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On May 15, 2024, Britain’s shadow foreign secretary, David Lammy, and shadow defence secretary, John Healey, visited Kyiv, Ukraine. The primary purpose of their visit was to assure Ukrainian officials of continued UK support, irrespective of the outcome of the forthcoming UK general election.

During the two-day visit, Lammy and Healey met with Ukraine’s defence and foreign ministers, as well as Andriy Yermak, chief of staff to President Volodymyr Zelenskiy. In their meetings, the Labour politicians conveyed their party’s commitment to maintaining the UK’s £3 billion annual military aid to Ukraine, a pledge made by the current government. Lammy emphasized that UK support for Ukraine enjoys broad backing within the Labour Party, stating, “There’s total support for Ukraine across the full breadth of the Labour party in and outside parliament.”

Moreover, Lammy and Healey discussed issues surrounding London's reputation as a hub for laundering illicit money and the enforcement of sanctions against Russia. Labour plans to enhance coordination between the Foreign Office and the Treasury to improve sanction enforcement and adopt a more stringent sanctions policy.

Additionally, Lammy highlighted the “critical moment” faced by Ukraine, with Russian forces launching fresh offensives in the Kharkiv region amid shortages of weapons and manpower. He also addressed the contentious nature of US support for Ukraine in contrast to UK’s stance, particularly concerning the political dynamics within the Republican Party.

Meanwhile, in a separate development, Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Beijing to solidify ties with China under President Xi Jinping. The visit intends to underscore the “no limit” partnership between Russia and China, particularly highlighting their mutual stance against US global influence.

Since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, China has maintained a strategic partnership with Russia, though it has avoided supplying weapons for the war effort. Analysts suggest amplified diplomatic cooperation and economic support from China could further bolster Russia amidst ongoing international pressures.

Putin’s visit to Beijing comes after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's recent trip, where Blinken warned China against deepening military support for Russia. However, despite pressures from the Biden administration, Xi Jinping reiterated his disapproval of what Beijing perceives as US-induced containment strategies.

In recent discussions, Xi and Putin pledged to deepen collaborations across various sectors, emphasizing their collective intent to challenge the US-led world order. Critics argue that the mere act of Beijing hosting Putin signifies substantial symbolic support for Russia amidst escalating geopolitical tensions.