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US will double number of long-range missile launchers deployed in Ukraine

The United States is preparing to further intensify its involvement in the war against Russia, doubling the number of long-range missile launchers sent to Ukraine.

In recent weeks, the US has already vastly expanded its involvement in the war, sending a range of top-tier modern weapons systems to Ukraine and directly training thousands of Ukrainian troops on how to operate them.

Over the past month, the US announced that it would be deploying M777 towed howitzers, M109 self-propelled howitzers, Harpoon anti-ship missiles systems, and HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems) medium-to-long-range guided missile launcher vehicles.

On Sunday, Politico cited two Defense Department officials saying the United States was planning to “double the number of High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems sent to the country.”

The US has already announced that it would send four HIMARS systems together with guided munitions capable of hitting targets 48 miles away. The UK is sending three American-made M270 Multiple Launch Rocket System vehicles, and Germany is sending three more.

According to the Pentagon, the US has so far sent \$6.3 billion in weapons to Ukraine since the start of the Biden administration, in 12 separate installments. To date the US has committed:

- Over 1,400 Stinger anti-aircraft systems
- Over 6,500 Javelin anti-armor systems
- Over 20,000 other anti-armor systems
- Over 700 Switchblade Tactical Unmanned Aerial Systems
- 126 155mm howitzers and 260,000 155mm artillery rounds
- 108 tactical vehicles to tow 155mm howitzers
- 20 Mi-17 helicopters
- 200 M113 armored personnel carriers

With each new arms shipment, it is becoming increasingly impossible to deny the reality that the war being waged in Ukraine is a direct conflict between NATO and Russia, pitting the world's two most powerful nuclear arsenals in a standoff that is rapidly spiraling out of control.

The massive expansion of arms shipments is taking place as Russia appears poised to cut off thousands of Ukrainian troops fighting in the so-called "Sievierodonetsk pocket" in the East Ukrainian cities of Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk. On Sunday, the Kremlin claimed to have killed over 50 Ukrainian generals and officers in an attack on a center of the Ukrainian army in the Dnepropetrovsk region, including members of Ukraine's general staff.

The head of the parliamentary faction of the ruling Ukrainian "Servant of the People" party, David Arakhamiya, admitted last week that up to 1,000 members of the Ukrainian armed forces are being killed or wounded every day in the battle in East Ukraine, with between 200 and 500 dying each day on average. Military casualties on the Russian side are also estimated to be in the thousands.

The response of the imperialist powers to this developing bloodbath is to double down on their war against Russia in Ukraine. Writing Saturday in the *Times of London*, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson declared, "We must ensure that Ukraine receives weapons, equipment, ammunition and training more rapidly than the invader."

He boasted: “British instructors trained more than 22,000 Ukrainian troops, an achievement that happened over seven years. Now we need to move faster, training that sort of number in months. So the UK plans to work with our friends to prepare Ukrainian forces to defend their country, with the potential to train up to 10,000 soldiers every 120 days.”

Johnson called for the UK to “finish this war on the terms that President Zelensky has laid out. That should be the definition of success.”

In March 2021, the Ukrainian government declared its intention to retake all of the Donbas and Crimea through military means, and Johnson’s declaration effectively pledges the UK to support an effort to recapture territory claimed by Russia.

Johnson’s statement was just one of a series of demands over the weekend to massively expand NATO involvement in the war. Speaking to the German newspaper *Bild am Sonntag*, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said, “We must not cease to support Ukraine. Even if the costs are high, not only for military support, but also because of rising energy and food prices.”

He added, “we need to prepare for the fact that it could take years.”

The US press, meanwhile, called for even further escalation over the weekend. “Where Are the Rockets for Ukraine?” demanded the *Wall Street Journal*, declaring that “the U.S. hasn’t provided nearly enough launchers to blunt the Russian equipment advantage.”

The *Washington Post*, meanwhile, published an editorial titled “As Russia advances, U.S. and Europe must redouble aid to Ukraine,” calling for “hastening and broadening military aid to Kyiv.”

In an internal message to military service members and seen by the BBC, General Sir Patrick Sanders, the new head of the British Army, effectively stated that the UK had to prepare for an imminent third world war against Russia.

He wrote, “There is now a burning imperative to forge an Army capable of fighting alongside our allies and defeating Russia in battle.” Chillingly, Sanders concluded, “We are the generation that must prepare the Army to fight in Europe once again.”

In the midst of this bloodcurdling rhetoric, the US and members of NATO are only further increasing military spending.

On Thursday, the Senate Armed Services Committee approved \$817 billion for the Defense Department for 2023, a figure \$45 billion greater than the Biden administration's budget request, which was already the largest military budget in US history.

Separately, the US House of Representatives has introduced an "Indo-Pacific Engagement Act," which would provide billions more dollars for the US conflict with China.

Ami Bera, the Democratic chair of the House Foreign Affairs for Asia subcommittee, told the *Financial Times*, "We want to make sure we're not losing focus on the strategic competition of the 21st century—competition with China."

In the midst of a deepening economic crisis and escalating military debacle in the US-provoked war against Russia, all factions of the US political establishment are recklessly driving ahead with accelerating the war in Europe while simultaneously working to provoke a war with China.

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