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U.S. Sanctions Russia Lawmakers, Defense Contractors

By AFP

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Herman Gref, chief executive of Russia's largest financial institution Sberbank. **Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency**

The United States on Thursday announced a fresh wave of sanctions against Russian lawmakers, oligarchs and defense companies in response to the invasion of Ukraine, the White House said.

The measures, which involve freezing U.S.-held assets, single out 328 members of Russia's lower house State Duma, and 48 defense companies "that fuel (President Vladimir) Putin's war machine," according to a statement released as U.S. President Joe Biden attended summits in Brussels focused on the war.

Also targeted is Herman Gref, chief executive of Russia's largest financial institution Sberbank.

"I'm announcing additional sanctions on over 400 Russian elites, lawmakers, and defense companies in response to Putin's war of choice in Ukraine," Biden tweeted.

"They personally gain from the Kremlin's policies, and they should share in the pain," he said.

The U.S. Treasury department said in a statement that the U.S. move aligned generally with those already taken by the European Union, Britain and Canada.

By designating Russian defense industry companies, it said, "today's action will have a deep and long-lasting effect on Russia's defense-industrial base and its supply chain."

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said: "The United States, with our partners and allies, is striking at the heart of Russia's ability to finance and carry out its warfare and atrocities against Ukraine."

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