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John Robbins 281-965-6390  
Jun Gai 281-498-4310

Publisher: Wea H. Lee  
President: Catherine Lee  
Editor: John Robbins

Address: 11122 Bellaire Blvd.,  
Houston, TX 77072  
E-mail: News@scdaily.com



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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## Blinken tells Ukraine he will keep working to avert Russian attack

KYIV, Jan 19 (Reuters) - U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday that Russia could launch a new attack on Ukraine at "very short notice" but Washington would pursue diplomacy as long as it could, even though it was unsure what Moscow really wanted.

On a visit to Kyiv to show support for Ukraine, the top U.S. diplomat said Ukrainians should prepare for difficult days. He said Washington would keep providing defence assistance to Ukraine and renewed a promise of severe sanctions against Russia in the event of a new invasion.

The Kremlin said tension around Ukraine was increasing and it was still waiting for a written U.S. response to its sweeping demands for security guarantees from the West.

The pessimistic statements highlighted the gulf between Washington and Moscow before talks between Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Friday that a Russian foreign policy analyst called "probably the last stop before the train wreck".

Blinken said he would not present a written response on Russia's proposals to Lavrov in Geneva but promised "relentless diplomatic efforts to prevent renewed aggression and to promote dialogue and peace".

He said a Russian build-up of tens of thousands of troops near Ukraine's borders was taking place with "no provocation, no reason".

"We know that there are plans in place to increase that force even more on very short notice, and that gives President (Vladimir) Putin the capacity, also on very short notice, to take further aggressive action against Ukraine," he said.

He did not spell out how quickly Russia might move. Independent security analysts say they do not believe Moscow has so far assembled the logistics and medical units it would need to launch an immediate attack.

Russia has also moved troops to Belarus for what it calls joint military exercises, giving it the option of attacking neighbouring Ukraine from the north, east and south.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, Ukraine January 19, 2022. Alex Brandon/Pool via REUTERS

Eight years ago it seized Crimea and backed separatist forces who took control of large parts of eastern Ukraine, but it has consistently denied any intention of invading now.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Western weapons deliveries to Ukraine, military manoeuvres and NATO aircraft flights were to blame for rising tensions around Ukraine.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said he did not believe there was a risk of a large-scale war and reiterated that Moscow had no plans to attack, strike or invade Ukraine.

His comments prompted a rally in Russian and Ukrainian government bonds, hammered in recent weeks by the escalating tensions.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba accused Russia of trying to sow panic in Ukraine; President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the government was doing everything to resolve the situation through diplomacy and citizens should remain calm.

"Keep a cool head, maintain confidence in your strength, in your army and in our

Ukraine," he said.

'HOPES ARE DIM'

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, Ukraine January 19, 2022. Alex Brandon/Pool via REUTERS

Russia says it feels menaced by Kyiv's growing ties with the West. It wants to prevent Ukraine ever joining NATO and for the alliance to pull back troops and weapons from eastern Europe.

"It's not clear what Russia's central demand is or is not. They've put a number of things on the table," Blinken said.

"Some of them are clearly absolute non-starters like closing NATO's door to new members," he said.

Washington remained ready to discuss anything that enhanced "everyone's security on a reciprocal basis", he said, including arms control, risk reduction, and the scale and scope of military exercises. After Friday, he added, the diplomatic possibilities might become clearer.

Former Facebook employee and whistleblower Frances Haugen testifies during a Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation hearing entitled 'Protecting Kids Online: Testimony from a Facebook Whistleblower' on Capitol Hill, in Washington, U.S., October 5,

But Vladimir Frolov, a former Russian diplomat who is now a foreign policy analyst, said Moscow would not be appeased by the U.S. and NATO offer of arms control talks and was seeking a much more sweeping rearrangement of Europe's security order.

"The Lavrov-Blinken meet is probably the last stop before the train wreck. But hopes are dim, the positions are incompatible," said Frolov.

Describing Russia's military deployment in Belarus as a "huge escalation", Frolov gave a dire assessment of the crisis.

"I think barring a U.S. surrender and their delivering Ukraine to Russia, some kind of a military option is all but inevitable now."



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# WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

01/19/2022

## President Biden's Anniversary



thousands of Russian troops have gathered on the border of the Ukraine making the tensions between Russia and the Ukraine imminent. Secretary of State Blinken who is currently visiting the Ukraine and Europe, hopes to resolve the crisis, but it may have little effect. A Russian invasion is very possible.

President Biden to change his current foreign policy. Close relationships and exchange is the trend of the world. We just can't stop it.

Most Asian Americans are supporting the government led by President Biden. If its performance fails to improve over the next three years, the Democratic Party is likely to lose power.

January 20th is the first anniversary of President Biden's coming to power. When we look back at the whole of last year, many people might be disappointed. Covid-19 has fallen into national fatigue, in-fighting against the pandemic in Congress and the Biden administration's attempt to pass a major

bill are challenges that still remain, but Biden is still repeatedly kidnapped by a few of his own democratic senators.

Because of a lagging supply chain and other problems, inflation has reached its highest point over the last forty years. Robbery and looting in department stores are going on in

all major cities. Just last week in the New York City subway system, an Asian woman was killed when she was pushed down by a black man onto the train tracks.

On the diplomatic front, we are still using an anti-China policy of a diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics games. Hundreds of



**Wea H. Lee**  
**Wealee@scdaily.com**

Chairman of International District Houston Texas

**Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee**

Southern News Group Chairman / CEO  
Chairman of International Trade & Culture Center  
Republic of Guiana Honorary consul at Houston Texas



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## Editor's Choice



A dead bird lies on a beach during a clean-up, following an oil spill caused by abnormal waves, triggered by a massive underwater volcanic eruption half a world away, in Tonga, in Ventanilla, Peru. REUTERS/Pilar Olivares



Britain's Prince William and Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, participate in a therapy session with individuals who have experienced the care system, during a visit to the Foundling Museum in London, Britain. Alastair Grant/Pool via REUTERS



A musician reacts during the funeral of late 23-year-old teacher, Ashling Murphy, who was murdered while out jogging, outside the St. Brigid's Church in Mountbolus near Tullamore, Ireland. REUTERS/Clodagh Kilcoyne



An Israeli army Black Hawk helicopter flies during full moon off the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, near the Israeli border with Gaza, as seen from Ashkelon, Israel. REUTERS/Amir Cohen



An American Airlines commercial aircraft flies past a cell phone tower as it approaches to land at John Wayne Airport in Santa Ana, California. REUTERS/Mike Blake



Officers in protective suits leave a closed pet shop in Mong Kok district after a hamster cull was ordered to curb the coronavirus outbreak, in Hong Kong, China. REUTERS/Lam Yik



## Group