

What Is HIMARS? The Advanced Rocket System US Is Sending to Ukraine

US to send High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems to Kyiv drawing criticism from the Kremlin which accused Washington of adding 'fuel to the fire'.

By [Al-Jazeera](#)

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White House officials have confirmed that the United States will [send M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems](#), also known as HIMARS, to war-torn Ukraine.

The medium-range rocket systems have long topped the lists of weapons requests by Kyiv as [fighting against Russian forces](#) has concentrated in the eastern regions of the country.

The US officials confirmed the systems would be part of a new \$700m security assistance package to Ukraine that will also include helicopters, [Javelin anti-tank weapon systems](#), tactical vehicles, spare parts and more.

In an op-ed in the New York Times on Tuesday, Biden wrote that the US will "provide the Ukrainians with more advanced rocket systems and munitions that will enable them to more precisely strike key targets on the battlefield in Ukraine", although he did not name the systems by name.

He said the weapons are meant to help Ukraine "fight on the battlefield and be in the strongest possible position at the negotiating table".

The military package, which is expected to be officially announced on Wednesday, will be the [eleventh provided](#) by the US to Ukraine since the Russian invasion began on February 24.

In total, the US has provided about \$4.5bn in military assistance since the invasion, including howitzers approved in April, the most powerful artillery provided prior to the HIMARS.

What is the new system US is providing?

HIMARS are a high-tech, lightweight rocket launcher that is wheel mounted, giving it more agility and manoeuvrability on the battlefield.

Each unit can carry six GPS guided rockets, which can be reloaded in about a minute with only a small crew.

Analysts say the system is considerably more reliable than other rocket systems Ukrainian forces currently use.

The range of the systems provided by Washington will be about 80km (50 miles), almost double the range of the US-provided M777 howitzers, which entered the Ukrainian battlefield in May.

It was not clear on Wednesday how many of the systems the US will send to Ukraine.

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Featured image: The High Mobility Artillery Rocket System fires the Army's new guided Multiple Launch Rocket System during testing at White Sands Missile Range. (U.S. Army photo/Public Domain)

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