



## Defying Pressure, Koch Industries Continues to Operate in Russia

Over 400 Western companies have withdrawn from Russia

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Amid a mass exodus of Western companies from Russia, the US conglomerate Koch Industries is defying the pressure and has decided to continue operations in the country.

Guardian Industries, a subsidiary of Koch Industries, operates two glass manufacturing plants inside Russia that employ about 600 people. Outside of Guardian, Koch Industries employs 15 other individuals in Russia.

Dave Robertson, the president and COO of Koch Industries, released a statement explaining the conglomerate's decision and denouncing Russia's invasion. He stated, "The horrific and abhorrent aggression against Ukraine is an affront to humanity."

"While Guardian's business in Russia is a very small part of Koch, we will not walk away from our employees there or hand over these manufacturing facilities to the Russian government so it can operate and benefit from them," Robertson said. "Doing so would only put our employees there at greater risk and do more harm than good."

Economist David R. Henderson, an emeritus professor of economics at the Naval Postgraduate School and a research fellow with the Hoover Institution, praised Robertson's statement. "If you want to hurt a government, you don't do it by giving it *more* resources," Henderson told Antiwar.com.

According to a tally done by Yale University's School of Management, over 400 companies have withdrawn from Russia or limited operations. In response, Russia is exploring the idea of seizing the companies' assets that are left behind and potentially nationalizing the businesses.

Since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion on February 24, the US has worked with its allies to impose crushing sanctions on Russia aimed at wrecking the country's economy. The measures have done nothing to deter Putin since they were factored into his decision to attack Ukraine, but the sanctions are punishing ordinary Russians for their president's decision.

Americans are also feeling the economic pain from the sanctions, something President Biden said to be prepared for. Amid soaring gas prices and inflation, Biden signed an executive order banning Russian oil imports and then announced a plan to ban other Russian goods.

Robertson noted that Koch Industries is complying with US sanctions. “To be clear, Koch companies are complying with all applicable sanctions, laws, and regulations governing our relationships and transactions within all countries where we operate,” he said.

Koch Industries CEO Charles Koch has a history of backing organizations that favor a more non-interventionist foreign policy, including the Quincy Institute, the Cato Institute, Concerned Veterans for America, and the American Institute for Economic Research.