

## Moscow accuses Washington of nuclear weapons ‘hypocrisy’

*The US stations its arsenal in Europe, but rebukes Russia for planning to do the same in Belarus, Ambassador Antonov has said*

28 Mar, 2023 08:03



Russian Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missile system. © RIA Novosti

Washington’s criticism of Moscow over its plans to place tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus rings hollow, as it also keeps its own nuclear arms in other countries, Anatoly Antonov, Russia’s ambassador to the US, said on Monday.

Antonov was asked to comment on remarks made by US State Department representative Vedant Patel, who blasted what he called Russia’s “irresponsible nuclear rhetoric,” suggesting that “no other country is inflicting such damage on arms control, nor seeking to undermine strategic stability in Europe.”

In a statement on Telegram, the ambassador said, “US officials have an extremely short memory.”

“It is Washington that has long been systematically destroying the legal basis of bilateral relations in strategic sphere. Trying to find a speck in someone else’s eye, they stopped seeing the log in their own eye a long time ago,” he added.

Antonov cited the US’ decision to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) in 2002, and more recently, from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) and Open Skies Treaties. Washington also failed to comply with certain limits of the New START Treaty, which places restrictions on the Russian and American nuclear arsenals. This led to Moscow suspending its participation in it, Antonov noted.

The US’ response to Russia’s plans to place nukes in Belarus “is a vivid example of hypocrisy of... American politics,” he continued. For the last 60 years, Washington has stationed its tactical nuclear weapons in five non-nuclear weapon states – Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Türkiye, the ambassador said.

“We have repeatedly demonstrated to the world the double standards in US foreign policy... The Administration conveys one message to everyone: the United States is allowed anything, while the rest of the world, especially Russia, is allowed nothing.”

Last week, President Vladimir Putin announced that Russian tactical nuclear weapons would arrive in Belarus as early as this summer, explaining that the move was prompted by the UK’s recent decision to provide Ukraine with depleted uranium shells.

Commenting on the decision, US National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said that Washington has not seen any signs that Russia is planning to use nuclear weapons, while the EU’s top diplomat, Josep Borrell, threatened to place sanctions on Belarus, calling Moscow’s plans “an irresponsible escalation.”

<https://www.rt.com/russia/573717-russia-us-nuclear-hypocrisy/>

From WarNew24/7: <https://warnews247-gr.translate.google.com/amyntiko-symfono-soudias-norvigias-danias-kai-finlandias-sygkrotisan-mini-nato-me-koini-dynami-250-machitikon/? x tr sl=auto& x tr tl=en& x tr hl=en>

**Defense Pact of Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland: They formed a "Mini NATO" with a joint force of 250 F-35 and Gripen fighters!**

Their air forces will be united into a single combat unit

**A new, historically unprecedented defense pact has been signed by the Nordic countries, which is sure to anger Moscow.**

Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland issued a joint statement declaring their intention to combine their air defenses, to the point where their respective air forces would be united into a single combatant unit.

What is called a joint declaration of intent (JDI) by the countries was signed at Ramstein Air Base in the middle of the month, but was only revealed in recent days.

The commander of the Danish Air Force, General Jan Dam, announcing the initiative stated that "**our combined fleet can be compared to a large European country**".

Since this means in principle that each of the four countries will participate in the defense of all in the event of an attack by a common enemy, DefenceNews.com likened the move to the creation of a "mini NATO."

Although the JDI agreement did not mention Russia by name, the entire initiative is clearly part of the ongoing response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

Regarding the number of fighter jets that could be integrated into a wider Nordic force, Lt. Gen. Rolf Folland, the head of the Norwegian Air Force (NAF), put forward a figure of nearly 250 advanced aircraft.

**He also suggested creating a joint air operations center that could include additional United States and Canadian commanders to provide their guidance and coordination.**

*"There is obvious interest in a regional initiative for a joint air command on NATO's northern flank.*

*We know the conditions in the High North well and have a lot to learn from each other.*

*With a total of almost 250 modern fighter jets, this is a large combat force that needs to be coordinated,"* said Folland.

**MORE –**

## Ukrainians given depleted uranium training

Tank crews have been filmed handling controversial munitions in a British military documentary

28 Mar, 2023 00:48



© YouTube / UK Ministry of Defence

**The British Defence Ministry has shown Ukrainian soldiers handling depleted uranium armor-piercing rounds, in a video released to mark the completion of their training on Challenger 2 tanks.**

**Instructors from the UK – and at least one American officer can be spotted in the Ministry of Defence (MoD) footage released on Monday. They spent weeks training Ukrainians how to use the main battle tanks.**

**London previously pledged to send 14 Challenger 2 tanks to Kiev, and some of them have reportedly already reached Ukraine. The US has promised several of its M1 Abrams MBTs, while several NATO members have already delivered German-made Leopards.** All Western tanks require a crew of four, including a manual loader, unlike the three-man crews of Ukraine's original tank fleet of T-64s and T-72s.

**These loaders will have to handle the standard NATO armor-piercing rounds, which are made with depleted uranium rods.** The ammunition has been linked to skyrocketing rates of cancer and birth defects in the former Yugoslavia and Iraq.

When **DU penetrators strike a target, "they fragment and burn, generating chemically toxic and**

**radioactive DU particulate that poses an inhalational risk to people,”** Doug Weir, an expert with the Conflict and Environment Observatory, told [Declassified UK](#). This will be another burden for Ukraine, in a conflict that has already generated “*serious pollution problems*,” he added.

Weir **identified the ammunition in the MoD video as the inert display version of the CHARM3, the 120-millimeter DU ammunition in use by the** British military.

The **MoD told reporters last week that the “impact to personal health and the environment from the use of depleted uranium munitions is likely to be low.”**

In an article published in [The Spectator](#) on Sunday, a researcher at the government-funded Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) think tank admitted that DU is toxic. Russian soldiers should not “*go to sleep cradling a depleted uranium round, or lick the tip*,” Jack Watling joked, adding that the projectile “*traveling at around 1,800 meters per second and burning up as it flies will be more concerning to any target than its radioactivity*.”

The **UK announced last week it would send the DU ammunition to Ukraine along with the Challengers. The Russian Foreign Ministry called the move a sign of “absolute recklessness, irresponsibility and impunity.”**

The **Russian military does not seem concerned about the potential effects of DU in combat. Lieutenant General Igor Kirillov, who is in charge of Russia’s Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defense Forces, pointed out that DU dust will contaminate the soil and wreck Ukraine’s agriculture for decades**, while causing “*irreparable harm*” to the health of Ukrainians, civilian and military alike.

<https://www.rt.com/news/573709-uk-ukrainians-depleted-uranium-training/>

## **UNSC vote on Russian resolution fuels suspicions – Moscow**

*The Security Council turned down a request for an international investigation into the Nord Stream sabotage investigation into the blasts that severely damaged the Nord Stream 1 and 2 gas pipelines last autumn. Russian diplomats suggested that the outcome of the vote was the result of diplomatic pressure exerted by the West on other countries.*

28 Mar, 2023 10:15

**The draft resolution, which sought to establish an international independent commission to look into “all aspects of the act of sabotage” of the pipelines that directly linked Russia and Germany under the Baltic Sea, as well as identify the attack’s sponsors and organizers**, was supported by three countries (Russia, China, and Brazil). No country voted against the document, with 12 abstentions, resulting in the resolution being rejected.

**Vassily Nebenzia, Moscow’s Permanent Representative to the UN, remarked that after the vote “the suspicion [about] who stands behind the sabotage at the Nord Stream will but increase.”**

Last month, renowned investigative journalist Seymour Hersh released a bombshell report accusing the US of having orchestrated the attack on the pipelines. While Washington has denied responsibility, last week Russian President Vladimir Putin said that he “*fully agrees*” with the reporter’s conclusions.

**“The more evidence testifying to the involvement of Washington and its NATO allies [in the Nord Stream sabotage] came to surface, the more vocal the Western bloc was getting about alleged inexpediency of an international investigation,”** Nebenzia added.

**Meanwhile, Russia’s Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Dmitry Polyanskiy, suggested in an interview with RIA Novosti that the West had been pressuring other countries over the vote. “I think that all the others were somewhat afraid to support us out in the open.”**

**Western countries, he added, “made it absolutely clear that they are not interested in a vote that would support the Russian position.”**

Commenting on the resolution’s rejection, US Ambassador to the UN Robert Wood claimed that the Russia-backed draft “*was not an attempt to seek the truth*” but rather sought “*to discredit the work*” of ongoing investigations by Sweden, Denmark, and Germany and “*prejudice any conclusions*” these countries might reach.

**Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova also weighed in, saying that an investigation into the sabotage “will directly harm” the US and its allies, as it threatens to reveal the truth about the incident.** <https://www.rt.com/russia/573728-un-vote-nord-stream/>

# China wants Nord Stream attackers ‘brought to justice’

Beijing has accused Washington of “double standards” over its stance on investigating the sabotage of the pipelines

28 Mar, 2023 10:49

The Chinese Foreign Ministry has said the saboteurs of the Nord Stream pipelines must face consequences, as it condemned America’s failure to support a UN-led investigation into the incident. A Russian-sponsored resolution for an international probe did not pass a vote at the UN Security Council earlier this week.

Speaking at a media briefing on Tuesday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning claimed that Washington is “keen to carry out so-called ‘investigations’ of developing nations, yet is secretive on this incident.” The diplomat argued that the US attitude was an example of “obvious double standards,” and suggested that officials in Washington were “afraid of” something. Mao added that China hopes the perpetrators will be “brought to justice” as soon as possible.

China, Russia, and Brazil backed the draft resolution for an international Nord Stream investigation in a UN Security Council vote on Monday, although 12 other members abstained. If adopted, the resolution would have requested the secretary general to establish a commission to conduct a “comprehensive, transparent, and impartial international investigation” of the incident, which happened in September last year.

The US claimed the proposal was intended to undermine the national investigations being run by Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. Germany was the intended recipient of Russian natural gas pumped through the sabotaged pipelines. Denmark and Sweden are conducting probes as the explosions which ruptured the energy link occurred in their territorial waters.

China’s deputy representative to the UN, Geng Shuang, argued that there was no obstacle to holding an international investigation in parallel with national ones.

Geng also noted that the trio of European nations had already had six months to conduct their probes. Beijing expects them “to increase their sense of urgency, report the progress of the investigations to the Security Council in a timely and regular manner, and find out and announce the results of the investigations as soon as possible,” the Chinese delegation said in a statement.

Veteran investigative journalist Seymour Hersh claimed last month that the attack on the Nord Stream pipelines was ordered by US President Joe Biden and was conducted jointly by America and Norway. Both nations have denied those allegations. Russian President Vladimir Putin said last week that he “fully agreed” with Hersh’s conclusions.

<https://www.rt.com/news/573727-china-nord-stream-un/>



## North Korea tests ‘nuclear drone’

Pyongyang has claimed that the “secret weapon” can create a “radioactive tsunami”

28 Mar, 2023 02:46

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is seen with a missile at an undisclosed location in North Korea, March 27, 2023. © AP / Korean Central News Agency

North Korea has shared details about two of its latest weapons tests, both involving simulated nuclear strikes. Seoul also reported that the DPRK fired off multiple ballistic missiles into the sea, just hours before a US warship is set to arrive in South Korea.

Pyongyang said it conducted tests on its new “nuclear unmanned underwater attack boat” between March 25 and 27, stating the “test combat unit” was “accurately detonated underwater.”

Previously dubbed a secret weapon, North Korea’s military has claimed that the platform can create a “radioactive tsunami” using underwater explosions and “annihilate enemy ship groups” without detection, though has revealed few details about the UAV.

The weapon remained submerged for more than 41 hours and was detonated in waters off North Korea’s east coast, the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) [reported](#) on Tuesday.

In another recent drill, tactical ballistic missiles were loaded with munitions “simulating nuclear warheads” to test the military’s “firing preparations,” followed by a “virtual nuclear attack” in which the test warheads were detonated 500 meters above their target. The commander of the launch unit said the drill affirmed that “if we fight, we will surely annihilate the enemy,” according to KCNA.



**During a meeting of the ruling Workers' Party on Monday, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un stressed the need to "qualitatively strengthen the DPRK's nuclear forces,"** and said he had "reviewed the prepared nuclear counterattack operation plan" in the event of a conflict.

The latest tests come amid **soaring tensions between Pyongyang, and Washington and Seoul**, with the US leading a flurry of major military drills in the region in recent months, which the DPRK has repeatedly condemned as preparation for an attack. In retaliation, North Korea has carried out a record number of weapons tests, including several intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), drawing condemnation from the US.

Earlier on Monday, South Korea's military said it detected two short-range ballistic missiles fired from the DPRK's North Hwanghae province. Both were reportedly launched in the direction of Japan, but landed outside the country's exclusive economic zone, according to officials in Tokyo.

"We will keep a close eye on North Korea's various activities and maintain firm readiness posture based on the capability to overwhelmingly respond to any provocations," the South Korean military said in a statement.

**Despite repeated warnings from Pyongyang, however, the military added that it would continue its scheduled drills with the US, which sent an aircraft carrier set to dock at a South Korean naval base on Tuesday.** The warship will take part in a joint exercise with South Korean forces in waters off its east coast before it arrives, the latest in a long list of [similar drills](https://www.rt.com/news/573711-north-korea-nuclear-drone/). <https://www.rt.com/news/573711-north-korea-nuclear-drone/>

## **Russia and India eye closer business ties ahead of St. Petersburg International Economic Forum**

**Plans are being made to push bilateral trade to \$50 billion this year following a sharp uptick in energy and fertilizer imports by New Delhi**



By Joydeep Sen Gupta, Asia Editor

28 Mar, 2023 16:33

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin. © Sputnik/Michael Metzler

**New Delhi is playing host this week to the 'Russia-India Business Forum: Strategic Partnership for Development and Growth'.**

**The gathering, taking place on Wednesday and Thursday, is part of the foreign events program under the auspices of the St. Petersburg International Economic**

**Forum (SPIEF), whose 26th iteration will be held from June 14 to 17.**

**Russia is one of India's traditional partners and is seeking to further bolster bilateral ties by forging high-tech alliances in various fields of convergence, including IT, cybersecurity, industry and manufacturing, smart cities, transport, logistics, and healthcare.** Moscow and New Delhi plan to push bilateral trade to \$50 billion this year, from a record \$31 billion last year following a sharp uptick in energy and fertilizer imports by India.

The **planned collaborations that will be discussed at the Russia-India forum are expected to support Russian companies as sanctions and trade restrictions force them to pivot away from the West** and focus on new markets. "The Russia-India cooperation format is one of the drivers of region-wide efforts to improve the architecture of inter-state relations in the Asia-Pacific Region (APR). The forum is designed to strengthen business ties between the Russian and Indian business communities, to support our businesses entering the Indian market and to acquaint Indian partners with specific export offers," Anton Kobayakov, an adviser to Russian President Vladimir Putin, said in a [press release](#).

**Representatives of Russian and Indian government agencies, commercial and industrial organizations will be taking part in the two-day event. Veronika Nikishina, general director of the Russian Export Center (REC),** one of the organizers of the event, said: "As part of the Forum, the REC will be carrying out a high-tech business mission, in which over 20 Russian companies from the IT sector, business process management, mechanical engineering, construction, energy and medicine will be taking part. A number of Russian companies have products and solutions that are unique and often unrivaled throughout the world. The REC will be arranging B2B [business-to-business] negotiations for them with potential Indian buyers and partners."

**The forum will host a panel discussion titled 'Technological Alliances in the Greater Eurasia', which will seek to find common ground between Russia and India** in high tech, one of the most in-demand areas of mutual interest as the two countries seek to break out of the digital monopoly belt of Western powers. India's IT

sector is expected to grow to \$245 billion this year, according to the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM), a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group.

*“The visiting session format is always very effective. During the event, participants exchange views on opportunities and prospects for economic cooperation, the specifics of legislative and executive government activities to ensure a favorable business climate and create the necessary legal conditions for businesses to operate,”* said Alexey Valkov, director of SPIEF.

**From WarNew24/7:** <https://warnews247-gr.translate.goog/efp-kai-antitromokratiki-exarthrosan-diktyo-tromokraton-pakistanoi-oi-syllifthentes-schediazan-epithesi-se-israilino-estiatorio/? x tr sl=auto& x tr tl=en& x tr hl=en>

## Arrests of Pakistani terrorists by EYP & Anti-Terrorism: They were planning a bloodbath in a Jewish restaurant-synagogue in Psirri (upd)

The terrorists were preparing a gas attack, assassinations and explosions

28/03/2023 - 17:48 in Main Topics , Homeland Security

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**Following coordinated actions by the Greek Police and the National Intelligence Service (NIS), a terrorist network was dismantled that, with guidance from abroad, was planning strikes against carefully selected targets in Greek territory.**

On the basis of information collected and processed by the National Intelligence Service, coordinated operations of the EYP and the Anti-Terrorist Service (D.A.E.B.) were carried out in various areas of the territory.

**In the context of these coordinated actions of the two Services, two Pakistanis, 29 and 27 years old, were arrested as accomplices of the terrorist-leader, who was active abroad, as the "brain" of the network.**

**The two Pakistanis arrested resided in Zakynthos and Sparta and are said to have been making trips to Athens to plan their terror attacks.**

The agents of the National Intelligence Service have been monitoring this particular case for months and passed the crucial information to the Counter Terrorism when they decided that arrests should be made before a terrorist attack can be carried out. According to information, several house searches have been carried out, while so far no weapons have been found.

### The announcement of EL.AS

**They aimed not only at the loss of innocent citizens, but also at undermining the country's sense of security, simultaneously damaging its institutions and threatening its international relations.**

Analysis of the seized information and digital data revealed and confirmed that the members of the network:

1. They had already chosen as the target of the attack, a building of special semiotics,
2. They had scouted the area and planned the attack,

**MORE –**

**From WarNew24/7:** <https://warnews247-gr.translate.goog/polemos-israil-iran-entos-elladas-m-netaniachou-i-mosant-voithise-tin-efp-i-techerani-organose-to-aimatokylisma/? x tr sl=auto& x tr tl=en& x tr hl=en>

## Israel-Iran war inside Greece - M.Netanyahu: Mossad helped the EYP in arresting the terrorists - The strike was ordered by Tehran

Weapons found - With Kalashnikovs they would "gas" innocent people in the restaurant

28/03/2023 - 21:18 in Main Topics , Homeland Security

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Following the revelation that EL.AS and EYP dismantled a terrorist network preparing attacks in Greece, Israel's intelligence agency Mossad, according to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office, helped Greek authorities prevent two Pakistanis from attempting to carry out an attack on Israelis and Jewish targets in Greece.

As relayed by the Israeli prime minister's office, the Mossad says the *"serious case"* disclosed earlier today is part of Iran's ongoing efforts to target Israelis and Jews.

*"After the investigation began in Greece, the Mossad helped uncover information about the methods of operation and the connection of the suspects to Iran,"* the intelligence agency said.

Also, according to the Jerusalem Post newspaper, the Mossad helped clarify how Iranian terrorist operations are carried out around the world.

As the Mossad points out, *"together with our intelligence partners, we will take active action to prevent Iran from causing trouble around the world."*

*"This is yet another example of Iran's attempt to use terrorism against Israeli and Jewish targets abroad,"* the intelligence agency said, according to the Times of Israel.

Israel's foreign minister, Eli Cohen, thanked the Greek government and the Greek authorities in a message on Twitter after the terrorist network was dismantled.

Israel's foreign minister, Eli Cohen, emphasized that terrorism *"is a common enemy and fighting it is our first priority."*

*"The Ayatollah government in Tehran is exporting terrorism to the Middle East and the entire world, and only a firm and common stance will stop the terrorist activities of the Iranian regime,"* continued the

## Coalition, opposition hold first talks on judicial overhaul with President Herzog

*Dialogue held in 'positive atmosphere'; more opposition parties set to join Wednesday; many protest leaders urge Gantz, Lapid to withdraw because legislation has not been abandoned*

By [Ash Obel](#) 28 March 2023, 10:46 pm



*President Isaac Herzog hosts delegations from Likud, Yesh Atid and National Unity for judicial negotiations at his residence in Jerusalem, March 28, 2023. (Kobi Gideon/GPO)*

**Representatives from coalition and opposition parties gathered at the President's Residence in Jerusalem on Tuesday evening to begin negotiations over the government's contentious judicial overhaul plans, in the first face-to-face talks between the sides after three turbulent months of a legislative blitz and nationwide mass protests.**

**The negotiations came after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday agreed to pause the**

**controversial legislation**, to give a chance for dialogue on the legislation that Justice Minister Yariv Levin publicly unveiled in January, triggering the wave of demonstrations and intense public opposition.

**A statement from the President's Office released after the 90-minute meeting said the discussions were conducted in "a positive atmosphere," and that further meetings would be held on Wednesday.**

**Tuesday's talks did not touch on the substance of potential reform, but rather focused on the mechanism** for negotiations. Channel 12 reported that it was also aimed at fostering a friendly atmosphere more conducive to talks than the fiery, combative rhetoric the sides have employed against each other for weeks. In a statement after the meeting, the opposition's Yesh Atid party said that as Israel prepares to celebrate its 75th birthday, there is an opportunity "to make real change, not cosmetic fixes." The party also reiterated its desire to



establish a constitution “based on the values of the Declaration of Independence.” [MORE - https://www.timesofisrael.com/coalition-opposition-hold-first-talks-on-judicial-overhaul-with-president-herzog/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/coalition-opposition-hold-first-talks-on-judicial-overhaul-with-president-herzog/)

## Despite pause, government files contentious judicial selection bill for final votes

*Coalition sources, Knesset secretary say move is ‘technical,’ but opposition MKs fume and say they’d be coming to overhaul negotiations with ‘a gun to the head’*

By [Tol Staff](#) Today, 12:22 pm



*Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (center) at the Knesset plenum, in Jerusalem, on March 27, 2023. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)*

**Opposition lawmakers fumed Tuesday morning as it became apparent that despite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s announcement Monday night that his government was pausing its judicial overhaul push in order to launch negotiations with the opposition, one of its most controversial bills had nevertheless been submitted to the Knesset for its final votes, which would enable it to be brought for approval at any later date.**

**The legislation would heavily politicize the**

**Judicial Selection Committee and give the coalition almost complete control over the appointment of judges. The makeup of the committee — which currently divides power between politicians and justices regarding new Supreme Court appointments — is arguably the most contentious part of the overhaul, and the issue in which a compromise is the most elusive.**

**The bill — which would give the government exclusive say in the first two Supreme Court picks that become empty during its term, followed by a mutual veto in the uncommon situation of a third or fourth justice being selected in a single term — was approved Monday by the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee for its final readings in the Knesset plenum.**

**Filing it with the Knesset secretary enables the coalition to call the final votes with 24 hours’ notice. The Knesset begins a month-long recess this weekend.**

**The move was done just hours before Netanyahu called for a pause in legislative efforts but only announced Tuesday morning.**

The Knesset secretary and coalition sources were quoted by the Ynet news site as saying the move was “technical” and did not indicate an intention to bring it for a vote soon, but several opposition lawmakers said the move constituted the coalition pointing “a gun to the head” of the opposition at the negotiation table.

**“The public doesn’t even get a full day to digest the legislative halt, and the coalition is already submitting the draft for a vote,”** said Labor MK Naama Lazimi. “What’s so urgent?”

Yesh Atid MK Orna Barbivai, a member of the opposition party’s negotiation team on the bill, said: “[Netanyahu] doesn’t have to file it. How can the draft be changed now?” [MORE - https://www.timesofisrael.com/despite-pause-government-files-contentious-judicial-selection-bill-for-final-votes/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/despite-pause-government-files-contentious-judicial-selection-bill-for-final-votes/)

## Calls for action against pro-government supporters after assaults on TV crew, Arabs



**Channel 13 reporter Yossi Eli suffers broken rib, cameraman head injury; Lapid blames Netanyahu, Ben Gvir; Gantz urges PM to unequivocally condemn attacks**

By [Tol Staff](#) Today, 3:22 pm

*Screen capture from video of Channel 13 reporter Yossi Eli surrounded by pro-government supporters, March 2023. (Twitter. Used in accordance with Clause 27a of the Copyright Law)*

**Opposition leaders on Tuesday urged the government and Israel Police to clamp down on violence by pro-government supporters after a television news team and**



several Arab passersby were assaulted during a demonstration in support of the coalition's planned drastic overhaul of the judiciary.

Channel 13 reporter Yossi Eli was hospitalized with a broken rib and suspected damage to his spleen late Monday, while cameraman Avi Cashman suffered a head injury.

Eli tweeted Tuesday his thanks to the police for saving him from "a group of rioters and La Familia members who blocked the road in Jerusalem, spat on us, threw objects and beat our photographer Cashman on his head with a stick."

In another incident, Tamer Alkilani, a reporter for Kan 33, the Arabic-language division of the Kan public broadcaster, was harassed by pro-government supporters at a demonstration in Jerusalem as he tried to give a live update.

There were other reports of [far-right activists attacking anti-government demonstrators](#) as well as passing Arabs and police officers.

In one incident, police said an Arab taxi driver was surrounded by protesters who hurled objects at his vehicle and banged on his window. The driver tried to flee via a nearby gas station, but was then "savagely attacked by the rioters who chased him and caused heavy damage to his car," police said in a statement, which said an investigation into the incident had been opened and three arrests had been made. **MORE -** <https://www.timesofisrael.com/calls-for-action-against-pro-government-supporters-after-assaults-on-tv-crew-arabs/>

## Pilots resume training flights as overhaul paused, but are keeping 'an eye open'

*After hundreds of Air Force reservists joined protest, Brothers in Arms group says it believes in actions, not words, and is ready to renew measures 'in a short time'*

By [Tol Staff](#) Today, 2:24 pm

The leaders of the reservist pilots' protest against the government's judicial overhaul plans announced Tuesday that they would resume training and operational activity after the controversial legislative plan was paused, but indicated that they're remaining alert in case it ends up being revived.

On Friday, around 200 reserve pilots, who fly combat missions, helicopters, and transport planes, notified their units they would not be reporting for a weekly flight session this week in protest of the government plans. On Saturday, nearly 1,000 retired Air Force pilots [pledged their support](#) for reservist personnel.

The failure to report for weekly training sessions would have had serious implications because pilots who miss them are not certified to fly operational missions.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant urged the government Saturday evening to freeze the overhaul, citing danger to national security if it goes ahead. Gallant was fired on Sunday evening, triggering unprecedented nationwide protests and strikes that forced Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to say Monday evening that he was delaying the overhaul push until May to allow for dialogue with the opposition on a compromise version.

On Tuesday morning, the Brothers in Arms group said in a statement: "According to [the prime minister], this halt was made with the intention of giving time for negotiations. We — like the majority of the people — do not believe the words, do not believe that there is a real intention to reach a broad agreement. We only believe in actions.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/pilots-resume-training-flights-as-overhaul-paused-but-are-keeping-an-eye-open/>

## Netanyahu to be invited to White House soon, US envoy says after overhaul pause

*Nides says PM likely to meet Biden after Passover; US said concerned by Defense Minister Gallant's firing, bombarded Jerusalem with warnings that move tarnishes democratic image*

By [Michael Bachner](#) Today, 10:28 am

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will be invited to the White House "as soon as their schedules can be coordinated," US Ambassador to Israel Tom Nides said Tuesday morning, less than 12 hours after the premier announced that he was pausing his government's highly divisive judicial overhaul plan. **[HUMMMMM Does it seem to you that the dimwits in DC are working to influence the political situation in Jerusalem. We know that the Soros crew is helping to sponsor the riots and it is reported that US State Department has been supporting and working against their government—rdb]**

**“I’m sure he’ll be coming relatively soon,” Nides told Israel’s Army Radio.** “I assume after Passover, obviously no date has been set yet. There’s no question he will come and meet [US President Joe] Biden. They will see each other personally, I’m sure, quite soon. Without question, he’ll be coming to the White House as soon as their schedules can be coordinated.”

**Netanyahu has reportedly been irked by the lack of an invitation to meet Biden for a full three months after he returned to power at the helm of a hard-right government.** A [report recently indicated](#) that the premier had forbidden his Likud party members from meeting US government officials during trips abroad, fearing this would underline that Netanyahu hadn’t met Biden yet.

**Washington has repeatedly cautioned against the plan to politicize and radically constrain the judiciary and urged dialogue on a more broadly agreed-upon reform, amid major months-long protests and warnings that the government’s plan would erode democratic checks and balances, economic growth and national security. So the US prefers to keep the liberal leftist court in a situation so it can direct the government. Sounds like their attempts to pack the US courts. – rdb]**

**These warnings intensified after Netanyahu announced he was firing Defense Minister Yoav Gallant on Sunday night after the latter broke with him** and urged a pause on the overhaul legislation, triggering unprecedented overnight demonstrations and nationwide strikes the following day that ultimately forced the premier to delay the bills until May.

The **New York Times reported late Monday, citing unnamed senior administration officials, that the Biden administration had bombarded Netanyahu with frequent messages that he was “imperiling Israel’s reputation as the true democracy at the heart of the Middle East.” MORE -** <https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-to-be-invited-to-white-house-soon-us-envoy-says-after-overhaul-pause/>

## **Biden: Israel can’t continue this way, no Netanyahu White House invite**

*Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has not visited the White House since taking his post in December 2022.*

By [TOVAH LAZAROFF](#) Published: MARCH 28, 2023 07:33 Updated: MARCH 29, 2023 01:57

**Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu won’t be invited to the White House in the “near term,” US President Joe Biden told reporters on Tuesday, as he urged Israel to drop its judicial reform plan.**

**“I hope he [Netanyahu] walks away from it,” Biden said as he issued his most clear objections to date over Israel’s judicial overhaul process.**

**“Like many strong supporters of Israel, I am very concerned. I am concerned that they get this straight. They can not continue down this road. I have sort of made that clear,” Biden said. Biden is not now nor has he ever been a “strong supporter of Israel. He is a strong supporter of Biden family wealth and that is it. – rdb’**

**“Hopefully the Prime Minister will act in a way that he will try to work out some genuine compromise, but that remains to be seen.”**

**When asked if he would invite Netanyahu to the White House, Biden quickly replied, “no, not in the near term.”**

**Earlier in the day a US National Security Advisor spokesperson also clarified that “there is no plan for PM Netanyahu to visit Washington.”**

**“Israeli leaders have a long tradition of visiting Washington, and PM Netanyahu will likely visit at some point,” the spokesperson said.**

Netanyahu said in response, “I have known President Biden for over 40 years and I appreciate his longstanding commitment to Israel.

**“The alliance between Israel and the US is strong and it always overcomes the differences of opinion that appear between us from time to time,” Netanyahu said as he defended his judicial reform program which critics warn is weakening Israeli democracy.**

**“The government led by me is committed to strengthening democracy by restoring the proper balance between the three authorities, which we strive to achieve with broad consensus,” Netanyahu said.**

**“Israel is an independent country that makes its decisions according to the will of its citizens and not based on external pressures, including our best friends,” he added.**

Culture and Sports Minister Miki Zohar (Likud) tweeted, "It breaks my heart to see how much damage has been done to Israel from all the fake news that has been spread in connection with our justified legal reform."

When Netanyahu returned to office after an 18-month hiatus, it was expected that one of his first foreign trips would be to meet with Biden.

US Ambassador to Israel Tom Nides has often spoken of how a trip was forthcoming in the near future, but never set a date. [Similar statements](#) were echoed in Washington. **MORE - <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-735639> [Who in heavens name does this idiotic demented excuse for an “American leader” think he has the right to tell a sovereign nation how they are supposed to manage their country and their system. The US State Dept and Deep State players which is almost one in the same with the leftist in power have been supporting this overthrow of Bibi and their actions are blatantly illegal and reprehensible. May the Holy One of Israel bring his judgement upon them soon. – rdb]**

## French banks raided in tax evasion sting

*The lenders are suspected of helping investors avoid paying taxes on dividends*



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**The Paris offices of five major banks were searched on Tuesday amid a probe into suspected money laundering and tax evasion related to dividend payments, several media outlets reported on Tuesday.**

**The raids in question took place at the offices of Societe Generale, BNP Paribas, Exane and Natixis, as well as those of British banking giant HSBC, according to Le Monde, which was the first to break the news.**

**Societe Generale confirmed the searches to Reuters, but abstained from further comments.** The other four banks did not comment on the reports.

**France’s National Financial Prosecutor’s Office (PNF) later confirmed reports of the raids in a statement, adding that the investigation was linked to the so-called “cum-cum” dividend strategy, a scheme whereby a bank temporarily transfers shares of a stock to a foreign investor ahead of a dividend payout to avoid paying the dividend tax.**

**The dividends are either not taxed or the taxes are refunded to the foreign investor.** The shares are subsequently returned to the original owner and the two parties split the amount saved – an amount that would have been taxed had the securities remained with the original owner.

PNF said the ongoing probe, which was opened back in 2021, is being carried out by 16 investigating judges and over 150 agents. According to a Bloomberg report, the five banks face collective fines of more than €1 billion (\$1.1 billion) in connection with the investigation.

The **searches came as yet another hit to the global banking industry, which is still reeling from bank failures in the US and the government-brokered rescue takeover of Switzerland’s Credit Suisse by rival UBS.** <https://www.rt.com/business/573741-french-banks-raided-tax-evasion/> **More questionable Banking actions to mix in with the pot of those already having issues. – rdb]**