

# CLOSING THE SKIES, LIBERATING UKRAINE

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## HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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## CLOSING THE SKIES, LIBERATING UKRAINE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY & COOPERATION  
IN EUROPE,  
U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Thursday, May 16, 2024.*

The hearing was held from 2:06 p.m. to 3:24 p.m., Room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Representative Joe Wilson [R-SC], Chairman, Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe, presiding.

**Committee Members Present:** Representative Joe Wilson [R-SC], Chairman; Representative Steve Cohen [D-TN], Ranking Member; Representative Marc Veasey [D-TX]; Senator Richard Blumenthal [D-CT]; Representative Victoria Spartz [R-IN]; Senator Sheldon Whitehouse [D-RI].

**Other Members Present:** Representative Jim Costa [D-CA].

**Witnesses:** Nataliya Bugayova, Non-Resident Fellow, Institute for the Study of War; Ambassador John Herbst [ret.], Senior Director, Atlantic Council; Michael Ryan, Former Deputy Assistant, Secretary of Defense.

### OPENING STATEMENT OF JOE WILSON, CHAIRMAN, U.S. HOUSE, FROM SOUTH CAROLINA

Chairman WILSON: The good thing is that, indeed, with the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe this is bipartisan, bicameral. We are really hoping that members of the Senate might be able to come across to be.

The bottom line, we are grateful to be here with all of you. I am looking forward to our ranking member, Congressman Steve Cohen, to be here. As we proceed I want to thank all of you for coming—to be here today on behalf of the United States Helsinki Commission.

This hearing comes at a critical time for the people of Ukraine and the urgent defense against war criminal Putin's genocidal invasion. Ukrainians continue courageously to fight for their lives, their families, and their homeland.

As we speak war criminal Putin is relentlessly attacking Kharkiv with a population of 1.5 million innocent civilians. The need for a vital air defense and long-range munitions has never been more dire.

I am grateful that President Biden has provided long-range missiles but Ukraine must be able to legitimately defend itself from attacks launched from within the borders of the Russian Federation.

We have seen a clear and repeated pattern when Putin attacks. The mass murdering Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad welcomed

Putin's involvement to quash the Syrian revolution of 2015. Putin's atrocities committed against innocent Syrians are being replicated to murder innocent Ukrainians, including chemical weapons and incendiary munitions.

War criminal Putin is also known for the double tap strikes which gruesomely target emergency personnel, medical personnel, police, fire, and volunteers as they search for survivors following the first round of attacks.

The once vibrant city of Aleppo in Syria had a population of 2.5 million people before it was decimated to rubble by war criminals Putin and Assad. This was done also in Mariupol, sadly, with a once-vibrant population of half a million people.

Now war criminal Putin threatens Kharkiv, the population of the second largest city of Ukraine of 1.5 million people, which historically at one time was the capital of Ukraine, and has so many beautiful historical artifacts and indications such as the beautiful Orthodox churches and libraries and museums and universities. We, sadly, know the intent of war criminal Putin is to create total rubble, which is inconceivable in the 21st century, of targeting civilian targets.

With speaker Mike Johnson's leadership, I am grateful for the passage of the significant support for Ukraine. Now it is time to expedite what Ukraine needs and remove arbitrary restrictions that tie the hands of the Ukrainian defenders.

Make no mistake, without shortages and delays Ukrainian victory could have already become a reality. Europe also should be recognized for being fully engaged in Ukraine as America is sixteenth in order of aid per gross domestic product. We are behind Lithuania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Poland, and Romania.

With military aid to Ukraine back online there is renewed hope that we can ensure that every assistance package to Ukraine matters and is tied very specifically to Ukrainian victory with the defeat of war criminal Putin and his thugs.

We have it with us today, and I appreciate that Congressman Veasey found it right away, this is a fragment of a Russian Kalibr, a cruise missile that was fired upon the homes of innocent Ukrainians in the city of Kherson shortly after it was liberated by Ukrainian forces in late 2022.

I want to pass this around to our colleagues to have a closer look and be careful, indeed, it has jagged portions to its—edges. The cost of one of the Kalibr missiles is over seven million—seven million dollars—fired purposely at Ukrainian civilians simply to exist as Ukrainians.

That is the enemy that Ukraine is facing, one that is so invested in their physical, cultural, and political destruction that they will spend enormous sums to build advanced weapons of war—by the Putinists to rain down on Ukrainian families. When they run out they are supplied by the terrorist regime in Tehran and the maniacal regime of Kim Jong-un of DPRK, North Korea.

Clearly, with war criminal Putin and Beijing today the axis of evil has never been clearer than dictators with the rule of guns invading democracies with the rule of law. War criminal Putin comes up with false excuses every day for his mass murder to further his expansionist goals.

His August 2021 treatise was clear and that is he believes that—and wants to ensure that Ukraine does not exist as he attempts to recreate the evil empire of the Soviet Union. Last May while I was in Berlin I was really disturbed and shocked to see the massive Russian embassy there it still has on top of it a hammer and sickle, and to me, that is the equivalent of having a swastika.

The thought that there would be the existence of a hammer and sickle is amazing, and we must face reality. Despite enormous casualties and equipment losses, Russia continues to press on with a full war economy while oppressing the people of Russia itself.

The Ukrainian victory will happen, not because Putin comes to his senses but when Ukraine has achieved clear military superiority in their country, diminishing Russian ability to wage war effectively and establishing territorial integrity. Every aid package should be tied to the objective of territorial integrity.

I now yield to Congressman Marc Veasey of Texas.

**STATEMENT OF MARC A. VEASEY, U.S. HOUSE, FROM TEXAS**

Representative VEASEY: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I appreciate that. I am glad that we are having these hearings and I am glad to see that you are steadfast and nonwavering in your commitment to maintaining freedom in Europe.

I really wish that everyone would go back and listen to Ronald Reagan's entire speech when he said, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall" because people hear that part of the speech but they forget about what was the contents of the speech, and he talked about the checkpoints. He talked about people's lack of freedom.

People forget that in—literally, in East Germany they had an organization known as the Stasi that spied on people, that spied on its own citizens, and if they would do things like politically gather and protest they would keep secret files on these people.

We know that countries that do things like that are evil and that countries that spy on their own people are bad, and I really wish that people could go back and just, again, listen to the contents of that speech because it was talking about America's unwavering commitment to freedom and democracy in Europe, and that is important.

One of the things that I wish that the president would do is talk more about the fact that energy—because of the record amount of oil and gas that President Biden has produced, a lot more than his predecessor, has helped keep Europe and has helped keep Putin at bay.

This would be a lot worse. If you want to stop death and destruction and you want to really squeeze Putin let him not be able to control the flow of energy in Europe and right now he is not. He thought he was going to be able to. He thought that there was going to be one harsh winter and that was going to be it and it did not happen, and we should be grateful for that because it could have been a lot worse. It could have been a lot worse.

We need to continue having conversations about that. If we can squeeze Putin without having to squeeze U.S. triggers ultimately then that is a good thing.

In closing, Joe and I have been to several of the Helsinki meetings and the winter meetings that they have—annually in Vienna

and, of course, the other meetings that they do in the summer that move from different European countries.

The officials and the people—they are the PMs in those countries and the electeds in those countries and the business leaders in those countries—they want to know that our country is committed to maintaining peace and prosperity in Europe.

They want to know that we are committed to making sure that this does not spread beyond Ukraine because if we do not stop Putin now and this spreads beyond Ukraine and it goes into Romania and it goes into Estonia we are going to have a lot more bloodshed and there will not be anything that anybody can do about it.

We need to make sure that this is the end, and when Joe and I go to Europe this summer I want to be able to tell those officials that we are going to meet with in Romania that we are committed to making sure that it does not go whether for any administration, that it stops now, that this is it and that we are committed to making sure that Ukraine can defend itself against this unlawful invasion and that they can continue to experience and get back to having peace and prosperity and rebuilding that country.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back and thank you for putting this hearing together today.

Chairman WILSON: Thank you very much, and thank you, Congressman Veasey.

We now have the—as the witnesses today we have Nataliya Bugayova, the nonresident fellow of the Institute of War. Additionally, I am grateful we have Ambassador John Herbst, who is the senior director of the Atlantic Council; and we also have Michael Ryan, who is the former deputy assistant secretary of defense.

Each one of you is welcome to be here today and it is wonderful that we have a free speech for Nataliya to begin. Thank you. [LAUGHTER.]

**TESTIMONY OF NATALIYA BUGAYOVA, NON-RESIDENT  
FELLOW, INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WAR**

Ms. BUGAYOVA: Thank you, Chairman, and thanks for the opportunity to be here and contribute to the discussion.

I will start by saying that the battlefield situation will likely get worse for Ukraine before it gets better. Russia is exploiting vulnerabilities across the entire front line, in large part because of the delays in Western aid. The Kremlin's main objective is to convince the U.S. that U.S. aid will not make a difference, especially as we approach critical milestones such as the NATO summit and the U.S. elections.

In our assessment, Ukraine, however, will be able to stabilize the front line and blunt the incoming Russian offensive as the aid arrives. Where we go from there and whether Ukraine is on the path to victory depends in large part on whether the U.S. learns critical lessons from the last two years of this war, and I would like to focus on two larger points in this respect.

The first one is that U.S. interests and the most advantageous outcome for the U.S. in this war remain the same. Russia is a self-declared adversary to the U.S. and any effective U.S. strategy to counter this challenge will recognize that the outcome of this war

is the center of gravity of Russia's power and its ability to threaten our interests.

Russia's ability to reconstitute, confront NATO, to contribute militarily to its partners like Iran, all depends disproportionately on whether Russia keeps or loses its gains in Ukraine but, it is not just about capability. It is also about the intent.

This war has empowered a nationalist community inside of Russia that believes in expansion by force and it is inherently anti-Western. If Russia is defeated in Ukraine the next after Putin may or may not be worse.

If Russia prevails in Ukraine the next after Putin will most certainly be like Putin or worse because of the political imperatives that this empowered nationalist community will generate. Given these realities, the most dangerous outcome for the U.S. is allowing Russia to win this war. The risk of a Russia-NATO war will rise exponentially and U.S. will face a reconstituted Russia that is also more determined to undermine the U.S.

In an alternative scenario in which Russia gets reprieve on the battlefield—in an alternative scenario in which Russia gets a reprieve on the battlefield either as a result of a premature ceasefire or insufficient Western aid that outcome is still far more costly for the United States than helping Ukraine to continue to fight because in this case Russia will have ability to rebuild and attack Ukraine again, which means U.S. will face the same problem under worse escalation risk, higher costs, and conditions that favor Russia.

The most advantageous outcome for Ukraine—for the U.S. remains helping Ukraine liberate its territory and its people as the only path to an actual durable peace and not a temporary respite, and then helping rebuild Ukraine and putting the largest combat-capable friendly military at the forefront of the NATO's defense.

As long as this outcome remains Ukraine's choice the most prudent U.S. strategy is helping Ukraine actually achieve it, which brings me to the second issue, what will it take at this point to reset Ukraine on the path to victory, I would like to highlight a couple of key requirements.

The first one, after Ukraine stabilizes the alliance, the priority should be helping Ukraine restore its ability to maneuver on the battlefield. This will require a lot more ground-based long-range strike capability.

Second, we must deny Russia sanctuaries. Russia is not entitled to sanctuaries when it is trying to erase a nation. Right now, as we speak Russian Air Force is conducting live bomb attacks from Russia's aerospace sanctuary on Kharkiv and it can do so indefinitely, as my colleague George Barros has written this week. We must abandon the Russian information line that Russia can somehow demand immunity from being attacked when it is waging an unprovoked war.

We must remove any existing constraints on Ukraine to target Russian legitimate military and defense industrial capabilities inside of Russia. This is critical if we are actually serious about imposing strategic costs on Russia across the board.

The third is that we must really think beyond the standard force ratios and focus on asymmetries. Ukraine's effort in the Black Sea

is a quintessential example of an effort producing outsized effects, effects the Kremlin, by the way, is going out of its way trying to downplay.

With more resources, this effort can have even larger effects including on-the-ground war. Other asymmetric opportunities include helping Ukraine scale its rapid innovation through—essentially helping Ukraine scale its rapid innovation and helping Ukraine’s defense industrial base reach its potential. Ukraine’s minister of strategic industry estimates that Ukraine has 10 billion dollars in additional production capacity if properly resourced.

The final point I will mention is that we also must surge our own capacity. Figuring out how to creatively allocate resources that we have while gradually aiding capability is important but that is not the main problem that we need to solve.

The U.S. needs to lead a global coalition of partners in Europe and Asia to dramatically increase the overall stack of capabilities that matter in Ukraine but they will also matter for our own ability to deter and fight future wars.

Look, the combined [GDP] Gross Domestic Product of the U.S., our European partners, and our Asian allies is on the order of 63 trillion dollars. Russia’s GDP is around 1.9 trillion dollars. Iran and North Korea add little.

China is an enabler of Russia, but it has not mobilized, and if we mobilize and lean in Russia loses, and mobilizing means not just a surge in production, sparing more of the existing capabilities, but also accepting the higher threshold for pain and risk now to avoid more risk, more cost, and higher pain in the future.

The final point I will make is that the U.S. should also recognize that the spirit of decision-making has been a critical, at times the most critical, factor in this war. The key successes of Ukraine and its partners in this war have resulted from strategic clarity and lost opportunities have resulted from the inability to connect the ground truth to our interests and capabilities fast enough to act.

The front line would look different now had the U.S. proactively invested in Ukraine’s initiative in the winter of 2023 or passed the supplemental earlier. Russia learned that lesson very early, so much so that Russia’s entire strategy for the last two years has been focused on deterring and delaying U.S. decision-making.

We should learn that lesson, too, and recognize that we should plan to proactively resource multiple Ukraine campaigns, not expecting any single operation to have a decisive outcome. The U.S. should also expand its knowledge sharing with Ukrainian partners including growing physical presence in Ukraine to connect the ground truth to our decision faster, recognizing that the outcome of this war depends as much on our decision-making speed as it does on the military capability.

Thank you very much.

Chairman WILSON: Thank you so much, Ms. Bugayova, and I told you all—I am correct again that the ranking member Steve Cohen would be here. Now, I did not realize he was going to be bringing his fan club with him, too. [LAUGHTER.] That is proof of his effectiveness and so that he would attract such a crowd.

With this in mind, Ambassador, we will proceed and what we will do, everybody at five minutes and then so that we can have—

and even the politician is going to be held to five minutes and Stephanie Pendarvis is going to make sure that the timing is correct.

As we proceed, thank you, Ambassador.

**TESTIMONY OF AMBASSADOR JOHN HERBST [RET.], SENIOR  
DIRECTOR, ATLANTIC COUNCIL**

Mr. HERBST: I just want to quickly—[off mic]—[comes on mic]—with Nataliya. Okay.

The greatest national security challenge that we face is the partnership of aggressive authoritarian regimes seeking to undermine our global leadership. The larger longer-range threat, of course, is China with a real economy but the greatest short-term danger comes from our peer nuclear power Russia which is conducting a savage war of conquest to subjugate Ukraine in Europe and would like to restore control, at a minimum, over all the territory of the former Soviet Union which happens to include three NATO allies.

Ukraine is the place where we can and must deal a decisive blow to our adversaries. If we help Kyiv defeat Putin in Ukraine we prevent further Russian aggression to the west and send a cautionary message to Xi to lay off Taiwan.

It would also make it harder for Moscow to enable further Iranian aggression in the Middle East, a key factor in Hamas assault on Israel and the Houthis attacks on global shipping. What does this mean for U.S. policy now that Congress has passed the aid bill?

First, the administration must identify what is at stake in Ukraine clearly. The problem is not a war in Ukraine but a nuclear power seeking to subjugate Ukraine and then move further west.

Two things flow from this. First, we need a policy of containment for Russia, a position endorsed by representatives from 10 think tanks here on Capitol Hill in early February. The place, again, to defeat and contain Moscow is Ukraine, a large country fighting for its right to live free as proud Ukrainians.

Stopping Moscow there does not involve American soldiers. If our need is to contain and defeat Russia so that we can enjoy a free society allowing people like that who do not understand but have a clear point of view to speak, yes.

Providing \$40 billion a year in aid to Russia—to Ukraine is not a gift to Ukraine. It is the smart way to defend the United States, to defend our security and our prosperity, and it represents, roughly, four percent or less of our defense budget. That is first. We need to understand that we have a problem containing this nuclear rogue power.

Secondly, we need a clear power towards Moscow's war on Ukraine. The administration has frequently said we would stay with Ukraine as long as it takes. That is not good enough. We need a clear signal to defeat Russia to enable victory in Ukraine for Ukraine.

What does this look like? The first order of business is to enhance Ukraine's defensive line, so Russia does not add to the incremental gains when American military aid is in doubt. They are right now bombarding Kharkiv 30 kilometers from Ukraine's bor-

der with Russia. They are also making incremental gains around Kharkiv.

Though, lately, the administration has moved smartly to get ammunition and artillery to Ukraine. But it needs to do much more to protect Kharkiv and other Ukrainian cities, Ukrainian critical energy infrastructure, from Moscow's massive aerial assault. This means more air defense systems, Patriots, and French SAMP/Ts. Ukraine has three Patriot batteries. They need at least nine more. There is a—our allies, some of them could help fill this void.

There is a second dimension to this problem coming from American reluctance until mid-last year to back sending of F-16s to Ukraine even from European countries. Allies are now on track to deliver about a brigade's worth of aircraft. Ukraine needs well over a hundred.

With that, they could stop the successful glide bombs Moscow was using to pound Kharkiv and other places in Ukraine. Those F-16s will be essential to Ukraine's offensive in 2025. The White House needs to decide how to arrange the transfer of that many F-16s with all the necessary avionics and missiles.

Kyiv will choose the target of its next offensive but Moscow's greatest achievement in its 10-year war on Ukraine is the seizure of Crimea. That is also its greatest liability because Crimea needs to be supplied by the Kerch Bridge and by the land bridge from Donbas-occupied Donbas to Crimea.

If we give Ukraine the necessary weapons, the longer-range fires, the artillery, the tanks, the airplanes, they can seriously disrupt if not deny supply of those weapons to Ukraine, forcing Ukrainian troops—Russian troops to retreat from south mainland Ukraine and posing a severe political problem for Putin.

We need to do this. A strong policy to promote Ukrainian victory would not just involve sending the right weapons Ukraine needs but we need to change our rules of engagement. Allow Ukraine to strike Russian tower targets in Russia which are currently pounding Ukraine. Ukraine—again, Kharkiv is less than 30 miles—excuse me, 20 miles from Russia.

Russian forces are massed within Russia along the border. Russian airplanes flying in Russian air space are pounding Odesa—excuse me, Kharkiv as well as Odesa. That is a different story.

We need to allow the Ukrainians to strike back at them. We must also organize ourselves to meet the current security challenge. I have got about one more minute.

We need to ramp up our arms production. Arms—we learned in Ukraine that a major power war is heavily arms-intensive. We need that not just to help Russia lose in Ukraine, to help Ukraine defeat Russia, but so we can deal with a confrontation with China or Russia.

We also need to be flexible in the way we run this war. We need a senior official responsible for overall coordination of our policy on this war, meaning ramping up arms production, meaning making sure Ukraine gets the weapons it needs, meaning making sure the American government can react properly to changes on the battlefield.

Our obsolescence rule that Ukraine cannot use American weapons to strike Russia should be gone now that we are watching what

has happened in Kharkiv. Hopefully, it will change but we need a senior administration official responsible for that.

Finally, Congress. Congress has been strong pushing the administration to do more. It got the aid package passed. However, we need greater flexibility in the way we allocate appropriate weapons. American weapons, even new ones, are facing challenges with electronic warfare in the battle space. We need to in the appropriations process agree to changes in weapons design to meet those challenges on the battlefield.

All right. Basic point—we have done this before. We defeated massive armed aggressors in World War II. We can do this now. Thank you.

Chairman WILSON: Ambassador, thank you so much. As we proceed, I would like to point out that despite the fan club members of Mr. Cohen we do not want to have people harassed as they are coming into the building or into the room, and that—anyone obstructing needs to know that obstructing the entrance is a fire code violation and they will be removed.

With that in mind, we now proceed to Secretary Michael Ryan.

**TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL RYAN, FORMER DEPUTY ASSISTANT,  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**

Mr. RYAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Cohen, and Congressman Veasey, I am honored to testify today.

Ukraine has a pathway to victory with our support. Kyiv's challenge is simply this—how does a smaller force fighting for its survival defeat a genocidal Goliath?

It is clear President Putin is in it to win it. He has no other option. Our strategic objective, therefore, must be a Ukrainian victory on Kyiv's terms. To achieve this there is much we must do. It is in our vital interest to do so.

Together with our European and global partners, we must give Ukraine decisive advantages in munition stockpiles, rates and ranges of fires, speed and skill of maneuver, air defense, air offense, and intelligence while compensating for Ukraine's relative lack of manpower and Russia's resurgent defense industry bolstered by the unholy alliance of China, Iran, and North Korea.

We must also find ways for Ukraine to hold Russian forces at risk wherever they may be. Time is of the essence. This summer may be decisive. By the fall it could all be over. Therefore, we must rapidly adapt before it is too late. Strategic and operational success requires that we do three things.

First, clearly and publicly state our strategic objective, the defeat of Russia, so we can comprehensively plan for success and let Mr. Putin know he cannot win.

Second, we need to substantially resupply Kyiv in the next weeks to two months where a Russian breakthrough on the battlefield is possible. Russia has the initiative. The 300-plus missile and drone attack on Israel on April 13 happens every week in Ukraine but with greater ferocity.

Third, we need to intelligently tailor our assistance to a specific strategy and plan that will bring victory to Ukraine. Ukraine cannot win on defense. They must take the fight to the enemy. Rapid

resupply from our own stocks is imperative on par with the 1973 resupply of Israel during the Yom Kippur War.

We need to give Ukraine a Patriot battery now. This could be the difference between winning in the long run or losing this summer. Ukraine needs more weapons and better tactics. To provide the weapons we should fully exploit the Defense Production Act and appoint a weapons czar to bring the industry in line with our strategic objective.

Russia's economy is on a war footing. Ours is not. We can help Ukraine help itself. American companies should partner with Ukrainian ones. Ukrainian warehouses are full of damaged equipment. American companies can repair this equipment.

A specific strategy and plan for victory includes tactics and knowing how to beat your enemy. Tactics inform requirements. Combining existing methods in innovative ways can be decisive.

To that end, former NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller and I wrote an article in *Foreign Policy* titled "Ukraine has a Pathway to Victory" that lays out how Ukrainian forces can recombine existing tactics and technologies into a new scheme of maneuver based on our Cold War Joint Air Attack Team, or JAAT, concept. As Russian forces move out from behind their prepared defenses, the updated eJAAT, as we call it, is an ideal counteroffensive tactic to blunt and defeat their advance. To win, Ukraine needs localized and temporary air and electromagnetic superiority at points of its own choosing. Fighter unmanned aerial vehicles that can autonomously find and destroy Russian surveillance and attack drones, could sweep the skies. Such systems should be rapidly developed and fielded.

Ukrainian "Wild Weasel" missions for suppression of enemy air defense are already active using U.S.-provided missiles and with the support of the eJAAT. The F-16 will enhance the effectiveness of this mission. The threat of Russian aircraft could be mitigated by UAVs, such as MQ-9s armed with air-to-air missiles. European leaders are now suggesting that NATO air defense could help clear the skies in Western Ukraine.

Electromagnetic superiority is a thornier problem. The work under the DOD Electromagnetic Spectrum Superiority Strategy should be fully exploited.

All this we must do—and more. For the want of a nail, the horse was lost. If Ukraine loses, which they could very well do this summer, the very expensive and dangerous implications are that, in his newly acquired position of strength, President Putin will not negotiate. Rather, he will push for total victory. His air force and navy are largely intact, as are his Strategic Rocket Forces. If Ukraine loses, tens of thousands of Russian troops will be on the borders of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania. The Black Sea will be a Russian lake. Russia will no longer be fighting Ukraine and degrading its own capabilities, but instead, its wartime economy will be restoring its strength, particularly in drones, cruise missiles, and hypersonics, which threaten all of NATO's European territory.

Most destabilizing in the short term would be the five to 15 million Ukrainian refugees flooding into Europe. In the long term, the damage to U.S. and NATO credibility will affect the Middle East, Africa, and most importantly, Taiwan and the South China Sea.

The entire global security dynamic will change. NATO's 75th Anniversary Summit is this July in Washington. Ukraine back on the offensive would be the perfect backdrop; Ukraine in retreat would not.

China is watching. The world is watching. The choice is ours. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WILSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Indeed, each of your statements—it is so refreshing. I agree with everything you said, okay? I have never been to a hearing like that.

Then it would be interesting to find out now if people of another political party feel the same way, so I will refer to opening statements by Congressman Cohen.

**STATEMENT OF STEVE COHEN, U.S. HOUSE, FROM TENNESSEE**

Representative COHEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do not know if I need—really need to do an opening statement. I would just as soon move into the five minutes and just do that now.

Chairman WILSON: You see what a great team member he is, and another team member is here all the way from Indiana, and that is Congresswoman Victoria Spartz, Indiana by way of Ukraine. We are delighted to have Congresswoman Spartz here.

We will begin with the five minutes, and hold everybody—beginning with me—to the five minutes.

Indeed, your comments were so important, but my hopes for the people of Ukraine—when I was there in December, before the invasion, it was—at that time, the planning was for resistance and guerrilla warfare. Well, the people of Ukraine have done so much better than that, and so just perceived that they could be overrun with mass slaughter. The people of Ukraine stood firm, and so we need to be doing that.

Then I appreciate, indeed, something that all of us have seen, and that is that we are talking about Ukraine, but it goes far beyond, and the implications are really clear. We have been together at the Narva River there in Estonia, and war criminal Putin—one time by accident a couple of months ago—by accident said how much he really appreciated Narva. You know, he does. That is called—NATO it is called Article 5, and we need to avoid it.

Then as specific as you were talking, and that is, with Transnistria of Moldova, with obsession with Abkhazia of Georgia, he already illegally occupies other countries. With 4,000 troops in Armenia that are there for peacekeeping, they could be an occupation force so, it just keeps on going.

For people not to realize the implications of how far this could go—and so many of us—and you are going to see it, I believe—and that is, it is bipartisan. I truly want Mr. Biden to succeed, and I am glad about the change of policy about the long-range missiles. I am hoping for other policies. I hope for expediting equipment. Then I am really pleased—bipartisan—we had—I would say we would get 300 votes for aid; no, it was 311, and so—and Speaker Mike Johnson did a great job.

Over and over again, it has been bipartisan. President Trump himself placed Javelin missiles in Ukraine to try to deter this. President Trump put American troops in Poland—so historically significant—and President Trump is the one who warned Angela

Merkel that Nord Stream 2 was going to finance the capitulation of Western civilization to Putin.

Over and over again, we see coming together—and beginning when—and Nataliya, I would like your point of view on the impact that you see—how important for success for the people of Ukraine.

Ms. BUGAYOVA: Thank you. I think two points on that—first of all, for Ukraine, this remains to be an existential war, and the choice is actually very simple, and it has never been just about choosing between Russia and the West. The choice remains about the way of life, and we see the two ways of life that Ukraine is choosing between on two sides of the front line: On one side a Russian occupation where you have atrocities on a daily basis committed against civilians, where you have extrajudicial killings, torture, deportation; and then on the other side you have Ukraine, that is free, unoccupied, and as imperfect as it is, striving to be a better state every day. Therefore, what stands in between those two ways of life is essentially Ukrainian armed forces, supported by the population of Ukraine, and its partners like the United States. For Ukraine, the choice remains clear.

I think there is a lot more at stake in this war than the existence of Ukraine, as we discussed, including vital U.S. national security interests, but also the future of NATO because, as you know well, Article 5, or NATO border, are not magic shields, and NATO's decision-making depends very much on the perceptions and assessments of individual member states, on the credibility of other member states in the alliance.

Chairman WILSON: Hear, hear. Ambassador?

Mr. HERBST: Again, I agree with what Nataliya said. The Ukrainian people have no choice. Putin has made clear—and our intelligence agencies brilliantly picked this up before the big invasion—their intention to impose their vision of what Ukrainians should be, which is—to use a historic and not much—appreciated phrase in Ukraine—little Russians, not to have their own identity as a separate people.

We see this in the brutal war crimes that are being conducted in occupied Ukraine against Ukrainians who want to speak the Ukrainian language, and who do not want to worship in the Russian Orthodox Church, so Ukraine had no choice. The people understand that, and even though they are suffering greatly, they do not have an alternative but to fight on because, as the former leader and her son said to me 18 months ago, living under Russian bombs is bad, but living under Russian occupation is far worse.

They are in this to the end, and they will win if we provide the necessary support—which again, as all three of us have made clear—is critical to American interests. It is a smart way to deal with a rogue nuclear superpower.

Chairman WILSON: Hear, hear.

Mr. HERBST: Beat them in Ukraine.

Chairman WILSON: Hear, hear.

Mr. Secretary?

Mr. RYAN: Sir, I completely agree with the two other witnesses. I would just add, as an attacker, Russia has two choices because Ukraine is fighting for its survival. It can either capitulate or annihilate, and they are on track to try to annihilate, and therefore it

is extremely important that we do everything possible now to prevent that from happening. Thank you.

Chairman WILSON: Thank you so much, I am really grateful that we have been joined by Congressman Jim Costa from California, and I am really grateful that we have with us Senator Richard Blumenthal, all the way from Rhode Island.

Senator BLUMENTHAL: Connecticut.

Chairman WILSON: That is okay—[LAUGHTER]—it is one of those assorted—hey, it is one of those assorted northeastern states, okay? [LAUGHTER.] They get confused.

Aside from that, before I embarrass myself again, we will proceed now. We have—beginning with Congressman Cohen.

Representative COHEN: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Let me ask—we started off—first, let me say what I think is—Ambassador Herbst, did you say that Congress moved the administration along to get the security bill passed?

Mr. HERBST: No. What I was referring to was they said that the—excuse me, the bill that was passed encouraged the administration to send—[off mic]. Now, of course, the administration sent—

Representative COHEN: No, I am not talking about that; I am talking about the security package. I thought you said that Congress had done some things, and one of the things they did was they helped the administration get that.

Regardless, the administration was for it; Congress was slow, and if it were not for Congress, we could have got that done three months earlier. Okay, good. Pass without a—

Chairman WILSON: We all agree.

Representative COHEN: Yes, let me ask you this. We started off with the sanctions. Do you think the sanctions worked?

Mr. HERBST: I do not have any doubt that the sanctions have cost the Russian economy 2 or 3 percent of growth annually, and perhaps a little bit less over time as Moscow has adjusted to it and Moscow's pals have adjusted to it. What it has not done, of course, is force Putin to end the war.

There is a lot of controversy about statistics regarding Russian economic growth. You could say according to [IMF]International Monetary Fund and the World Bank the Russian economy grew more than 3 percent last year. The problem is that those statistics are essentially based on Russian economic numbers. Russia puts out statistics designed to meet the political needs of the government.

Representative COHEN: Kind of like Hamas and Palestine saying how many children have been killed every week.

Mr. HERBST: Civilian casualties. U.N. agencies accept it as real.

Representative COHEN: Well, last week the U.N. said that they were not right and there were about 5,000 people that they said were dead, they have no conclusion that is dead and that the children were a greater number than ever. The New York Times just had not picked up on that yet.

Mr. HERBST: Indeed.

Representative COHEN: Anyway, so sanctions, you think they have helped.

Mr. HERBST: Correct.

Representative COHEN: Nevertheless, they were not the panacea. They did not effectively kill the Russians—

Mr. HERBST: The advocates for sanctions were not saying they would be a panacea. They were saying they would place an immediate and a long-term cost. Perhaps the most effective of the sanctions, although not as effective as we like, have been the technology control sanctions. They have clearly made it much harder for Moscow to develop weapons, or rather to produce weapons that are effective. Of course, they are finding ways around it, especially with help from China.

Representative COHEN: I agree with you we need to have—allow Ukraine to use weapons to go into Russia. It makes no sense, them coming and destroying all of the utilities, energy sources, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, and then Ukraine's got their hands tied behind their back. Putin's not thinking nicely of us—we give \$60 billion; he is going to think, oh, but we let them shoot weapons into Belgorod or whatever it is called.

Mr. HERBST: There is no doubt about that. All of us agree on it. I would just note that when the House finally passed the aid package, a lot of people in Moscow were unhappy and they did not hide it.

Representative COHEN: I am sure they were unhappy. Let me ask you this: We passed the aid package. We need to get them weapons on the front line to protect Kharkiv and areas on their eastern front, but at the same time, we need to get them the Patriot missiles and defensive missiles. Do we have any idea what is been prioritized and what has not?

Mr. HERBST: Sadly, our—we are providing merely missiles for Patriot batteries, as opposed to batteries themselves.

Representative COHEN: Oh.

Mr. HERBST: I think—I am not an expert on this but I believe we have like 19 or 20 Patriot batteries ourselves. I do not know if we believe we can spare that. Some of those are protecting our troops in the Middle East so that is work that has to be done. They need to be there. We know that some of our allies who are not in any danger right now have one or two or three that could be provided. I think the administration could be stronger in pushing for that.

Representative COHEN: Yes, I think—I think it was Romania offered some of their batteries, one of the Eastern Bloc countries.

Mr. Ryan, do you have any thoughts on that, about the ability to get them batteries or Patriot missiles, defensive missiles?

Mr. RYAN: Yes, sir. The most important near-term thing we could do: Spain has a Patriot battery in Turkey; it is been there for a long time. We could get the Spanish to move that into Ukraine and then we could put one of our batteries there, which helps us in the Middle East with the problem Ambassador Herbst was talking about. That we could do fairly quickly.

Representative COHEN: Thank you. Thank you.

I appreciate what is been done. Are you from Russia?

Ms. BUGAYOVA: No, I am not. I am an American and I grew up in Ukraine.

Representative COHEN: You grew up in Ukraine. Okay, well there was something in there, your biography, that made me think

about that and I was just thinking about Vladimir Kara-Murza and how much—he is still imprisoned and we need to get him free and it is awful. I mean, Russia just—thank you.

Yield back.

Chairman WILSON: I do not want to ruin Congressman Cohen's reputation but he was thinking of Vladimir Kara-Murza and I was thinking of Alexei Navalny, so there are brave Russians.

With this, we now proceed to—this is bipartisan, bicameral, and so we are so grateful to have Senator Richard Blumenthal, Connecticut. You all are familiar with that. It is the Nutmeg State. [LAUGHTER.]

**STATEMENT OF RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, U.S. SENATE, FROM CONNECTICUT**

Senator BLUMENTHAL: Thanks, Mr. Chairman, and appreciate your letting me ask just a few questions and the courtesy of my House colleagues. Thank you for conducting this hearing.

Thank you for being here. Each of you has very extraordinary knowledge and experience in this area, and I think you are united in the sense that we need to defeat Russia. Our own national security is at stake, and we ought to do everything possible.

I want to ask you about something unrelated to the arms. I think we need to do more long-range artillery, the F-16s, whatever is necessary to extend the field of battle, even into Russian territory, so as to disrupt their command and their supply of weapons, and we need to do it quickly because obviously, the offensive is coming. But there are two areas where I would like you to comment.

Number one: How effective have our sanctions been? On the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations in the Senate, we are doing an investigation of violations of sanctions, how countries like Uzbekistan—you are very familiar with that country, Mr. Ambassador—are potentially, whether purposefully or unwittingly, providing a means for sending semiconductors, parts, components that have been found in the weapons used against Ukraine. They have been found by the Ukrainians. Last time I was in Ukraine I sat across from President Zelensky. I have been there five times and met with him over each of those meetings, and the last time he handed me photographs, and documents in a file on what they found in terms of components and parts made by Americans in Russian weapons.

The second relates to financial resources that we could use, Russian assets. The REPO Act—you may be familiar with it—endeavors to take—seize and use those Russian assets to support Ukraine, and whether there is more we can do to push our allies in Europe to side with us in this effort. I think they have been the reluctant party. Our government was reluctant for a long time but I think they have demonstrated more resolve.

Mr. HERBST: There is no question that there have been unusual changes, increase in trade between, say, Kyrgyzstan and Russia, some of the other Central Asian republics and Russia, Georgia, and Russia, maybe Turkey and Russia, and they may well be explained by sanctions evasion. Therefore, yes, we need to—we need to have a very serious conversation with all of the countries in question—of course, with China, which apparently Secretary Blinken did a

few weeks ago. In fact, Chinese-Russian trade dipped somewhat in March and April, which may have reflected those efforts. We need to do more, for sure. For sure. Because Russia is not really high-tech in the way we are, and so they need those components to run their weapons so, we should do more.

On the frozen Russian state assets, I agree with you. We need to do a lot more on this. I credit the administration, Daleep Singh, for his initiative, which is to allow the use of interest—20 years' worth of interest from the 300 billion of frozen state assets, so they can—Ukraine could receive \$50 billion in the next few months if everybody agreed. Sadly, this is the U.S.—I mean, it is good it is the U.S. position; my understanding is that London and Ottawa are also in favor of this, and the rest of the G-7 are not. I know that Singh has been arduously pushing this agenda. I think he could use some help from the most senior members of the administration, starting with his boss, Secretary Yellen, but also the president. I think if we pushed hard, we might be able to persuade our allies to do this.

I also think that this is an even better idea than the one that Daleep Singh is pushing. This is an idea associated with Philip Zelikow, Bob Zoellick, and Larry Summers, to simply transfer almost all of that 300 billion to Ukraine. There have—there is a justification for this. I know that there is interest in this elsewhere. However, if we could start with what I call the Singh issue, that would be wonderful. To the extent that Congress can encourage the administration to use its vast influence to persuade the allies, that would be welcome.

Senator BLUMENTHAL: Thank you.

Ms. BUGAYOVA: I would add, on the sanctions part, I think the core question is how do we assess the effectiveness of the sanctions, and whether we assess them on trying to affect Russia's intent to wage the war, or Russia's actual capability to wage the war. I think if we try to assess from the perspective of intent, that is not necessarily the most helpful metric, because Russia's objectives remain maximalist. Very few things are capable of changing them.

However, sanctions certainly degraded Russia's ability to an extent to conduct the war. Russia's defense industrial base and its ability to surge its production is not without constraint, and it is not without limitation. I think the issue is that the sanctions are A, insufficient; second, it is—a lot of it is cat-and-mouse, as Russia adapts to the sanctions. For them to be more effective, they have to be increasingly proactive, and they have to be increasingly tied with other efforts, including the military campaign, the questions of the global contested logistics, and the question of the Russian shadow fleet. It is a question of proactiveness and comprehensiveness. But they certainly have an effect on Russia's ability to sustain the war.

Senator BLUMENTHAL: Thank you.

Chairman WILSON: Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator BLUMENTHAL: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WILSON: Indeed, we have discovered the senator from Rhode Island—[LAUGHTER]—okay, Senator Sheldon.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: It is quite near Connecticut. [LAUGHTER.]

Chairman WILSON: Might I—

Senator WHITEHOUSE: Kind of our western suburb, in fact.  
[LAUGHTER.]

Chairman WILSON: Hey, that—

Senator BLUMENTHAL: I want to just tell my colleague from Rhode Island that I was mistaken for him—

Chairman WILSON: No, no—no—no, no—the—hey, the—please, the states were confused. Because of the assorted northeastern states. We cannot remember all of them, okay? [LAUGHTER.]

Senator BLUMENTHAL: They were all so close together, right?

Chairman WILSON: Quite close.

Keeping all this in order, somehow, I want to—indeed, we are delighted, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, who is going to soon be the incoming co-chair of the OSCE. What a northern gentleman he is. He is going to be deferring to Congresswoman Virginia—Victoria Spartz of Indiana.

#### **STATEMENT OF VICTORIA SPARTZ, U.S. HOUSE, FROM INDIANA**

Representative SPARTZ: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will try to make a brief statement. My question is going to have quick five parts. I mean, from my perspective, we either did not have a strategy or had a bad strategy, because the situation tilted in the direction of Russia.

You know, so in five items, I want to get your assessment of where we are positive and negative on these five items related to Ukraine. You know, I understand Ukraine did a lot of changes. They changed generals, and a lot of things happened. They still did not put the country in war mode. Russia did; Ukraine did not. Can you assess what is happening in Ukraine?

The United States. Obviously, we did not give—[LAUGHS]—you know, the cluster munitions for no reason. We also did not really supply—resupply and did not put our industry in the proper mode to be able to have even—if we plan to have long wars, which I do not think is a good idea. I think decisiveness and speed benefit the West much more.

Then China, what is happening in China, your assessment of where they are with this. They facilitated this war for Russia.

Europe. Europe does a lot of grandiose talk, but generally, all ends in grandiose talk and a lot of statements.

Then the rest of the world and Global South, what is happening in Africa, Global South, and the rest of the world. What are the dynamics right there?

On these five items—Ukraine, USA, Europe, China, Global South, and the rest of the world—if you can just—we can start maybe with Mr. Ryan.

Mr. RYAN: Thank you. Perfect. Clearly, they are all related. As was said earlier, Ukraine, the situation there is the center of gravity for our interests, and the interests of our allies and partners in Europe, and in the Asia-Pacific region.

Start with the Global South: They are watching. They are being played by both China and Russia, who are both trying to change the rules-based world order to one more favorable to autocracy, and they are offering autocracy as a better way to meet the needs of

the people and ensure peace in the world. That is a narrative that we have to defeat. Defeating Russia in Ukraine will help us defeat that narrative.

In Europe, the narrative has not taken place. Europe has transitioned significantly, as Ambassador Herbst said earlier, well beyond what we thought they would do. They are slowly getting things forward, but I would note the Germans are now putting together an initiative across Europe for air defense in Ukraine. Therefore, there are some positive signs coming forward.

China is playing its own game, of course. They need Russia to be able to push their narrative around the world, that they are the best form of government, and everyone should be like them. Without Russia, that is going to start to fall on deaf ears, and China's interests will be lessened.

Now, in the United States, we are starting to come to grips, as we always do, slowly—but now that we are getting together on the same sheet of music if you will, we have the opportunity to invoke our industrial might, as we have in the past. Because this next year on the ground in Ukraine, is going to be an industrial competition between what Russia can do with Chinese, Iranian, and North Korean support, and what we can do with our European friends. We really need to move forward in that area.

In Ukraine, as we all know, Ukraine has done a spectacular job. The beginning of your question, I think, was exactly right. We did not start with a strategy. At first, we thought Ukraine would lose, then when they started to win, we were late to need, and we were not able to reinforce their success. That gave the Russians time to dig in. Then we just assumed that the Russians were going to be bad forever, and the Ukrainians were undefeatable. The counter-offensive did not go as planned, because we did not diligently get in there, and tie our assistance to the strategy and the tactics employed on the ground. Now, it is a moment of reset, and everyone is looking. We need to reset correctly and go on the offensive as soon as possible. In the very near term, we need to get as much assistance, as intelligently as possible, to the forces in Ukraine so that they can start to turn the tide.

Representative SPARTZ: What—if you would say, what top three things that need to be done in the immediate term better? What needs to be done? Three things, if you just—

Mr. RYAN: We need to provide long-range fires for the Ukrainian military, so they can interdict Russian forces wherever they are, including in the Russian Federation, in order to stop the destruction of Kharkiv, and to regain the initiative. Because once Russia can no longer supply its troops, and they can no longer sustain their command and control—in other words, we can—Ukraine can destroy their headquarters—then the Ukrainian army is more motivated and better trained, and they will start to prevail.

The next thing is to provide air defense because we need to protect Ukrainian cities and the Ukrainian population. The third thing is we need to get in, with the Ukrainians, provide a strategy for victory, one that is tied to our industrial support, our political support, our ability to marshal allies, particularly in Europe, to align the Europeans' effort to areas where we are not as strong as they are, and they can get in and do it as well.

Also, listen to our Eastern European counterparts, because they know the situation better than anybody. They were proven right.

Representative SPARTZ: Right. I know the strategy not to lose if you—how might lose, but you will never win. You have to have a strategy and action to win.

Mr. RYAN: Exactly.

Representative SPARTZ: Thank you so much, sir.

My time has expired, so I yield back.

Chairman WILSON: Thank you very much, Congresswoman Spartz.

We will now proceed to Senator Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island.

**STATEMENT OF SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, U.S. SENATE, FROM RHODE ISLAND**

Senator WHITEHOUSE: Thanks very much, Chairman.

While I am here among so many House members, may I take a moment to thank all of you for seeing to it that the REPO Bill got into the supplemental. I know it is always a little bit of a challenge when House members have to put a Senate bill into something that they have been working on. Chairman Wilson, you all should know, was an extremely powerful voice for getting that done.

Chairman WILSON: Thank you.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: A sponsor of the bill over on this side. I just want to express appreciation to the House in general for achieving that, and to the Chairman in particular—

Chairman WILSON: Thank you.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: For his leadership and oomph, to get that done.

Ambassador Ryan, I am delighted to hear—[LAUGHS]—you think that we would add strategic value to the Ukrainians as they find their way to victory. So far, we have managed to—seem to have gotten most things wrong. I hope that, as we support the Ukrainians on their path to victory, we are a lot more humble about deferring to their good judgments, rather than insisting on our own. We do not have much a—of a track record right now, beginning with that horrible, huge briefing over in the joint secure space here, in which every single member of the executive branch said they had five days to two weeks, and then it was all done. There were people in the audience who did not believe that. I was one of them, and sure enough, here we are.

Senator BLUMENTHAL : I remember it well.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: I am trying to—yes, was not that an awful moment?

Anyway, on—right now, I think a key focus is air defense. I am not a defense expert, a strategy expert, a weapons expert. What do you think is the best place to go for a comparison between what Ukraine has, and what it needs to provide its own Iron Dome-equivalent, to be able to defend its territory from air attack most effectively? Is there some published resource that is best at that? Or who should I ask?

If you know, just go ahead and give me the answer. I suspect this is not the panel for that detailed question.

Mr. RYAN: Thank you for the question, sir. I would suggest—General Dave Allvin, the chief of staff of the United States Air Force. I used to sit beside him every day when we were stationed together at U.S. European Command. He gets it.

Air defense is a layered—a multisystem approach.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: Yes.

Mr. RYAN: Therefore, at the high altitude, to intercept the most dangerous payloads, that have the largest bang, Patriot is absolutely outstanding for that.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: Yes.

Mr. RYAN: Some of the European systems, including former Soviet-made systems, like the S-300, all integrate it together, so to have the launchers is necessary. To have the radar that can see through the clutter of the electromagnetic jamming, so that they can then engage those targets, is extremely important. Then ground-based air defense, so nearer into the targets, to get that last mile. The way the Israelis do it, is the Iron Dome, then they have David's Sling, which is the next layer out. Then they have the David—the Arrow system—

Senator WHITEHOUSE: Yes.

Mr. RYAN: —Which is even further, and then we supplement that with our own assets.

It has to be layered. It has to be supported by outstanding radars. It has to have an electromagnetic aspect to it. However, General Allvin can give you the best answers on that.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: I could not help but notice that when Iran rocketed Israel, a phalanx of allies was able to come together, and pretty much knock every missile out of the sky. That was a stark comparison to what Ukraine is experiencing.

In your view, if 10 is the best-quality interception and defense capability against incoming artillery and missiles, where have we left Ukraine right now, in terms of the equipment? Are they at two? Are they at four? Are they at six? How big is the hole that we need to fill to protect their skies?

Mr. RYAN: The answer varies based on geography. Kyiv is a 10. Other parts of Ukraine are a two. It is the scope and scale, and what Russia has been doing is trying to get maximum effect in areas that have the least amount of defense. To have—as Ambassador Herbst mentioned earlier—nine Patriot batteries forward, really is the way you protect the rest of Ukraine. It is like a hockey goalie coming out of the goal.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: Yes.

Mr. RYAN: You take—you cut the angles down, and then you can defend with less. We need to do that. That means we need to have security forward, which means the Ukrainian army—as they push forward, we can push the air defense forward. It is that capability that we are after.

Senator WHITEHOUSE: Did you notice the hockey goalie example, for New—for New—we New Englanders? [LAUGHTER.] [Fed ?] right to us.

Chairman WILSON: Yes, you and Tom Emmer an example to me later. [LAUGHTER.]

Senator WHITEHOUSE: All right.

Well, thank you all very much. I think if there has been one concern that I have had, it is that we have always been there to give the Ukrainians what they needed, and we have always been there six months late. I hope that we can pick up our pace so that they are not crying for Javelins, and then crying for HIMARS, and then crying for Abrams, and crying for ATACMS, and crying for 300s, and now F-16s—always there, always late, seems to be our practice. I hope we can fix that.

Thank you very much, Chairman.

Chairman WILSON: Hey, thank you so much, soon-to-be Ranking Co-Chair.

Very important, very perceptive, as an identification of the phalanx of countries coming together. One of those, incredibly enough, was France. I was really grateful, last week, to be with the senator for the 80th anniversary reception at the French ambassador's residence. As an indication that all Americans should see how Europe is coming together, at home is a huge copy of the Statue of Liberty. On this, at the ambassador's residence, is also a Ukrainian flag. If the people wonder about countries coming—Europe coming together, it is real, and we have had the opportunity to see that.

Also, real—I want to credit Congressman Marc Veasey for his being here first. Congressman Veasey.

Representative VEASEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the panel for being here, as well.

I was hoping that you could give us some examples—because I think that this is important, as we sort of move forward, when we have to come back for—and ask for funding in the future. Can you provide some really specific examples of how the bipartisan foreign aid package that was passed, how it is already tangibly helped Ukraine against capabilities for Russia's unlawful invasion? Is there anything that is very tangible, that we can like, take away, and go back and share with our constituents?

Mr. HERBST: Tangible. There is no question that once the bill passed the House, right, before it became law, Ukraine began to reduce its rationing of ammunition and other weapons supplies. It took another step towards reduced rationing after the bill became law, and the administration has moved, I think, almost as quickly as possible, to get stuff out. Would still—they are still a way in the hole because we are months behind but, they have done things.

Beyond that, it is hard to say. Well, actually, there are two other points. The Russians were clearly deeply unhappy about this. They were sort of counting on this to continue. However this had—may have had a perverse impact on their operations. They see this as a window closing, and this may have persuaded them to push a little bit harder, especially in the northeast around Kharkiv. However, that is the only—that is the only thing I can see.

Representative VEASEY: Yes. Yes.

Ms. BUGAYOVA: I can—I can elaborate on that point.

Representative VEASEY: Yes, please.

Ms. BUGAYOVA: I think three additional points. First of all, before the aid package was passed, actually, we were in a moment where the range of possibilities was exceptionally wide. It actually included the most dangerous scenario, of Russia essentially putting Ukrainian forces on the path of collapse. With the aid package

being passed, that most dangerous scenario is not presently on the table, and it reset the range of outcomes that are possible in this war, that still includes Ukraine's victory.

I think secondly, more concretely, the aid package is also exceptionally important for Ukraine's ability to plan operations ahead. Third, it does matter also for Ukraine's ability to resolve its manpower issues. Ukraine has taken concrete steps legislatively and practically, but having the ability to plan around concrete aid deliveries will also help units who have limited capabilities to be able to relieve from the front, and essentially participate in training. It is also very important for the manpower planning component.

Representative VEASEY: Thank you very much. Yes, that is very helpful.

Ambassador and Mr. Ryan, I was hoping that maybe you could also tell us what sort of dangers, or problems may occur for Russia's sustained use of Iranian and North Korean weaponry and technology in this conflict. I know that there has been some talk about that and was hoping that you could shed some light on how that may further—or how that could hurt us in the future if they are going to continue to use these weapons, and how that is giving Russia, or any of these other countries, some sort of a military advantage.

Mr. RYAN: Thank you, Congressman.

Proliferation around the world of these types of weapons, that contribute to instability in Africa, South America, and other parts of the world, generally comes from North Korea and Iran. By funding their arms production, through Russian acquisition, the Russians are actually enabling their ability to be more disruptive in more places in the world, which creates a greater problem for us. President Putin early on decided—and this was in Secretary Ash Carter's memoirs—that he needed to oppose U.S. policy everywhere in the world and create as many problems for us as he could. Using North Korean and Iranian proliferation of weapons does that. When we look at the domino effect of coups in Africa, it is directly related back to that Russian policy dictated by President Putin, and as enabled by Iranian and North Korean shipments.

Representative VEASEY: Okay.

Mr. HERBST: I would add that Iran has long sought more advanced Russian weapons technology—planes, and missiles. The Russians have been somewhat reluctant to do that. Yet, Russia has been dependent on Iranian drones since Month Two of the big invasion. This has enhanced Iranian leverage to, for example, maybe get the technology, and start producing more and more advanced Russian jets with Iran.

As far as I know, this has not happened yet. This is—I mean—I mean, you can—you can go to the intel community, and find out where this stands. This is certainly something Iran is trying to get from Russia, and for that matter, the North Koreans, as well. When Putin went hat in hand for artillery from North Korea, a lot of which are to have proved to be duds, the North Koreans were also asking about ramping up their missile technology with Russia. I am not sure the Russians have done anything yet. Again, this stuff is in play.

Representative VEASEY: Yes. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WILSON: Thank you very much, Congressman Veasey.

Again, I want to recognize Congressman Veasey as the first person here, so that should be remembered. We appreciate it.

As we conclude, it really is—I hope people see symbolically that what we have is—again, recognition from California, with Jim Costa.

**STATEMENT OF JIM COSTA, U.S. HOUSE, FROM CALIFORNIA**

Representative COSTA: I wanted to thank—

Chairman WILSON: Now, I want to point out, that he is with the Trans-Atlantic Dialogue, okay? He is very perceptive.

Thank you.

Representative COSTA: Well, thank you very much, my friend. I appreciate your leadership, as was noted before, on these efforts.

I think there is a lot of consensus here, is what we are hearing. I think learning the lessons of the last two-and-a-half years is what is critical for the purpose of the testimony here. As we go forward, not to recount, well, if we coulda, shoulda, woulda, that is fine but, that is in the past.

My questions are directed toward the short term, with the passage of this package, and the longer term, and how we put together a concentrated bipartisan effort to support Ukraine. We have got 10 members of their parliament here this week. They are aggressively trying to seek support, both in the short term and the long term, as we all should be doing. I have worked with two of you here before. We have gone to Ukraine several times, three times for me in the last 18 months. Just came back in February.

My question is, how do we focus on doing everything we can? The administration is, as has been noted, has done the right thing, but oftentimes, three and six months too late. This micromanaging, this tending of micromanaging the Ukrainians' efforts from the West Wing has got to change. I do not know what advice you might have to suggest on how we do that in a way that does not politicize this thing because obviously, that will have other impacts that we—I do not want to see take place.

What would your priorities be? Ms. Bugayova, we will start with you, in terms of recommendations to us in Congress, in terms of short-term and long-term efforts and priorities? I want to ask the same question with you, my friend, Ambassador Herbst.

I want to end with Mr. Ryan there on F-16s.

Ms. BUGAYOVA: Thank you.

To recap, I think there are concrete steps, and also a change in approach that is required, based on the lessons learned from the last two years. I think the concrete steps are providing Ukraine with what it needs to help Ukraine restore its ability to maneuver on the battlefield. That is the priority, which requires a lot more ground-based long-range strike capabilities.

We discussed about denying Russia sanctuary space, and that is to the question of air defense that was asked earlier. No amount of Patriot batteries will solve the glide bomb problem that Russia is—that Ukraine is experiencing right now in Kharkiv. Ukraine has to be able to strike Russian targets inside of Russia.

Representative COSTA: No, absolutely. I mean, this is the—they are offensive. They are the aggressor, and I do not see how you can conduct any legitimate counter-strategy without doing that.

Ms. BUGAYOVA: Yes. I will say, the final point, in terms of the change of the approach, as we learned, the decision-making speed is a critical asset in this war. I think it, for the U.S., is really important to be able to connect the ground truth to our capabilities and interests fast enough. That requires expanding knowledge-sharing with Ukrainians, including potentially expanding U.S. ground presence in Ukraine, recognizing that decision-making speed will determine the outcome of this war, very much so, as well.

Representative COSTA: Thank you.

We will follow up, Ambassador Herbst.

Mr. HERBST: It would start with the administration wanting victory as a policy goal, and deciding it was a critical interest of the United States to accelerate that victory. When we—when we—when we talk about our—when we talk to Ukraine about their campaign plans, we follow the battlefield closely. We send them the weapons they need to achieve the objectives that we understand make sense to win this war quickly. You need to have someone at a—at a very senior level in the administration, maybe even a special—a special manager for the overall Ukrainian—win the Ukrainian war effort. They are—they make sure that weapons that Ukraine needs are gotten there in time, that we are looking proactively to how we can help with this, as opposed to waiting for simply Ukrainian requests. They also make sure that we ramp up our arms production, which we have been talking about for two years, and have not done much to do. These—we decide this is a—we decide this is a priority for us. We will organize ourselves to win. If—that is what the Biden administration did with passing the IRA, that is what happened with COVID on the previous administration, we can do this. Of course, we have won—

Representative COSTA: The world has changed since February 24, 2022.

Mr. HERBST: Right.

Representative COSTA: We recognize that, and now we need to act on it.

The Air National Guard in California has been working, as you know, my friend for 23 years. We have been trying to coordinate this transfer and training of pilots for the F-16s. It has been slow, terribly slow. It looks like we have maybe close to 16 pilots training. We need to fund these. The amount of the inventory of these platforms, I understand, is there. How would you offer the best way to accelerate this effort? Are—my friends on our side say they would never urge an offensive like we—the Ukrainians tried last year without an air offensive. I mean, it was just crazy. We would not do it. However yet, we expected the Ukrainians to make a miracle out of this without the proper air cover.

Mr. RYAN: Yes sir, absolutely correct.

First, I would say, all of the above. If we do those things, then we are in a position to utilize the F-16s appropriately. The thing that underpins that, which we often miss in the debates, is the supply chains, the logistics, the maintenance, and the repair of

damaged equipment, all of which are part of a long-term strategy to make the F-16 a winning contribution to the war effort in Ukraine. I know the California National Guard has been working that with the Ukrainians for a very long time. We have to do those things.

As an A-10 pilot, I actually flew the F-16 once. It is easy to fly. It is very hard to employ it in a way that we employ it, in a very complex air scenario that supports ground maneuver. That is where we need to get the Ukrainians to because you are absolutely right. Without that cover for their ground maneuver, they are not going to win. With it, they are going to win. That is why we need to do that.

The funding is very important. The number of pilots is very important. Experienced pilots can learn the aircraft very quickly; new pilots can learn it relatively quickly. We need to get them—

Representative COSTA: I hear they have good pilots.

Mr. RYAN: They have very good pilots. We need to get them into the mission scenarios where they actually learn to employ the aircraft effectively. They are already doing that with the suppression of enemy air defense with their own aircraft, with our missiles. That is great training for them to transition to the F-16.

Representative COSTA: They are the original MacGyvers.

Mr. RYAN: They are, yes, sir, absolutely.

Taking the picture holistically as part of a winning strategy based on a clear objective will allow us to put the training resources against the F-16 requirements of the Ukrainians, get the Europeans fully involved in supporting those aircraft on the ground, getting them bedded down where they can be useful—

Chairman WILSON: Hey, Mr. Secretary, I want to take a quick picture. I want the three of you to come here. We want to get a picture while the senator is still here.

Please, you all come around, but—and we shall—[LAUGHTER]—hey.

Mr. RYAN: I was finished.

Chairman WILSON: Trans-Atlantic Chairman, thank you. We now will be concluding, and—but hey, to him—

Senator WHITEHOUSE: Stand in front of the podiums here, or—

Chairman WILSON: I was going to get them and we will stand right here. We want that backdrop behind us, okay? [Sounds gavel.]

[Whereupon, at 3:24 p.m., the hearing ended.]

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

OPENING STATEMENT OF CO-CHAIRMAN CARDIN, U.S. SENATE, FROM MARYLAND

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This hearing is both timely and crucial. As leaders of the Helsinki Commission, all of us here are keenly aware that Russia's war against Ukraine is a crisis for human rights and a humanitarian catastrophe.

The Helsinki Final Act, adopted in 1975 between the United States, the Soviet Union, and 33 other states, gave rise to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as well as our own Commission. This seminal agreement articulated ten distinct principles: Sovereign equality; non-use of force; inviolability of frontiers; territorial integrity; peaceful settlement of disputes; non-intervention in internal affairs; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; self-determination of peoples; cooperation among states; and fulfillment of obligations under international law.

At no point since the adoption of the Helsinki Accords have these principles been more thoroughly and egregiously tested. Today, in Ukraine, Russia is clearly violating every single one of these principles. Every single one.

Any pretense of good faith that Russia once projected around its Helsinki obligations has not only been undermined—but completely shredded. It is an aggressor against Ukraine, posing a major threat to Europe as a whole, as it pursues a campaign against Ukraine's people and their very nationhood itself. It is no exaggeration to say that the Ukrainian victory is the most urgent human rights cause in Europe today, and that cause only can advance with the provision of Western arms.

Meanwhile, Russia clearly has broader imperial ambitions in Europe. Its soft annexation of Belarus, its influence campaign undermining Georgia, and its many threats against the free nations of Europe demonstrate that it does not intend to stop with Ukraine. Europe's peace, which the United States relies on for our own security, is being defended today by Ukraine and its heroic people. We must support them in this fight.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses to hear more about how we can better support Ukraine during this critical and dangerous time. Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF ISW NON-RESIDENT RUSSIA FELLOW NATALIYA BUGAYOVA

Thank you, Chairman Wilson and honorable members of the Commission for the opportunity to contribute to this critical discussion.

The battlefield situation in Ukraine will likely get worse for Ukraine before it gets better. The delays in Western materiel deliveries came at the cost of Ukraine's advantage. Russia is exploiting vulnerabilities across the frontline. Russia seeks to achieve battlefield effects in the remaining window of opportunity before Western military assistance reaches the frontline at scale.

Russia's main objective, however, is to falsely convince the United States that the aid will not make a difference—especially amid upcoming political milestones, such as the NATO summit, European Parliament elections, and US elections.

Ukraine is likely to be able to stabilize the frontline and blunt the Russian offensive as the aid arrives and Ukraine continues to address its manpower shortages. The supplemental aid package helped avoid a path to the most dangerous outcome and reset a range of possible outcomes for the war that still includes a Russian defeat and Ukrainian victory. Which outcome Ukraine is moving toward depends in no small part on the US learning lessons of the last two years.

LESSON #1: US interests in this war remain unchanged, and so does the most advantageous outcome for the US. This will likely remain true regardless of the ebbs and flows on the battlefield.

Russia is a self-declared adversary to the United States. Any effective US strategy to counter the Russian challenge will recognize the outcome of this war as a center of gravity of Russia's power and Russia's ability to threaten US interests. Russia's ability to reconstitute, to subjugate its neighbors, to confront NATO, to cooperate militarily with its partners like Iran, disproportionately depend on whether Russia keeps or loses its gains in Ukraine. It is not just about Russia's capability; it is about Russia's intent too. Putin is not seeking any offramps from his objectives to erase Ukraine a State, to fracture NATO, and to undermine the US. Moreover, the war has empowered an ultra-nationalist community inside of Russia that believes in expansion by force and is inherently anti-Western. If Russia is defeated, the next Russian leader may or may not be worse than Putin. Russian victory in Ukraine is a nearly guaranteed path to another Putin or worse because of the political imperatives that an empowered nationalist community would create.

Given these realities, the most dangerous outcome for the United States is allowing Russia to prevail in this war. The United States would face the worst threat from Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union, as a victorious Russia would emerge reconstituted and more determined to undermine the United States—and confident that it can. The risks of a Russian attack against NATO will rise. The challenge of defending the Baltic States could become almost insurmountable. A Russian victory would diminish America's deterrence around the world. If Russia wins in Ukraine as a result of diminished US aid, our adversaries would learn that the US can be manipulated into abandoning its interests in a winnable fight. Russia prevailing in Ukraine would constitute a convincing argument for the effectiveness of nuclear blackmail and would likely accelerate nuclear proliferation.

A scenario in which Russia gets a reprieve via a premature cease-fire or insufficient Western aid that halts Ukraine's advance is far more costly than continuing to help Ukraine fight. This scenario would simply allow Russia to rebuild, launch new attacks on Ukraine, and confront NATO. The United States would face another invasion but at a higher cost of Ukrainian lives and US taxpayer dollars, worse escalation risks including those that could risk American lives, and under conditions that favor Russia, including a strengthened Putin regime, a stronger Russian military that is experienced in fighting a NATO-supplied adversary on a contemporary battlefield, more advantageous starting lines for Russia compared to February 2022, and higher Russian immunity to coercive measures.

The most advantageous outcome remains helping Ukraine liberate its territory and people, as it is the only path to a durable peace, rather than a temporary respite; and then helping Ukraine rebuild, putting the largest and most powerful friendly military in Europe at the forefront of NATO's defense.

As long as this course of action remains Ukraine's choice and will, the most prudent US strategy is helping Ukraine achieve it and accepting the short-term risks of helping Ukraine liberate itself to decrease the chances of a larger risk of escalation and costs in the future.

LESSON #2 Putting Ukraine on the path to victory requires more capabilities but also different approaches. More capabilities are needed because delays of materiel provision have come at a cost of Ukraine's advantage and because they provided Russia with time and space to adapt. Ukraine and its partners also require new approaches in this phase of the war:

Helping Ukraine restore its own ability to maneuver on the battlefield, after it stabilizes the lines, is a priority. Achieving this objective will require more capabilities and an evolving warfighting concept to overcome positional warfare. A key task will be achieving temporary effects of air superiority without having what is conventionally defined as air superiority. This will require a much larger scale of ground-based long-range strike capabilities. Ukrainian forces may be able to restrict movements of Russian troops and supplies within a selected area of the front provided they have a sufficient quantity of long-range precision strike missiles, for example. Ukraine may also be able to innovate, achieve, and exploit a version of air superiority at lower altitudes if its partners continue to support its unmanned aerial vehicle capabilities.

Ukraine needs additional air defense capabilities deployed at the frontlines to deny and contest Russia's ability to maintain localized air superiority. In sum, Ukraine needs capabilities to protect Ukrainian forces during maneuver, disrupt Russia's reconnaissance strike complex, employ offensive and defensive electronic warfare at scale, defend Ukraine's airspace, disrupt Russian rear areas—including rear areas in Russia itself.

Denying Russia's sanctuaries. Russia is not entitled to sanctuaries when it is trying to erase a nation. As we speak, the Russian Air Force is conducting glide bomb attacks from Russia's airspace sanctuary on Kharkiv Oblast and can do so indefinitely, as my colleague George Barros has written. The West must abandon the Russian information line that Russia, having launched an unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, can somehow demand immunity from attack on the Russian rear with Western or Ukrainian weapons. The US must remove any existing constraints on Ukraine to target legitimate Russian military and defense industrial capabilities in Russia. The West should also develop a long-term strategy against "sacred Russian cows" in the West, such as the Russian State nuclear energy corporation Rosatom. Shrinking Russia's sanctuary spaces in Russia and globally is key to imposing strategic dilemmas on the Kremlin.

Thinking beyond standard force ratios and focusing on asymmetries. Ukraine's effort in the Black Sea is a quintessential example of an effort producing outsized effects across multiple domains. This is exactly the kind of effort that the US needs to amplify with more resources—given its potential to have an even larger effect, including on the ground war. Other asymmetric opportunities include helping

Ukraine scale its rapid innovation cycle, as well as helping Ukraine's defense industrial base [DIB] realize its potential. Ukraine's Ministry of Strategic Industries estimates that Ukraine has additional ten billion in production capability, if resourced properly.<sup>1</sup>

Surging Western capabilities. Figuring out how to creatively allocate existing Western military assets while gradually adding new capability is important, but it is not the main problem we need to solve. The United States needs to lead a global coalition of partners—both in Europe and Asia—to dramatically increase the overall stock of capabilities that are making the difference in Ukraine, but which are also likely to matter to US efforts to deter and fight future wars. The West's existing and latent capability dwarfs that of Russia. The combined GDP of NATO countries, non-NATO EU states, and our Asian allies is over \$63 trillion. The Russian GDP is on the close order of \$1.9 trillion. Iran and North Korea add little. China is enabling Russia, but it is not mobilized on behalf of Russia. If we lean in and mobilize a higher percentage of our latent capacity, Russia loses. Mobilizing would mean surging military production, sparing more of our existing military capabilities and economic assets, but also accepting a higher threshold for pain and risk now to avoid more cost and pain and risk in the future.

LESSON #3: Decisionmaking speed has been a critical factor defining successes and failures in this war.

The key successes achieved by Ukraine and its partners have resulted from strategic clarity. Lost opportunities have resulted from the West's failure to connect ground truths to our interests quickly enough to act. The world had a moment of clarity in February 2022, recognizing Russia's true intent and the stakes of the war. This clarity informed a myriad of actions by individuals and leaders in Ukraine, in the United States and globally. These actions helped Ukraine defeat Russia in the Battle of Kyiv, which meant the difference between the world's largest present-day war and what would have been the world's largest insurgency. Conversely, the West's slow decisions about materiel delivery in part driven by the Russian manipulations of Western perception, cost Ukraine on the battlefield. For example, US failure to proactively resource Ukraine's initiative after two successful counteroffensive operations in the fall of 2022 contributed to a missed opportunity for Ukraine to conduct a third phase of counteroffensive operations in the winter of 2022–2023. This reprieve allowed Russia to build its defenses in depth and to shore up manpower, making Ukraine's 2023 counteroffensive an extraordinarily difficult undertaking.

The frontline as of May 2024 would look different had the US proactively invested in Ukraine's initiative in 2022, had the US delivered advanced capabilities or passed the supplemental earlier.

Russia has learned this lesson early. So much so that the Kremlin's main effort—since its failed “three-day war”—has focused on targeting US decisionmaking with the goal of slowing down Western support.

The United States should learn this lesson as well and plan to proactively resource multiple Ukraine's campaigns and not expect any single operation to be decisive. A sustained US effort will also grant Ukraine the certainty about resourcing so Ukraine can plan for future operations and disabuse Putin of the notion that he can outlast the West.

The United States should recognize that the speed of knowledge transfer and decisionmaking matters disproportionately in this war, as Russia is using perception manipulation to achieve goals beyond the limits of its real capability. The US should improve knowledge sharing with Ukraine and its partners, including by increasing physical presence in Ukraine to connect the ground truth to our decisions and capabilities fast enough to act. The US must also build resistance against Russian influence campaigns that aim to manipulate US decisionmaking, including the current Russian information operation supported by its intensified military action in Ukraine.

LESSON #4: The West has the advantage over Russia; it needs to choose to use it.

<sup>1</sup> <https://kyivindependent.com/minister-ukraine-to-produce-more-weapons-worth-10-billion-if-financed/> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/putins-safe-space-defeating-russias-kharkiv-operation-requires-eliminating-russias>

The gap that Ukraine and its partners need to close to help Ukraine liberate its territory and people is smaller than the gap that Russia needs to close to achieve its unchanged objectives of subjugating Ukraine. Make no mistake—the Kremlin intends to close this gap. Putin has additional resources he can and will mobilize. The recent appointment of an economist, Andrei Belousov, to lead Russian Ministry of Defense is another indicator of Putin’s prioritization of Russia’s defense industrial base.

Nevertheless, Russia’s surge capacity is neither unlimited nor without constraints. ISW has continued to observe the indicators of these limitations. For example, recent satellite imagery indicates that Russia is largely sustaining its war effort by pulling old armored vehicles from storage and modernizing them rather than producing new vehicles and weapons systems at scale. What the Kremlin has mobilized to date is orders of magnitude higher than what the West has mobilized on behalf of Ukraine. Russia had every advantage in the last 10 years and occupied 18 percent of Ukraine at an enormous cost.

The Kremlin cannot accomplish its maximalist objectives in Ukraine if Ukraine’s will to fight persists alongside Western support. The Kremlin’s main effort—in addition to ramping up its own capacity—is to convince us that Russia prevailing in Ukraine is inevitable and that we must stay on the sidelines, allowing Russia to fight Ukraine in isolation. The notion that the war is unwinnable because of Russia’s dominance is a Russian information operation, which gives us a glimpse of the Kremlin’s real strategy and only real hope of success—a strategy that the US has the power and vital interest to deny.









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