

ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY, CHAIRMAN

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
JEANNE SHAHEEN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, DELAWARE
CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, CONNECTICUT
TIM Kaine, VIRGINIA
EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
JEFF MERKLEY, OREGON
CORY A. BOOKER, NEW JERSEY
BRIAN SCHATZ, HAWAII
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND

JAMES E. RISCH, IDAHO
MARCO RUBIO, FLORIDA
RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN
MITT ROMNEY, UTAH
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
RAND PAUL, KENTUCKY
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING
TED CRUZ, TEXAS
MIKE ROUNDS, SOUTH DAKOTA
BILL HAGERTY, TENNESSEE

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

March 8, 2022

The Honorable Donald Lu
Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Assistant Secretary Lu:

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 unite 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. Russia's deep defense ties with countries in South Asia pose serious concerns for long-term U.S. security interests in both Europe and Asia. Further, Central Asian governments are growing ever more dependent on Moscow, as seen in the recent Russian-led CSTO intervention in Kazakhstan.

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 South and Central Asia are imposing and enforcing sanctions on the Putin regime and the Russian economy? Please specifically describe your efforts to encourage the governments of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan 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 South and Central Asia 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 Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan 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 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 fluid and cursive, with a period at the end.

Robert Menendez
Chairman