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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

March 8, 2022

The Honorable Yael Lempert
Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Acting Assistant Secretary Lempert:

I appreciate the Department's intense focus put into ensuring a robust diplomatic response to the crisis in Ukraine. The multilateral, coordinated response in terms of sanctions and security assistance, particularly in Europe, is unprecedented and a testament to the Department's tireless efforts.

However, a truly comprehensive and ultimately effective effort to counter the Kremlin cannot be limited to Europe. The world needs to be united against an emboldened Kremlin, not only with rhetoric, but action. If the world does not counter this rising threat, Russian aggression will be the scourge of future generations to come in every region. We must act now.

To that end, I urge the United States to reorient its diplomatic approach and redouble its efforts throughout the world to counter Kremlin aggression. Over the past decade, we have witnessed the Kremlin's unconscionable and deadly support for the brutal Assad regime in Syria contribute to heartbreaking human tragedy and Russia's mercenary Wagner group exacerbate conflicts in Libya and elsewhere.

I respectfully request that you provide me details to the questions below in writing.

First, how are you personally working to ensure that countries in the Middle East and North Africa are imposing and enforcing sanctions on the Putin regime and the Russian economy? Please specifically describe your efforts to encourage the governments of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia to impose and enforce sanctions, including sanctions similar or equal to those imposed by the United States.

Second, how are you personally encouraging countries in the Middle East and North Africa to provide financial support to Ukraine and security assistance to the Ukrainian armed forces? Please provide specific details on these efforts and quantify these efforts by country in the region.

Third, what specific efforts are you making to encourage the governments of Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, the UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia to end purchases of Russian military equipment or cut off other economic ties with Russia?

Fourth, what are you doing to counter the Kremlin's persistent disinformation in the region and to ensure that the public has access to unbiased information about Russia's invasion of Ukraine?

The United States needs a comprehensive, global and durable diplomatic approach to counter rapidly increasing Kremlin aggression. Thank you for your attention to these issues. I expect your prompt reply in open or classified form as appropriate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Menendez." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert Menendez
Chairman