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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

March 7, 2022

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Austin:

It is vital to the security of Europe and the United States that Ukrainians have every possible means of military assistance that we collectively can provide. I welcome the administration's willingness to engage with Poland to provide Soviet-era jets to Ukraine. I urge you to work as quickly as possible to finalize this dialogue with Poland and persuade additional NATO and Eastern European countries to transfer such aircraft to the government of Ukraine without delay.

I understand this is not an easy decision for these countries to make. Asking them to provide their own aircraft, especially as Russia's military aggression edges closer to their own borders, would be unthinkable except in the direst circumstances. Unfortunately, that is the situation the world faces. Extraordinary times require extraordinary measures and sacrifices.

The United States and our NATO allies should do everything we can to compensate countries that heed Ukraine's desperate call for fighter jets to defend their homeland. The United States and its allies should commit to replace any donated aircraft, including on an interim basis if possible. NATO should redeploy fighter aircraft to the same bases where any aircraft that is ultimately donated is currently based, as a visible commitment to those countries' front-line defense. Finally, the United States and our NATO partners should also seek to provide concessionary financing and loans, and discount the prices of new aircraft through government subsidies.

I will support efforts in the Senate to implement measures to compensate our allies that provide their aircraft for Ukraine's defense. Thank you for your ongoing efforts to persuade our partners, with the compensatory actions described, to rise the occasion and provide much-needed aircraft to Ukraine without delay.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
Chairman