

NBC's *Today*

02/22/22

7:00:32 a.m. [TEASE]

28 seconds

HODA KOTB: On the ground. Vladimir Putin sending troops into eastern Ukraine heightening fears of a full-blown invasion at any moment. The U.S. calling it a clear and unprovoked attack during an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council overnight.

U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE U.N. LINDA THOMAS GREENFIELD: In this moment, no one can stand on the sidelines.

KOTB: The White House already imposing sanctions, vowing more to come. But will that be enough and is there any chance of a diplomatic way out of this crisis? Straight ahead, complete coverage from Washington, Moscow, and the frontlines.

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7:03:00 a.m.

10 seconds

HOTB: Well, the move quickly drawing condemnation overnight during an emergency meeting of the U.N. The U.S. and European allies saying it marks a dramatic provocation.

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7:05:29 a.m.

13 seconds

RICHARD ENGEL: The White House fears recognizing the Ukrainian separatists may be the opening move in a wider Russian war, but stopped short of calling it an invasion, convening an 11th hour meeting last night of the U.N. Security Council.

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7:06:54 a.m.

3 minutes and 10 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking News; U.N. Orders Emergency Meeting on Ukraine Crisis]

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE: And to address the ongoing crisis, the U.N. Security Council held a rare, overnight, emergency meeting condemning Russia's latest moves. The U.S. Ambassador vowing to impose more sanctions. NBC's chief White House correspondent Kristen Welker has that part of the story. Kristen, good morning.

KRISTEN WELKER: Hi, Savannah. Good morning to you. That tense meeting overnight at the U.N. Security Council which Russia currently chairs comes as the White House braces for what it says is an imminent invasion by Russia. The President is expected to impose new sanctions today after announcing an initial round on Monday. But Mr. Biden is under pressure with Republicans and even some Democrats calling on him to get tougher with Putin right now. Overnight, an urgent meeting between the U.S., Ukraine, and allies at the U.N. Security Council after Vladimir Putin ordered what he's calling peacekeeping forces into two regions of eastern Ukraine. The U.S. and other countries condemning the move accusing Russia of violating international laws.

GREENFIELD: This move by President Putin is clearly the basis for Russia's attempt to create a pretext for a further invasion of Ukraine.

WELKER: The Ukrainian ambassador delivering a stern warning.

UKRAINIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE U.N. SEGIY KYSLYTSYA: Dear members of the Security Council, the United Nations is sick. That's a matter of fact. It's been hit by the virus spread by the Kremlin.

WELKER: On Monday, the White House scrambling to respond. After meeting with his national security team, President Biden signing an executive order imposing limited sanctions on the Russian separatist regions of Ukraine with more possible today. The administration warning these initial rounds are separate from larger, more punishing sanctions Washington has prepared should Putin invade. Still, Republicans and even some Democrats are calling on the President to get tougher. Close ally of President Biden, Delaware Senator Chris Coons said, "the time for taking action to impose significant costs on Putin and the Kremlin starts now."

SENATOR TOM COTTON [on FNC's *America's Newsroom*, 02/21/22]: What are we waiting on? We need to tell Vladimir Putin exactly what we are going to do if we are going to have any effect whatsoever.

WELKER: For weeks the Biden administration has taken a hard line.

JAKE SULLIVAN [on NBC's *Meet the Press*, 02/20/22]: President Biden has spoken to the fact that if a Russian tank or a Russian troop moves across the border that's an invasion.

WELKER: But when pressed on whether the Russian forces crossing the border into Ukraine met definition of an invasion, a senior administration official didn't answer the question, but noted Russian troops have been in those regions for years. Now, as for those new sanctions, expected today, the administration has said it will coordinate with allies and partners but has not said who will be targeted. All of this comes, of course, as the president had agreed in principle to a summit with President Putin, but only if Russia does not invade Ukraine. This morning, the prospects for that summit or any diplomatic path are growing dimmer by the hour.

GUTHRIE: Much debate about what constitutes an invasion in this context. Kristen, thank you

very much.

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8:00:34 a.m. [TEASE]

23 seconds

KOTB: Tensions rising. Vladimir Putin deploys troops to eastern Ukraine overnight prompting an emergency meeting at the U.N.

GREENFIELD: This move by President Putin is clearly the basis for Russia's attempt to create a pretext for a further invasion of Ukraine.

KOTB: What happens now? And is there any room for a diplomatic way out? We're live from the frontlines with the very latest.

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8:02:39 a.m.

15 seconds

KOTB: The U.S. and its allies have started imposing economic sanctions after Russian forces were spotted in eastern Ukraine overnight. In one of the boldest moves, Germany says it will halt certification of Russia's critical Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline.