

U.S. set to send depleted uranium munitions to Ukraine

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Members of the U.S. military get ammunition for the Abrams tank during an exercise at Mielno range near Drawsko-Pomorskie. (Photo by Reuters)

Washington, September 4 (RHC)-- The United States is reportedly set to send controversial armor-piercing munitions containing depleted uranium to Ukraine, despite international concerns over health

risks the weaponry poses to civilians.

The administration of President Joe Biden will unveil a new military aid package for Ukraine next week, according to a document seen by Reuters. The coming aid package will be worth between \$240 million and \$375 million, a US official who also confirmed the report told Reuters.

The weapons aid packages have also included artillery, air defense missiles, and ground vehicles, according to the document. The controversial munitions can be fired from US Abrams tanks that are expected to be delivered to Ukraine in the coming weeks.

This is the first time the U.S. will send the controversial rounds to Ukraine. The International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons warned that there are dangerous health risks from ingesting or inhaling depleted uranium dust, including cancers and birth defects.

The UN environment program also warned that air, soil, water, and vegetation can potentially be contaminated and affected by the round residues.

Depleted Uranium is not considered nuclear weaponry, but it contains low levels of radiation. The munitions use depleted uranium, which is a by-product of when uranium is enriched for use in nuclear reactors or nuclear weapons.

The move to send the controversial weapons to Ukraine follows an earlier decision by the Biden administration to provide cluster munitions to Ukraine. At the time, President Vladimir Putin warned that Russia would "respond accordingly" given that the collective West is starting to use weapons with a "nuclear component."

Cluster bombs, banned under the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), carry several hundred bomb-lets or cluster munitions, dropped by aircraft, or launched from the ground. Cluster bombs, like landmines, pose a risk to civilians long after their use. Unexploded ordinance from cluster bombs can also kill and maim people years or even decades after the munitions were fired.

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