

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine
September 21, 2023

President Biden. Everyone in?

Q. Thank you, sir.

President Biden. Mr. President, it's an honor to welcome you back to the White House and to the Oval Office.

And earlier this week at the U.N. General Assembly, I made it clear that no nation can be truly secure in the world if, in fact, we don't stand up and defend the freedom of Ukraine from facing this Russian brutality and aggression.

That's why we brought together a coalition of more than 50 countries—more than 50 countries—to help Ukraine defend itself, and it's critical. And that's why, together with our partners in Ukraine, we have provided humanitarian aid as well as tens of millions of people with food, clean water, and so much more.

And that's why we've begun the process of formalizing our long-term commitment to Ukraine's security, alongside the G-7 and with other partners. And that's why we support a just and lasting peace, one that respects Ukrainian sovereignty and its territorial integrity.

Mr. President, the brave people of Ukraine—and that's not hyperbole; the people of Ukraine have shown enormous bravery—enormous bravery—have inspired the world, literally inspired the world with their determination to defend these principles.

And together with our partners and allies, the American people are determined to see to it that you—we do all we can to ensure the world stands with you, and that is our overwhelming objective right now.

So, welcome, welcome.

President Zelenskyy. Thank you so much.

President Biden. We have much to talk about.

President Zelenskyy. Thank you so much, Mr. President—so warm and strong words to all the Ukrainians from you. Thank you. Appreciate it.

I'm glad to meet you. It's already the third time this year. Thank you for the invitation. Our regular dialogue has proved that our countries are really, truly allies and strategic friends. And we greatly appreciate the vital assistance provided by the United States to Ukraine to combat Russian terror—really, terror.

Today I'm in Washington to strengthen our coalition to defend Ukrainian children, our families, our homes, freedom, and democracy in the world. And I started my day in the U.S. Congress to thank its Members and to people of America for all the big, huge support.

I've felt trust between us, and it's allowed us to have a frank and constructive dialogue, Mr. President. And this trust and support I felt from both Chambers and both parties. I'm grateful for this.

Then, with the First Lady, I honored innocent victims of September 11 Memorial in Pentagon. All those who—tragedy—death—who died on American Airlines Flight 77. It's very

important to all in the world to remember the victims of terror and value everyone who fights with it.

And now, I look forward, Mr. President, to our discussion for the benefit of our nations and the world.

When it comes to weapons, we will discuss everything, with a special emphasis on air defense. And just to say that—especially this day—1 year ago, we had—we made a big exchange of prisoners—war prisoners and journalists.

And it was on this day when we got and brought home defenders of Azovstal. And also citizens of the United States—now I'm happy that we did it—Alexander Drueke and Andrew Tai Huynh, both from Alabama.

Thank you, Mr. President.

President Biden. Thank you.

Thank you all very much.

[At this point, several reporters began asking questions at once.]

Q. Mr. President, what's your message to Americans—*[inaudible]*?

Q. Are you confident Congress will provide the funding for Ukraine?

Q. Mr. Zelenskyy, are you—aren't you concerned that you're losing Poland over the grain export dispute? Are you concerned that you're losing a friend?

President Zelenskyy. Our friends with Poland? Our friends, we are very thankful to Polish people, Polish society for all of—for their support.

That's it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:42 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, President Zelenskyy referred to his wife Olena Zelenska; and Tuscaloosa, AL, resident Alexander Drueke, and Hartselle, AL, resident Andrew Tai Ngoc Huynh, U.S. military veterans who were captured by Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine and later returned to the U.S. following a negotiated prisoner exchange. Also participating in the meeting were U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and National Security Adviser Jacob J. Sullivan; and Head of the Presidential Office Andriy Yermak and Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba of Ukraine.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Ukraine, President Zelenskyy.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: Group of Seven (G-7) nations; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance.

DCPD Number: DCPD202300818.