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China Opposes Russia Sanctions as Taiwan Slams Moscow's Actions in Ukraine

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Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying. **VOA**

China on Wednesday opposed the idea of sanctioning Russia and called for dialogue to resolve the Ukraine crisis while Taiwan criticized Moscow for its actions in Ukraine.

Russia this week formally recognized the eastern Ukrainian separatist republics of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent and sent in Russian "peacekeepers" to the regions. Ukraine's Western allies swiftly responded by announcing new sanctions on Russia that include halting the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

Democratic Taiwan has watched the Ukraine situation closely as it lives under constant threat of a Chinese invasion, with Beijing claiming sovereignty over the island and vowing to seize it one day — by force if necessary.

"Obviously, you don't understand the policy of the Chinese government enough," Chinese

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said when asked whether Beijing planned to sanction Moscow over the Ukraine crisis.

“Sanctions have never been a fundamental and effective way to solve problems. China has consistently been against any illegitimate unilateral sanctions,” Chunying told reporters, according to Russia's state-run TASS news agency.

The comments came hours after Taiwan’s president condemned Russia’s actions in neighboring Ukraine, declaring them a “violation of Ukrainian sovereignty.”

Chunying dismissed comparisons between the Ukraine crisis and its own claim over Taiwan, saying any comparison showed a "lack of the most basic understanding of the history of the Taiwan issue."

"Taiwan has always been an inalienable part of China's territory. This is an irrefutable historical and legal fact," she said, blasting "unwise" Taiwanese authorities for "making the Ukraine issue into a hot topic."

Chunying also accused Washington of "raising tensions, creating panic, and even playing up the threat of war" by sending defensive weapons to Ukraine.

"If someone is adding fuel to the fire while blaming others ... then that behavior is irresponsible and immoral," she added, turning the spotlight on the United States in response to a question on China's role in resolving the situation.

"China has been calling on all parties to respect and pay attention to each other’s legitimate security concerns, work together to solve problems through negotiations and consultations, and maintain regional peace and stability," she said without mentioning recent diplomatic efforts by Ukraine's Western allies aimed at preventing a Russian invasion.

Beijing has trod a cautious line on Ukraine but also offered growing support to Putin.

The two powers signed a joint statement this month, agreeing on multiple foreign policy goals including no further expansion of NATO and that Taiwan is an "inalienable part of China."

Chinese officials have also repeatedly sided with Russia in blaming the West for the tensions over Ukraine, accusing them of a "Cold War mentality" while describing Moscow's security concerns as "reasonable."

The latest Western sanctions are expected to shift Russia's trade flow toward Beijing in an effort to alleviate the economic impacts on the Russian economy.

AFP contributed reporting.

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