

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024

Statement on Ukraine's Independence Day
August 23, 2024

Tomorrow, as the people of Ukraine mark their Independence Day, let it be clear: When Russia's senseless war began, Ukraine was a free country. Today, it is still a free country. And the war will end with Ukraine remaining a free, sovereign, and independent country.

I spoke with President Zelenskyy today to reaffirm this message and to express America's unwavering support for the people of Ukraine. For 2½ years, they have repelled Russia's vicious onslaught, including retaking more than half of the territory Russian forces seized in the initial days of the war. They have remained unbowed in the face of Russia's heinous war crimes and atrocities. And day after day, they have defended the values that unite people across both of our nations and around the world—including independence.

That is why I am proud we will announce a new package of military aid for Ukraine today. The package includes air defense missiles to protect Ukraine's critical infrastructure, counter-drone equipment and anti-armor missiles to defend against Russia's evolving tactics on the battlefield, and ammunition for frontline soldiers and the mobile rocket systems that protect them. We are also imposing new sanctions today on nearly 400 entities and individuals who are enabling Russia's illegal war as part of our enduring commitment to hold Russia accountable for its aggression.

These actions build on a series of historic steps we have taken with our allies and partners over the last few months to support Ukraine, from transferring F-16 fighter jets, to committing to deliver hundreds of air defense interceptors over the next year, to quickly surging security assistance to the frontlines following the passing of our national security bill. Last month, I also brought together 20 nations who have signed bilateral security agreements with Ukraine to form the Ukraine Compact, which will strengthen Ukraine's ability to defend itself now and in the future. And, together with the G-7, we are taking unprecedented action to make Russia pay for damage it's caused by issuing \$50 billion in loans backed by the profits of frozen Russian sovereign assets.

Make no mistake: Russia will not prevail in this conflict. The independent people of Ukraine will prevail, and the United States, our allies, and our partners, will continue to stand with them every step of the way.

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