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## Ukraine presses U.S. to sanction Russian oil and gas exports

[Dan De Luce](#)

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Ukraine is calling on the Biden administration to sanction Russia's oil and gas exports, arguing that it's the only way to put real pressure on Putin to stop the invasion.

Andriy Kobolyev, the former head of Ukraine's state-owned gas company, Naftogaz, flew to Washington this week to make the case for limiting Russia's fossil fuel exports, meeting with more than a dozen lawmakers from both parties, as well as senior White House and State Department officials.

Putin has convinced the ruling elite in Moscow that "the West cannot survive without Russia's energy supply," Kobolyev told NBC News. Casting doubt on that premise would shake the foundation of his power, he said.

"That sounds like a very hard and painful step, but I don't see any other way for the West to stop the invasion," said Kobolyev, who has negotiated with Kremlin officials and Russia's state-owned Gazprom in his former role. "Eight years ago, everybody was saying Ukraine would not survive without Russian gas. We proved we could."

Ukraine Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba also called for a "full embargo" of Russian oil and gas exports this week.

Energy analysts say placing sanctions on the world's third-largest oil producer could trigger a spike in oil prices and wreak havoc on the global economy. But Kobolyev argues that there's sufficient oil production capacity in the U.S. and the global market to withstand the blow.

The Biden administration hasn't moved to ban Russian oil in the U.S. or issue sanctions for such products despite growing calls from lawmakers in both parties to cut off Russian imports. However, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said this week that Biden hasn't ruled out the idea.