

**Ukraine - Countering Russian Intervention  
and Supporting a Democratic State**

**Senate Foreign Relations Testimony by  
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Chairman Menendez, Senator Corker, and Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today on actions taken by the United States, along with our Allies, and international partners in response to Russia's incursion into Ukraine.

Russia's illegal annexation of Ukrainian sovereign territory and continued aggressive actions are not just a threat to European security, but a challenge to the international order. The United States continues to pursue three main lines of effort, consistent with the President's direction, to achieve a negotiated, peaceful outcome. These lines of effort include: 1) demonstrating support to Ukraine's transitional government, 2) re-assuring Allies and de-escalating tensions in Eastern Europe, and 3) imposing costs on Russia for its actions. The Department of Defense has an important role in achieving U.S. objectives in all three areas.

**Support to Ukraine**

As demonstrated by the Vice President's recent visit to Kyiv, the Administration has made support for Ukraine a top priority. The United States has been working with the international community including the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and allies to address the most pressing political and economic issues. From a bilateral perspective alone, the United States has pledged funding for a \$1 billion loan guarantee to allow Ukraine to raise funding directly in private capital markets at a more affordable rate and \$50 million for new programs to address emerging needs in Ukraine.

The Departments of State and Defense are working with Ukraine to review, prioritize, and respond to its defense capability needs. Our aim is to provide reassurance and support without taking actions that would escalate the crisis militarily.

The first round of this process was completed on March 29 with the delivery of 330,000 Meals Ready-to-Eat to support Ukrainian forces in the field. Subsequently, the U.S. Government approved the requisition and delivery of medical equipment, uniforms and individual equipment, water purification units, handheld radios, and Explosive Ordinance Disposal robots to the Ministry of Defense. We are also providing non-lethal assistance to the State Border Guard Service to procure monitoring and surveillance equipment, electric generators, shelters, vehicles, and engineering equipment. The Departments of State and Defense are working together to procure and deliver these items to the Ukrainian armed forces and State Border Guard Service. To date, we have purchased and delivered fuel pumps, concertina wire, vehicle batteries, spare tires, binoculars, and communications gear to the Ukrainian Border Guards. Taken together, this represents about \$18 million of security assistance to Ukraine from existing resources.

Looking ahead, we will continue to utilize all available tools to provide meaningful, cost-effective support to Ukraine's security institutions. We are working with the Department of State to identify additional security assistance resources for Ukraine. We are mindful of the fact that we cannot fill all of the gaps in the security sector. Ukraine's requests for material assistance are far-reaching and vastly outstrip our ability to meet them under current authorities and appropriations.

In addition to material assistance, the Department of Defense is maintaining senior-level dialogue with our Ukrainian counterparts, including multiple phone conversations between Secretary Hagel and the Ukrainian Minister of Defense. On April 1, we held bilateral defense consultations in Kyiv, at which we discussed our mid-term and long-term objectives for defense cooperation. U.S. European Command will reinforce this effort with senior-level dialogue in Ukraine in June to maintain focus and encourage progress towards our mutual goals.

These initiatives represent only the most recent developments in our longstanding defense cooperation programs with Ukraine. Many of our existing programs are intended to build capacity over the long-term, particularly those that focus on education and training. We continue to realize the gains from investments made over the last 20 years in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, as officers trained in U.S. military institutions have

assumed positions of greater responsibility in Ukraine's armed forces. We saw this manifested in the great professionalism and restraint exercised by the Ukrainian military during the demonstrations on the Maidan and when the Ukrainian military refused to use force against peaceful demonstrators, and in their courage and restraint in the face of overwhelming force in Crimea. Now, more than ever, it is important to bolster Ukraine's security sector to give them the means to secure and defend their territory.

### **Re-assuring Allies and de-escalating the situation with Russia**

The United States has taken prompt and high-profile steps to re-assure NATO Allies in light of Russia's incursion into Ukraine. Measures so far include bolstering our maritime presence in the Black Sea with the USS *Donald Cook*, USS *Taylor*, and an extension of stay for the USS *Truxtun*. We augmented the U.S. January-April rotation in the NATO Baltic Air Policing mission with six additional F-15s, and we deployed 12 F-16s and nearly 200 support personnel to Poland to supplement the U.S.-Poland Aviation Detachment training rotation. Our KC-135s are providing air-to-air refueling for NATO early warning and surveillance flights over Poland and Romania. And last week, 600 paratroopers from the U.S. Army's Europe-based 173rd Airborne Infantry Brigade Combat Team arrived in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland to begin exercises requested by those nations. These exercises are the first in a series of expanded, land-based training activities that will take place over the next few months and beyond. These measures are in addition to 22 U.S. European Command and NATO exercises already planned between April and June.

We are also taking measures to support non-NATO security partners who feel directly threatened by Russia's actions. Moldova, for example, has Russian forces on its territory, nominally peacekeepers, but who actually support the unrecognized, separatist regime in Transnistria. We recently held senior-level consultations with Moldovan officials and approved \$10 million in additional funding for Moldova to help it maintain secure borders. We are also working to address Georgian concerns, given the ongoing Russian occupation of Georgian territory.

Since the start of this crisis, our NATO Allies have acted with resolve. Denmark, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom have offered aircraft for NATO's Baltic Air Policing. The Netherlands and Turkey have offered air-to-air refueling capabilities. Germany and Norway have offered ships for Baltic maritime security. And to ensure preparedness across the Alliance, NATO is updating and expanding its contingency planning. As we approach the NATO Summit in Wales this fall, we continue to urge all NATO Allies to increase support to these reassurance measures, including by bolstering their individual commitments to Allied security through robust defense investment.

As a coordinated effort, these measures represent a clear eastward shift of Allied forces – a shift that is explicitly intended to counter Russia's aggressive actions. As Secretary Hagel has said: "The essential character and commitment of (our) alliance...remains unchanged, but we will look for new ways to collaborate and improve the alliance's capabilities and readiness."

### **Imposing costs on Russia**

We are also further isolating Russia and imposing significant costs on Russia for its actions. Russia continues its illegal annexation and occupation of Crimea, and President Putin continues a campaign to destabilize eastern Ukraine from within using local pro-Russian agents and Russian special forces. Russia continues to deploy significant military assets along Ukraine's border in a menacing fashion, adding to the uncertainty and instability present in eastern Ukraine. Russia has clearly failed to abide by the commitments it made in the 1994 Budapest Memorandum commitments and violated the principles of the NATO-Russia Founding Act. In response, the United States has led the international community in isolating Russia diplomatically and imposing financial and political costs for its actions.

At the Department of Defense, we have halted all military-to-military engagements with Russia, including bilateral military exercises, bilateral meetings, port visits, and planning conferences, although we do maintain channels for dialogue that can serve to deescalate the crisis. While we have worked hard over two decades to build a cooperative, transparent defense relationship with Russia, its actions to undermine stability in Europe mean that we cannot proceed with business

as usual. NATO and many Allies have likewise suspended military cooperation and engagements with Russia.

## **Conclusion**

Chairman Menendez, Senator Corker, and Members of the Committee, Russia's actions stand as an affront to the international order that we and our Allies have worked to build since the end of the Cold War. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, followed by blatant and unconcealed efforts to destabilize eastern and southern Ukraine, signifies a paradigm shift for our relations with Russia. Despite Russia's efforts to portray the situation otherwise, this crisis is entirely one of its choosing. These actions represent a wholesale rejection of the goal of a Europe whole, free, and at peace.

As the crisis deepens, our European Allies and partners will look to the United States to demonstrate resolve and to reinforce solidarity across the continent. In support of our broader national objectives, the Department of Defense will continue to strengthen ties and build capacity across the security sector in Europe, and we will carefully apply any additional tools that Congress puts at our disposal.

I want to conclude by thanking Congress for its resolute support throughout the crisis so far. The Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act of 2014 is closely aligned with the Administration's objectives, and demonstrates a unified position across the U.S. Government. And in addition to legislative actions, the outreach by Members to our partner nations on Russia's periphery has provided reassurance in the face of great uncertainty. As we move forward, it will be important to continue to show resolve and to speak with one voice across our government, and I appreciate that we are doing so now.

I look forward to your questions.