

State Dept. refuses to detail 'red line' if China provides support to Russia amid war in Ukraine

China has fallen short of criticizing Putin's actions against Ukraine.

The State Department on Friday refused to detail what "red lines" the U.S. would draw with respect to China's support for Russia amid its deadly invasion in Ukraine.

President Biden warned Chinese President Xi Jinping in a call Friday morning that there would be "consequences" if Beijing provides Moscow with "material support" while Russia continues its deadly campaign against its southern neighbor.

But when pressed by reporters as to what "red lines" the White House would draw the State Department was light on answers.

"I wouldn't want to get into any hypotheticals," deputy spokesperson Jalina Porter said. "What we have done is we've encouraged our allies and partners and the international community to band together to condemn this senseless war that Russia has gotten itself into. I have nothing else here at this time."

China has drawn international ire for its refusal to condemn Russian President Vladimir Putin's deadly and illegal invasion of Ukraine.

A readout from the Chinese government following the call with Biden once again fell short of criticizing Putin's actions and instead said, "China stands for peace and opposes war."

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The statement said that Xi made clear that China advocates for adhering to international law and charters established under the United Nations.

But Xi apparently also called on the U.S. and NATO to “jointly support Russia and Ukraine in having dialogue” to end the war.

China has been widely criticized for its refusal to join the U.S. and NATO, along with nations like Japan, Australia and New Zealand, to hit Moscow with steeper sanctions in an attempt to staunch Russian advances.

Putin claimed in the lead-up to his attack that he was concerned over a growing NATO presence in Europe and attempts by Ukraine to join the 30-member alliance, which would have theoretically permitted military equipment to be closer to Russian borders.

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The U.S. and European officials have dismissed this argument and pointed to a series of steps that Ukraine would have needed to accomplish in order to join NATO.

But China has given credence to Putin’s concerns. On Friday, Xi argued the U.S. and NATO should hold talks “with Russia to address the crux of the Ukraine crisis and ease the security concerns of both Russia and Ukraine.”

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