

Russia may target U.S. businesses with cyberattacks, Biden warns

 [nbcnews.com/politics/joe-biden/evolving-intelligence-suggests-russia-may-target-us-businesses-cyberat-rcna20921](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/joe-biden/evolving-intelligence-suggests-russia-may-target-us-businesses-cyberat-rcna20921)

March 21, 2022



President Joe Biden urged U.S. businesses Monday to take added precautions amid "evolving" intelligence that Russia could target American companies with cyberattacks.

"The magnitude of Russia's cyber capacity is fairly consequential, and it's coming. The federal government is doing its part to get ready," Biden said while speaking to the Business Roundtable CEO quarterly meeting in Washington.

He called on companies to invest "as much as you can" in beefing up technological capacity to guard against potential attacks.

As the war in Ukraine following Russia's invasion last month rages on, the White House released a fact sheet Monday telling U.S. companies to "Act Now to Protect Against Potential Cyberattacks."

"This is a critical moment to accelerate our work to improve domestic cybersecurity and bolster our national resilience," Biden said in a statement. "I have previously warned about the potential that Russia could conduct malicious cyber activity against the United States, including as a response to the unprecedented economic costs we've imposed on Russia alongside our allies and partners.

"Today, my administration is reiterating those warnings based on evolving intelligence that the Russian government is exploring options for potential cyberattacks," he continued.

In its release, the White House pushed companies to mandate the use of multifactor authentication, backup and encrypt data and educate their workforces about tactics hackers may deploy, among other steps.

Get the Morning Rundown

Get a head start on the morning's top stories.

"If you have not already done so, I urge our private sector partners to harden your cyber defenses immediately by implementing the best practices we have developed together over the last year," Biden said in Monday's statement.

Jen Easterly, director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, reinforced the president's warning in a statement urging "all organizations, large and small, to act now to protect themselves against malicious cyber activity."

At Monday's White House briefing, Anne Neuberger, the deputy national security adviser for cyber and emerging technology, told reporters that the Russian government "is exploring options for potential cyberattacks on critical infrastructure in the United States."

"The president has said the United States is not seeking confrontation with Russia, but he has also said that if Russia conducts disruptive cyberattacks against critical infrastructure, we will be prepared to respond," Neuberger said.

Biden on Monday also joined a meeting with top administration officials and 16 chief executives from major U.S. companies, who were briefed about Russian President Vladimir Putin's "unprovoked and unjustified war against Ukraine," the White House said in a statement.

NBC News reported last month that Biden was presented with a menu of options for the U.S. to carry out cyberattacks against the Russians to disrupt Russia's ability to sustain its military operations in Ukraine.



Allan Smith

Allan Smith is a political reporter for NBC News.

Zoë Richards

Zoë is the evening politics reporter for NBC News.

Shannon Pettypiece contributed.