

War in Ukraine

Top US official makes secret push to win over Ukraine war sceptics

Jake Sullivan to meet India, Brazil and others as Kyiv's counteroffensive faces fierce resistance



Jake Sullivan, US national security adviser, is expected to attend the meeting in Denmark © Getty Images

Demetri Sevastopulo in Washington and **Henry Foy** in Brussels 8 MINUTES AGO

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Joe Biden's top national security aide will fly to Denmark this weekend for an unannounced meeting with representatives from India, Brazil and other countries that have not condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine in a bid to boost support for Kyiv.

Officials from South Africa, Turkey and possibly China are expected to attend the meeting in Copenhagen with [Jake Sullivan](#), the White House national security adviser, according to people familiar with the plans. The list of attendees has not been finalised and could change before the gathering, one of the people cautioned.

Ukraine requested the meeting with developing countries of the "global south", the people said. One of the people added that Washington has been encouraging China, India, Brazil, Turkey and South Africa to attend.

Sullivan will travel with Victoria Nuland, the number-three official at the US state department. A senior EU official will also participate. The White House declined to comment.

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The planned meeting to shore up support comes as Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the Ukrainian president, warned that Kyiv's counteroffensive launched earlier this month to roll back Russian advances had been "slower than desired".

With the [war](#) expected to rage into next year, western officials worry about preaching the virtues of Ukraine's resistance to the converted without making sure their arguments have wider appeal.

"Only little do we realise how much the rest of the world is not convinced," said one European official. "They are not convinced. It's a terrible thing to acknowledge."

Bilateral trade between Russia and China has soared since the full-scale invasion while India is Moscow's largest customer for arms exports and has significantly boosted purchases of Russian crude oil, offsetting western embargoes.

Two people familiar with the plans said the officials would discuss peace principles for Ukraine in an informal setting. One stressed that the meeting was not intended to result in any concrete outcome.

The US and other western countries have backed Zelenskyy's peace proposal — which calls for a complete withdrawal of Russian forces — but remain open to diplomatic efforts by others, including China, to press Moscow into ending its invasion.

The Copenhagen meeting will come after a three-day visit by India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, to Washington, during which he is expected to discuss Ukraine with Biden, the US president.

Sullivan this week said that while India had a different perspective on the war in Ukraine, it would be useful to discuss the conflict with Modi. He added that Zelenskyy had urged Biden to engage with leaders such as Modi.

"We think this actually sends a message to the coalition and Ukraine that we're working to advocate on their behalf with a broader range of countries than just those that show up around the table either in Nato . . . or at the G7," Sullivan told reporters this week, when discussing Modi's visit.

India, Brazil, China and South Africa — the other members of the Brics grouping alongside Russia — have refused to join western sanctions against Moscow while providing varying degrees of support to the Kremlin since it invaded its neighbour.

Another person familiar with the Copenhagen meeting said there was "no information" indicating that China would take part at a high level, but said it was possible a lower-level official could attend to observe the discussions

possible a lower-level official could attend to observe the discussions.

Brazilian president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has said that both Russia and Ukraine are to blame for the war, while South Africa has [stepped up](#) military co-operation with Russia since the invasion.

Turkey, a Nato member that has developed strong trade ties with Russia over the past decade, has maintained a good relationship with Moscow since the invasion while also pitching itself as a broker between Zelenskyy and Russian president Vladimir Putin.

Additional reporting by Felicia Schwartz in Washington

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