

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Secretary-General António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres of the United Nations and an Exchange With Reporters in New York City
September 21, 2022

[President Biden's remarks were joined in progress.]

President Biden. ——really positive, particularly you stepping in to access grain out of Ukraine and Russia. And—but there's so much more we can do, I think. We're prepared.

And it wasn't hyperbole what I was suggesting when I spoke. There are—I think that, you know, the great polluting nations of the world like ours owe an obligation to the nations that are suffering the consequences of global warming.

You know, you see—you all saw the recent reports. The seas are going to rise as much as three feet in the next several decades. I mean, that's going to put a lot of the Caribbean underwater, for example. And there's things we can do now.

And when—I think I mentioned this to you before—when we had one of our G-7 meetings, I suggested we set up a Build Back Better initiative worldwide where we don't only go into countries and help them, but we're looking for \$600 billion among us to be able to have them build the infrastructure they need to protect their physical capacity to survive.

And I think we can do it. That's going to take some real focus.

And Senator Kerry is still continuing to try to generate some cooperation with China, which was started. I hope we can get that back on track in a major way.

There's just a whole lot of things that I think we have the capacity to do.

And—but—then again, there's one friend of mine who is a neurosurgeon who said my problem is, I'm a congenital optimist. But I am optimistic. I think we can make things better.

I think they're—don't you all agree that, all of a sudden, in the last—this past year, all the climate deniers looked and said: "Oh, my God. Look what's happening." It's hard to be denier anymore.

So I think it presents enormous opportunities on the climate side and on the security side, on the physical security side.

But any rate, let's—I'm talking too much.

[At this point, Secretary-General Guterres addressed reporters as follows.]

Secretary-General Guterres. Do you mind now—please, leave us.

Russia/Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, do you have reaction to Putin's announcement about a partial mobilization of troops?

President Biden. You didn't listen to my speech. Go read my speech.

Q. I saw it. Anything else you want to share about his sudden decision?

President Biden. Nope.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:54 a.m. at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John F. Kerry. A reporter referred to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: New York City; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : United Nations, Secretary-General Guterres.

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Names: Guterres, António Manuel de Oliveira; Kerry, John F.

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