

# U.S. IMPOSES NEW SANCTIONS ON RUSSIA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Tough action: A file photo of President Joe Biden at the White House in Washington. AP/Evan Vucci

The United States announced sanctions against Russia on Thursday and the expulsion of 10 diplomats in retaliation for what Washington says is the Kremlin's U.S. election interference, a massive cyberattack and other hostile activity.

President Joe Biden ordered a widening of restrictions on U.S. banks trading in Russian government debt, expelled 10 diplomats who include alleged spies, and blacklists 32 individuals alleged to have tried to meddle in the 2020 presidential election, the White House said in a statement.

Mr. Biden's executive order "sends a signal that the United States will impose costs in a strategic and economically impactful manner on Russia if it continues or escalates its destabilizing international action," the White House said.

## Response 'inevitable'

The U.S. barrage came the same week as Mr. Biden offered to meet President Vladimir Putin for their first face-to-face talks, suggesting that the summit could take place in a third country.

After the White House unveiled its measures, the Russian Foreign Ministry said a response was "inevitable."

"The United States is not ready to come to terms with the objective reality that there is a multipolar world that excludes American hegemony," spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

The latest tension comes amid worries both in the U.S. and its European allies over Russia's recent troop build up on the border of Ukraine.

The imprisonment of Alexei Navalny, who is effectively the last open political opponent to Mr. Putin, has further spiked concerns in the West.

The White House statement listed in first place Moscow's "efforts to undermine the conduct of free and fair democratic elections and democratic institutions in the U.S. and its allies and partners."

This referred to allegations that Russian intelligence agencies mounted disinformation and dirty tricks campaigns during the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections, in part to help Donald Trump's candidacy.

The White House said the sanctions likewise respond to "malicious cyber activities against the U.S. and its allies and partners," referring to the massive so-called SolarWinds hack of U.S. government computer systems last year.

The statement also called out Russia's extraterritorial "targeting" of dissidents and journalists and undermining of security in countries important to U.S. national security.

In addition, the Department of Treasury, together with the EU, Australia, Britain and Canada, sanctioned eight individuals and entities associated with Russia's occupation of Crimea in Ukraine.

In Brussels, the NATO military alliance said U.S. allies "support and stand in solidarity with the U.S., following its announcement of actions to respond to Russia's destabilising activities".

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