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Why US sanctions may not have as much impact on Putin



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PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — About 24 hours into his nation's invasion of Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces attacked not only the Eastern parts of the country that he considered their own nations, but many of Ukraine's largest cities, key airports, and the Chernobyl nuclear plant.

The attack has come in the face of increased sanctions by the U.S. and other nations, all meant to dramatically curtail the Russian economy and deter military action.

"It does seem like Putin is determined to continue out these attacks on Ukraine. He's moved forward with the threat of sanctions, with some already in place," said World Affairs Council of Philadelphia President & CEO Lauren Swartz.

She believes that the sanctions coming from the U.S. won't have as large of an impact on the Russian economy as it would on other parts of the world, simply because our business and trade ties with Russia aren't as large.

Now that this is all playing out in front of us, one question remains: What is Putin's goal, and has it changed?

"Many people think that Putin's objective is to displace the current government and put in a government that's more favorable to Russia," said Swartz.

"If that happens, that would be a significant tipping point and we would all wait and see. Is this enough? Is that enough of what Putin wants?"

This conflict is putting a lot of the world's eyes on the U.S. and its allies, and the future of not just NATO or the European Union, but of other nations nearby.

"I think questions we might be able to answer sooner are 'What is the role of NATO overall? And do European allies within NATO strengthen their spending, strengthen their military complex, and make different investments?' Swartz said.

In the meantime, Swartz said people here should try to grasp what Ukrainians and others in America who have ties to the country are watching through their lens.

"We should think of them in solidarity and think, and say 'What if this happened to us? What if military buildup happened around our community or our country?'" she said.

"We've been watching it coming for a number of months, and now it's become real. It feels like a very scary moment in our history."

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