

U.S. president condemns Trump for January 6 capital insurrection

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Trump supporters clash with police and security forces as they invade the inauguration platform of the U.S. Capitol. (Photo: AFP)

Washington, January 6 (RHC)-- U.S. President Joe Biden forcefully condemned former President Donald Trump on Thursday for promoting a “big lie” that the 2020 United States election was stolen and inciting an angry mob of his supporters to attack Congress on January 6th last year.

In a speech delivered in Statuary Hall, an ornate and marbled chamber that was choked with tear gas a year ago, Biden delivered a blistering attack on Trump as a “defeated president” who today still threatens American democracy.

“We must be absolutely clear about what is true and what is a lie,” Biden said. “Here’s the truth. The former president of the United States of America has spread a web of lies about the 2020 election.”

“For the first time in our history, a president not just lost an election, he tried to prevent the peaceful transfer of power as a violent mob breached the Capitol,” Biden said.

In 2020, Trump had refused to accept the outcome of the presidential election that Biden won by a decisive seven million popular votes and 306 to 232 margin in the U.S.’s Electoral College. When Congress met on January 6 to certify the votes -- a constitutional requirement -- Trump gave a fiery speech to a rally of his supporters and urged them to march on the Capitol.

“You and I and the whole world saw with our own eyes,” Biden said, asking his audience to close their eyes and recall what they saw that day, as he described the harrowing, violent mob attacking police, hunting down the Speaker of the House, and threatening to hang the vice president, Mike Pence.

Thousands of Trump supporters had converged on the Capitol building where Congress was meeting and forced their way past police barricades, smashing windows and doors and marauding through the hallways.

While all that was unfolding shockingly on national television, Biden said, Trump sat at the White House watching. “Here is the God’s truth about January 6, 2021. They were looking to subvert the Constitution,” Biden said.

Since that day, Biden has cast the state of American politics as a contest between democracy and autocracy and he warned on Thursday that voting rights are under attack by Trump’s Republican allies in state legislatures across the country.

“We are in a battle for the soul of America,” Biden said. “I did not seek this fight, brought to this Capitol one year from today. But I will not shrink from it either. I will stand in this breach, I will defend this nation. I will allow no one to place a dagger at the throat of this democracy.”

Trump issued a statement shortly after the speech calling it “political theater” and accusing Biden of using “my name to further divide America.” He repeated claims that the 2020 election was rigged, and said the “big lie” was the vote itself.

The former president, who still holds great sway among Republican voters, had planned to hold a press conference on Thursday but cancelled it.

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