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U.S. Could Cut Off Russia's Smartphone, Car Imports Over Ukraine Invasion – Reuters

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Igor Ivanko / Moskva News Agency

The United States could hamstring Russia's smartphone and automobile imports if Moscow invades Ukraine, Reuters reported Tuesday, citing an unnamed Biden administration official.

The "unprecedented" U.S. export control measures are expected to be discussed at a White House meeting Tuesday. Washington will also reportedly closely coordinate its steps with key European and Asian partners that could be affected and encourage coordinated steps where appropriate.

The tough sanctions would "halt Russia's ability to import smartphones, key aircraft and automobile components, and materials from many other sectors," according to Reuters.

"They could have a major impact on Russian consumers, industrial operations, and employment," the news agency cited the Biden administration official as saying.

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The reported export controls would mark a step beyond possible economic sanctions which the U.S. has already warned of. Earlier this month, U.S. President Joe Biden warned Russian leader Vladimir Putin that Moscow would be hit with sanctions "like none he's ever seen" should it invade Ukraine.

Moscow denies planning to launch an invasion against Ukraine following weeks of alarm in the West over Russian troop buildup near Kiev's borders. Instead, Russian officials accuse U.S.-led NATO of threatening the country's security with military exercises, weapons deployment and expansion near Russia's western borders.

Putin on Tuesday threatened a "military-technical" response to perceived Western threats to Russia's security as he sought legally binding guarantees from Washington to limit NATO's presence in the former Soviet space.

Washington signaled that it was ready to discuss Russia's demands through bilateral and multilateral channels and with European involvement, a condition that Moscow has so far rejected.

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