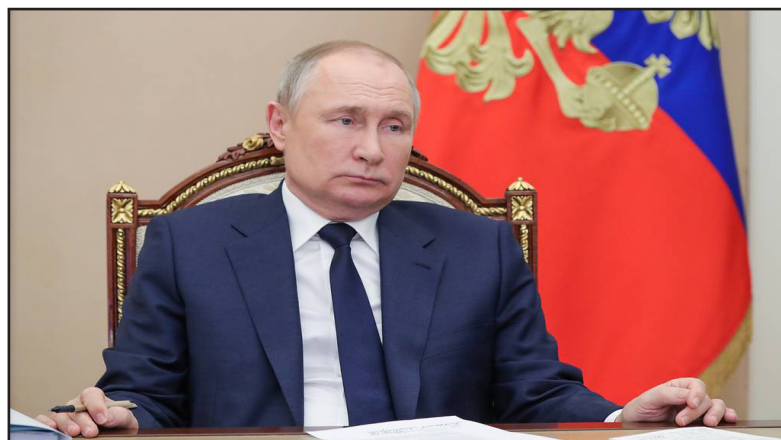


# Putin: West to Sacrifice Rest of World for Global Domination



Russian President Vladimir Putin

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - **The culpability for the global consequences of sanctions against Russia, including possible hunger in a number of countries, rests with Western countries who for the sake of their domination are ready to sacrifice the rest of the world, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at a meeting on economic issues on Thursday.**

He noted that a number of countries are already encountering the threats of hunger and if the sanctions against Russia continue, the EU may also encounter consequences which would be difficult to reverse, TASS reported.

"The blame for this entirely and completely rests with the elites of the Western countries who for the sake of preserving their global domination are ready to sacrifice the rest of the world," the Russian leader stated.

In turn, Russia is confidently coping with external challenges, he added, thanks both to the re-

sponsible macroeconomic policy of recent years and systemic solutions on bolstering the economic sovereignty and technological and food security.

"Our production companies are gradually filling in domestic market niches freed up after unscrupulous partners left, including basic goods, industrial and service equipment, construction and agricultural machinery," the Russian leader continued.

Moscow has repeatedly condemned the U.S. and its NATO allies for delivering arms to Ukraine, insisting that the inflow of supplies will only prolong the conflict.

Deputy Chairman of Russia's Security Council Dmitry Medvedev foresees a number of crises and conflicts as a result of the anti-Russian sanctions and the failed concept of a "U.S.-centric world".

On Friday, the former president took to his Telegram channel to write about the repercussions of the sanctions against Russia,

which he believes will stoke energy, logistics and food quagmires, and trigger other global crises.

"As a result, a new security architecture will be created which will recognize the new reality first de facto and then also de jure: a) the weakness of the Westernized concepts of international relations along the lines of the "rules-based order" and other meaningless Western junk; b) the collapse of the idea of a U.S.-centric world; c) the presence of interests respected by the global community of those countries that are in a critical stage of disagreement with the Western world," he wrote.

EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell announced on Friday that the bloc will offer another €500 million (\$520 million) in military aid to Ukraine.

Speaking on his way to the meeting of G7 foreign affairs ministers in Weissenhaus, Germany, Borrell said he will announce that the European Union provides "a new tranche of €500 million military support to Ukraine."

The new addition will bring the bloc's contribution to \$2 billion (\$2.08 billion) in total.

On Friday International Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that the EU has turned into an aggressive player in the international arena,

According to the diplomat, the EU countries are "rushing exactly along the tracks that NATO is already laying, thereby confirming the trend that they are merging with NATO and will, in fact, perform the functions of its appendage", RIA Novosti reported.

## China Voices Discontent With EU-Japan Position on Disputed Islands



The disputed East China Sea islets known as the Senkaku islands in Japan. China also claims the islands, which it calls Diaoyu.

BEIJING (Dispatches) - **Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said on Friday that a joint EU-Japan statement that mentioned a territorial dispute between China and Japan was an attempt to smear China and interfere in its internal affairs.**

The statement, issued following a joint EU-China summit in Tokyo, expressed concern over the situation surrounding the disputed East China Sea islets known as the Senkaku islands in Japan. China also claims the islands, which it calls Diaoyu.

"Japan and the European Union have been speculating on China-related issues at the conference, smearing and discrediting China, interfering in China's internal affairs and provoking regional confrontation," Zhao told a regular briefing in Beijing.

"China is firmly opposed to this and has already made solemn representations to the relevant parties."

European Union leaders also said on Thursday in Tokyo that the EU wanted to become a bigger actor in Asia, which they termed a "theatre of tensions."

The EU-Japan summit featured European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, European Council President Charles Michel and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

Both European leaders also warned of China's close relation-

ship with Russia.

### Biden Pledges \$150mn to ASEAN With Eye on China

U.S. President Joe Biden opened a summit of Southeast Asian leaders with a pledge to spend \$150mn on infrastructure, security and the anti-pandemic efforts, as Washington seeks to counter China's rising influence in the region.

Biden on Thursday kicked off a two-day summit with the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Washington with a dinner at the White House ahead of talks at the State Department on Friday, Al-Jazeera reported.

While Russia-Ukraine war was on the agenda, Biden's administration hopes to demonstrate that Washington remains focused on the Asia-Pacific as Beijing becomes an increasingly powerful player in the region.

China in November pledged \$1.5bn in development assistance to the ASEAN countries - Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines - over three years to fight COVID and support economic recovery.

Analysts say ASEAN countries remain cautious about aligning with Washington against Beijing due to their reliance on Chinese trade and investment and relatively limited U.S. economic incentives.

## North Korea Fires 3 Ballistic Missiles Amid 1st Virus Outbreak



North Korea has dramatically ramped up testing this year.

SEOUL, South Korea (Dispatches) - **North Korea fired three short-range ballistic missiles toward the sea on Thursday, its neighbors said, the latest in a series of weapons demonstrations this year and one that came just hours after it confirmed its first case of the coronavirus since the pandemic began.**

The launches could underscore North Korea's determination to press ahead with its efforts to expand its arsenal despite the virus outbreak to rally support behind the leader, Kim Jong Un, and keep up pressure on its rivals amid long-dormant nuclear diplomacy.

It was also the first after the inauguration of conservative South Korean

President Yoon Suk-yeol this week. Yoon, who has signaled a hard line against the North, immediately convened a meeting of its national security council.

The missiles plunged into the waters between North Korea's eastern coast and outside of Japan's exclusive economic zone, Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi said. There was no report of damage to aircraft or vessels.

Earlier Thursday, North Korean state media confirmed the country's first COVID-19 infections as Kim ordered nationwide lockdowns to slow the spread of the virus. Kim also ordered officials to bolster the country's defense posture to avoid any security vacuum.



MOSCOW (Reuters) - **Russia on Friday expelled 10 Romanian diplomats in response to similar expulsions by Bucharest. Moscow's foreign ministry added that it rejected Romanian attempts to blame Russia for alleged war crimes in Ukraine. In a separate statement, the ministry said a member of the Bulgarian embassy was also being expelled. The moves are part of a series of tit-for-tat expulsions by Russia after more than 300 of its diplomats were kicked out of European capitals in the wake of its military campaign in Ukraine.**

\*\*\*

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) - **A first-of-its-kind federal study of Native American boarding schools that for over a century sought to assimilate Indigenous children into white society has identified more than 500 student deaths at the institutions, but officials expect that figure to grow exponentially as research continues. The dark history of Native American boarding schools - where children were forced from their families, prohibited from speaking their languages and often abused - has been felt deeply across Indian Country and through generations.**

\*\*\*

CHICAGO (AP) - **One person was killed and 10 were injured in two shootings on Chicago's South Side in the space of six hours, a spasm of gun violence on the hottest day of 2022 so far, serving as a warning that the city is entering the warmest and deadliest time of year. Chicago and other U.S. cities reported dramatic spikes in homicide totals last year; Chicago's 797 homicides in 2021 - its highest toll for any year in a quarter century - eclipsed Los Angeles' tally by 400 and the total in New York by nearly 300.**

\*\*\*

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - **The number of confirmed COVID-19 deaths has exceeded two million in Europe, the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe said on Thursday. The cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the region has surpassed 218 million, and 2,003,081 COVID-19-related deaths have been reported. "While this number is devastating, it represents a fraction of the overall deaths directly and indirectly associated with COVID-19, as the WHO's report on excess mortality during the pandemic has shown," the office said in a statement.**

\*\*\*

LONDON (AFP) - **The United Kingdom (UK) and the European Union (EU) disagreed over how to fix Brexit's Northern Ireland Protocol problem. London said it "will have no choice but to act" if the EU does not show the "requisite flexibility" over the protocol. In a telephone call with European Commission Vice President Maros Sefcovic, UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said her country's overriding priority was to protect peace and stability in Northern Ireland and that the protocol had become the greatest obstacle to forming a Northern Ireland Executive, according to a UK government press release.**

## Wildfires Burn California Mansions, Threaten New Mexico Resorts



This satellite image provided by Maxar Technologies shows the active fire lines of the Hermits Peak wildfire, in Las Vegas, New Mexico, May 11, 2022.

NEW MEXICO (AP) - **Wildfires edged towards mountain resort towns in northern New Mexico and engulfed an enclave of multi-million-dollar mansions in southern California.**

Residents of around 900 houses were under evacuation in coastal California and one firefighter was injured when a wildfire fire torched about 81 hectares in

Laguna Niguel on Wednesday, Orange County officials said.

In New Mexico, meanwhile, more than 300 homes and other buildings have been destroyed in wildfires burning since early last month. As westerly winds picked up Thursday, firefighters torched fire breaks and set up sprinkler systems to save ranches and homes around 24 km south of Angel Fire, a ski re-

sort town.

Crews bulldozed containment lines to stop the blaze getting into Black Lake, Angel Fire, and even the Taos area, known for its UNESCO World Heritage Site Native American community.

To the south, residents returned to the rubble of homes built on land that has been in their families since before the area became part of the United States in the mid-19th century.

All that was left of Michael Salazar's modular home in Tierra Monte was twisted metal. Melon sprouts had come up in his greenhouse, which survived.

The Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon fire began in part with a prescribed burn by the US Forest Service that went out of control on April 6. The blaze then merged with a separate fire, the cause of which is still under investigation.

The wildfire, on track to become the largest in New Mexico's history, has burned over 105,141 hectares, or about two thirds the size of Greater London. The fire is 29 percent contained.

## Sudanese Protests Resume as Moves for Political Deal Falter

KHARTOUM (Reuters) - **Security forces fired tear gas and stun grenades at protesters who rallied against Sudan's military rulers, as diplomatic moves to broker a political solution to a post-coup crisis showed little sign of progress.**

Thousands marched towards the presidential palace in Khartoum on Thursday amid high temperatures and a heavy security presence, in the first major demonstration since the fasting month of Ramadan and the biggest turnout for several weeks.

Crowds in the capital - and others filmed in other cities on social media - could be heard chanting "Kill us, we're not afraid," and "The people's government is civilian." Sudan has been in political flux since months of mass

demonstrations pushed the military into overthrowing former president Omar al-Bashir in April 2019.

After more rallies, the army agreed to share power with civilian groups, but then took over again in a coup in October 2021.

Since then, civilian parties including resistance committees organizing the protests, have rejected negotiation with the military. Military leaders have looked to factions that were close to Bashir to try to build a political base.

Talks organized by the United Nations and the African Union that were expected to launch this week have stumbled, amid heavy criticism from parts of the military and civil society.