

Biden to Meet With Ukrainian Leadership in Kiev

April 21, 2014



Vice President Joseph Biden (right) follows U.S. President Barack Obama (left) at the White House in April.

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden will meet with Ukraine's acting president, Oleksandr Turchynov, and Prime Minister Arseny Yatsenyuk during a visit to Kiev on Tuesday, the White House has said.

Biden arrives in Kiev on Monday afternoon local time, and becomes the most senior U.S. official to visit the country since the crisis began there.

He will meet with members of Ukraine's Rada parliament from different political parties and regions as well as representatives from nongovernmental organizations during his two-day stay, the White House said Tuesday in a statement.

In those meetings, Biden will "discuss the international community's efforts to help stabilize and strengthen Ukraine's economy and to assist Ukraine in moving forward on constitutional reform, decentralization, anti-corruption efforts, and free and fair presidential elections

on May 25," the statement said.

"The vice president will also consult on the latest developments in eastern Ukraine and on steps to enhance Ukraine's short- and long-term energy security."

Early on Sunday, at least three people were killed in a gunfight near an eastern Ukrainian city controlled by pro-Russian separatists, shaking an already fragile international accord that was designed to avert a wider conflict.

The incident triggered a war of words between Moscow and Ukraine's Western-backed government, with each questioning the other's compliance with the agreement, brokered last week in Geneva, to end a crisis that has strained Russia's ties with the West.

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