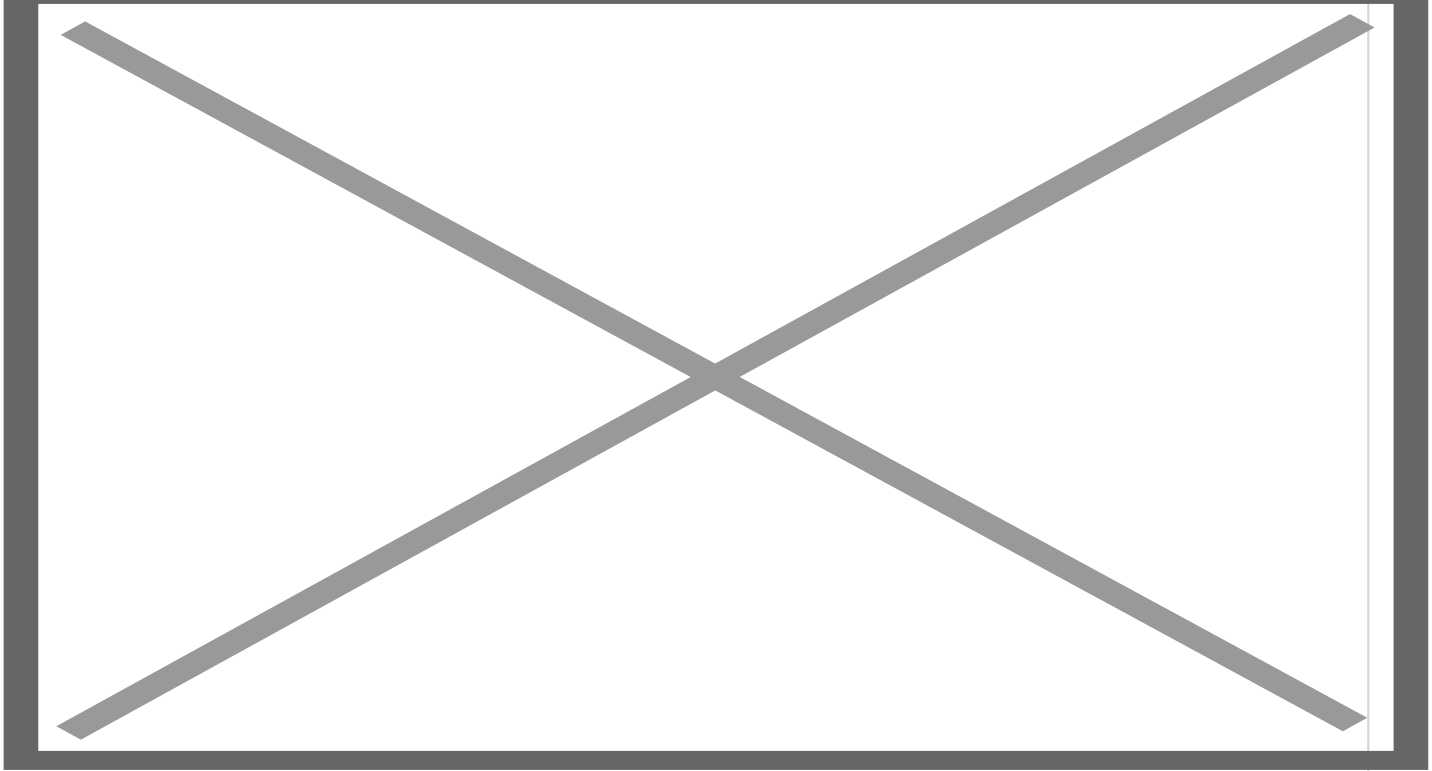


U.S. president holds emergency meeting with military officials in response to Iran's retaliatory strikes on Iran

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The U.S. president held an emergency meeting with military and national security officials in light of the Iranian retaliatory strikes on Iran.

Washington, April 14 (RHC)-- The U.S. president held an emergency meeting with military and national security officials in light of the Iranian retaliatory strikes on Iran.

Daniel Hagari, spokesman for the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), said that around 200 drones and missiles were launched towards Israel by Iran. The vast majority were intercepted by the IDF and its partners, he added.

The escalation forced President Biden to cut short a planned visit to his home state of Delaware, as he rushed back to the White House to meet with national security officials.

The White House later shared a photo of the president in the White House situation room, surrounded by top officials including Jake Sullivan, his national security adviser, and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin.

White House National Security Council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson said Biden was "in constant communication with Israeli officials, as well as other partners and allies." "Our support for Israel's security is ironclad," she added. "The US will stand with the people of Israel and support their defence against these threats from Iran."

The two officials speaking to CBS said that American forces had shot down "several" Iranian drones, but did not specify where or how they were intercepted.

The RAF was also assisting in the region. A statement by the Ministry of Defence said British jets were ready to intercept attacks within range of the UK's existing missions in the Middle East.

Additional help has been deployed, the UK ministry added, including more jets and air refuelling tankers.

Iran's delegation at the UN said Tehran considered that "the matter can be deemed concluded" with its salvo but warned it would strike again if there were reprisals by Israel or its allies.

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard meanwhile said in a statement that "support or participation in attacking Iran's interests will have a fierce response."

Sunak condemned Iran's attack in a statement, calling it "reckless," adding that the strikes "risk inflaming tensions and destabilising the region."

Other nations, including France and Canada, have also condemned Iran and expressed support for Israel.

An administration official told CBS that the NSC meeting lasted around two hours. Mr Biden later spoke to Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister.

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