

# US wants war in Ukraine, Russia charges at UN debate

Patrick Martin  
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Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia accused the United States of “whipping up tensions” and seeking to provoke a Russian invasion of Ukraine, in a debate at the United Nations Security Council over the mounting crisis in Eastern Europe.

“The discussion about a threat of war is provocative in and of itself,” he said. Turning to US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, he continued, “You are almost pulling for this. You want it to happen. You’re waiting for it to happen, as if you want to make your words become a reality.”

Nebenzia was referring to the obvious desire of the Biden administration to use a manufactured war scare to divert social tensions at home, but he said nothing about the domestic political considerations driving the foreign policy of US imperialism.

More than 900,000 Americans have died of COVID-19 since the pandemic erupted two years ago, and there is mounting popular anger over the continued drive by corporate America and its two political parties to force through a reopening of schools and workplaces to maximize the extraction of profit from the working class.

He continued, criticizing the statements from US officials about imminent war, which have destabilized the economy of Ukraine. “This despite the fact that no threat of a planned invasion into Ukraine from the lips of any Russian politician or public figure over all of this period has been made. No threat has been made. All along we’ve been categorically rejecting such plans, and we are going to do this right now. Everybody who claims the opposite is misleading you.”

He went on to argue that the Western powers had instigated the conflict between Ukraine and Russia, when they “provoked and supported the 2014 bloody anti-constitutional coup bringing to power nationalists,

Russophobes, fascists, Nazis. ... They are making heroes out of people who fought on the side of Hitler, who destroyed Jews, Poles, Ukrainians and Russians.”

He challenged the US delegation, “Since our American colleagues convened us today let them show us any evidence apart from this narrative that Russia is intending to attack Ukraine. We do recall this since the Secretary of State Colin Powell in this very room waved around a vial with an unidentified substance as so-called evidence of the presence of WMDs in Iraq. They didn’t find any weapons but what happened in that country is well known to one and all.”

Ambassador Nebenzia went on to indict the hypocrisy of the United States and its allies, who criticized Russia’s movement of troops on its own soil, while remaining silent about American military operations all over the world. “The Americans hold the record for having troop presence outside their territory,” he said sarcastically. “American troops, advisers and weapons including nuclear weapons are frequently deployed thousands of kilometers, and we’re not even talking about the fact that the military centers of the US have killed hundreds of thousands of civilians in places where they were supposed to be bringing peace.”

He cited the routine US use of force against other countries without the authorization of the Security Council and widespread deployment of American military forces around the world: “There is incontrovertible evidence on the internet that there are 750 US bases in more than 80 countries of the world. The overall number deployed of US troops, this is 175,000 troops deployed abroad.”

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield was clearly on the defensive when she addressed the Security Council, arguing that the Russian ambassador

was engaged in “false equivalency.” She claimed, “there are no plans to weaken Russia,” although such plans are openly discussed in the American media and in the U.S. Congress.

She claimed that it was the movement of Russian troops and Russia’s demands for security guarantees, such as an assurance that Ukraine would not join NATO and would not host foreign troops, that were provocative, not the US campaign of war hysteria.

Thomas-Greenfield made no effort to rebut Nebenzia’s sallies about US lies before the invasion of Iraq or its massive international military deployment, since the facts are unassailable and make nonsense of US declarations that no country has the right to overthrow the government of another or redraw international borders.

China’s ambassador restated his government’s opposition to a Security Council session on Ukraine and rejected the US claim that Russian troop movements “posed a threat to international peace.” Given Russian assurances that there are no plans for military actions and Ukraine’s assertions along similar lines, “What we urgently need now is quiet diplomacy but not microphone diplomacy.”

While all 15 members of the Security Council spoke in the course of the two-hour debate, only a handful echoed US charges of imminent Russian aggression against Ukraine. Most of those who spoke called for continued negotiations and backed the so-called Normandy process, in which leaders of France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine have ongoing discussions about the conflict which began with the 2014 right-wing coup in Kyiv.

The US and Britain pushed for the Security Council debate on Ukraine to be held on January 31 because Russia takes the rotating presidency of the council for the month of February and has already scheduled a review of ongoing negotiations through the Minsk process, an effort to bring about a ceasefire in the civil war in eastern Ukraine between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian government forces, which has gone on for nearly eight years.

The Council voted to schedule the debate, a procedural motion which is not subject to the veto of the five permanent members. The vote was 10-2 with three members abstaining. China and Russia opposed holding the debate, while Kenya, India and Gabon

abstained. Nine votes were required for passage.

The continuing tensions were manifested when four countries which had been invited to attend the Security Council session were invited to speak: Ukraine, Belarus, Poland and Lithuania. Three made rabid anti-Russian speeches, while Belarus is aligned with Moscow. Nebenzia left the council chamber as the Ukrainian Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya started to speak.

Despite the blistering indictment of US hypocrisy and lies delivered by its UN ambassador, the Russian government of President Vladimir Putin has no other policy than seeking some sort of accommodation with the imperialist powers, seeking to play off France and Germany against the United States. Representing the interests of the thoroughly corrupt Russian billionaire oligarchs who built their personal fortunes out of the collapse of the Soviet Union, through massive theft of state resources, Putin can make no popular appeal to antiwar sentiment either in the US, Europe, or for that matter, within Ukraine and Russia.

US-Russia talks will continue Tuesday with a scheduled telephone discussion between Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. There are also ongoing discussions in the Normandy framework and back-channel discussions between Ukraine and Russia.

NATO military maneuvers directed against Russia continue at an accelerated pace, including US Air Force refueling practice conducted over northern Finland, as well as Russian naval maneuvers in the Black Sea.

There are also press reports in Russia and elsewhere saying that, in the wake of Ukrainian President Zelensky’s statements criticizing the campaign of war hysteria on the grounds that it was causing panic and damaging the economy of his country, there were moves to oust him. These were attributed variously to the US government or to fascist elements within the police and military forces, such as the Azov Battalion.



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