

[H.A.S.C. No. 118-6]

**OVERSIGHT OF U.S. MILITARY SUPPORT
TO UKRAINE**

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

**HEARING HELD
FEBRUARY 28, 2023**



U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

51-964

WASHINGTON : 2023

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

MIKE ROGERS, Alabama, *Chairman*

JOE WILSON, South Carolina	ADAM SMITH, Washington
MICHAEL R. TURNER, Ohio	JOE COURTNEY, Connecticut
DOUG LAMBORN, Colorado	JOHN GARAMENDI, California
ROBERT J. WITTMAN, Virginia, <i>Vice Chair</i>	DONALD NORCROSS, New Jersey
AUSTIN SCOTT, Georgia	RUBEN GALLEGO, Arizona
SAM GRAVES, Missouri	SETH MOULTON, Massachusetts
ELISE M. STEFANIK, New York	SALUD O. CARBAJAL, California
SCOTT DESJARLAIS, Tennessee	RO KHANNA, California
TRENT KELLY, Mississippi	WILLIAM R. KEATING, Massachusetts
MIKE GALLAGHER, Wisconsin	ANDY KIM, New Jersey
MATT GAETZ, Florida	CHRISSY HOULAHAN, Pennsylvania
DON BACON, Nebraska	ELISSA SLOTKIN, Michigan
JIM BANKS, Indiana	MIKIE SHERRILL, New Jersey
JACK BERGMAN, Michigan	VERONICA ESCOBAR, Texas
MICHAEL WALTZ, Florida	JARED F. GOLDEN, Maine
MIKE JOHNSON, Louisiana	SARA JACOBS, California
LISA C. McCLAIN, Michigan	MARILYN STRICKLAND, Washington
RONNY JACKSON, Texas	PATRICK RYAN, New York
PAT FALLON, Texas	JEFF JACKSON, North Carolina
CARLOS A. GIMENEZ, Florida	GABE VASQUEZ, New Mexico
NANCY MACE, South Carolina	CHRISTOPHER R. DELUZIO, Pennsylvania
BRAD FINSTAD, Minnesota	JILL N. TOKUDA, Hawaii
DALE W. STRONG, Alabama	DONALD G. DAVIS, North Carolina
MORGAN LUTTRELL, Texas	TERRI A. SEWELL, Alabama
JENNIFER A. KIGGANS, Virginia	STEVEN HORSFORD, Nevada
NICK LALOTA, New York	JIMMY PANETTA, California
JAMES C. MOYLAN, Guam	MARC VEASEY, Texas
MARK ALFORD, Missouri	<i>Vacancy</i>
CORY MILLS, Florida	
RICHARD McCORMICK, Georgia	

CHRIS VIESON, *Staff Director*

RYAN TULLY, *Professional Staff Member*

ROB IKOKU, *Professional Staff Member*

OWEN McGEARY, *Research Assistant*

CONTENTS

	Page
STATEMENTS PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS	
Rogers, Hon. Mike, a Representative from Alabama, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services	1
Smith, Hon. Adam, a Representative from Washington, Ranking Member, Committee on Armed Services	2
WITNESSES	
Kahl, Hon. Colin H., Under Secretary of Defense for Policy	5
Sims, LTG Douglas A., II, USA, Director for Operations, J-3, The Joint Staff	7
Storch, Hon. Robert P., Inspector General, U.S. Department of Defense	8
APPENDIX	
PREPARED STATEMENTS:	
Kahl, Hon. Colin H.	61
Sims, LTG Douglas A., II	65
Storch, Hon. Robert P.	71
DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:	
USA Today article submitted by Mr. Clyde	81
The Washington Post article submitted by Mr. Courtney	86
Global Times article submitted by Mr. Gaetz	89
Additional articles submitted by Mr. Gaetz	94
WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:	
Dr. DesJarlais	139
Mr. Fallon	139
Ms. Houlahan	139
Ms. Mace	139
QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:	
Mr. Gallagher	145
Mr. LaLota	145
Dr. McCormick	146
Mr. Moylan	146
Mr. Rogers	143
Mr. Scott	143

OVERSIGHT OF U.S. MILITARY SUPPORT TO UKRAINE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Tuesday, February 28, 2023.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:01 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Mike Rogers (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROGERS, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM ALABAMA, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order. Before we start, I wanted to notice to every member that you'll find in your desk drawer, in addition to a seating chart of the members of the committee, a chart of all the staff, both sides of the aisle.

It's just been one of those things that's always driven me nuts over the last 20 years, is not knowing who all these people are that work for us and keeping up with them as they change. So that'll be in your desk drawer.

Without objection, the Chair may declare the hearing in recess at any point, so ordered.

A few housekeeping matters before we begin. First, we will adjourn the public portion of this hearing at 12:30 today and immediately move upstairs for the classified portion.

Second, I want to welcome back to the committee Mr. Veasey after his brief hiatus. I'm glad that you remembered where we were.

And finally, after consultation with the minority, I ask unanimous consent that Mr. Clyde of Georgia, a member of the Appropriations Committee, be allowed to question witnesses at today's hearing. Without objection, so ordered.

Last Friday, we observed the 1-year anniversary of Putin's illegal and brutal invasion of Ukraine. The American people have responded with extraordinary support for the Ukrainians. Millions of Americans have donated their time and money to charitable organizations helping the Ukrainian people. Some have even volunteered to fight alongside the Ukrainian defense forces.

Congress has responded by appropriating over \$100 billion in military, economic, and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and our NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] allies. To date, the administration has distributed over \$75 billion of that money, including \$46 billion in security assistance.

These are unprecedented numbers, and it requires an unprecedented level of oversight by this committee and by Congress. We're up to the task.

Last year, Chairman Smith started monthly classified briefings with the administration officials that have continued into the new majority. Many of us have traveled to Ukraine and surrounding countries to witness firsthand the train-and-equip mission.

We've made classified information on the situation in Ukraine available to all Members. And our staff have constantly been briefing—being—are constantly being briefed with the latest developments by the Department.

But today is the first time the Committee of the House is holding an open public hearing on the matter. I've asked the Inspector General and the Under Secretary to appear today because it is imperative that the American people understand A, where our security assistance is going; B, how it's being used; C, and what protections are in place to ensure it doesn't fall into the wrong hands.

But oversight is about more than just accounting. It's about ensuring the administration is setting strategic goals and implementing a policy to achieve them. That's why we all are here with very real concerns.

Since the beginning, the President has been overly worried, in my view, that giving Ukraine what it needs to win would be too escalatory. This hesitation has only prolonged the war and driven up the cost in terms of dollars and lives.

This conflict must end. And the President must be willing to do what it takes to end it with victory. Continued reluctance and indecision only empowers Putin, and it sends the wrong message—the wrong signals to President Xi and the Chinese Community Party.

And with that, I yield to my friend and colleague, the ranking member.

STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I welcome our witnesses as well. And really, thank you for the work you've done. You've all appeared before us in classified settings to update us on a very regular basis on the effort in Ukraine.

We appreciate the cooperative relationship between the executive branch and the legislative branch on this matter. And more than anything, we appreciate your leadership in supporting Ukraine so effectively over the course of the last year.

I think it's hard to really imagine the massive undertaking that has been done in the last year since Russia made its decision to invade. And really since in the weeks and to some degree months before the invasion, when we came to realize from our intelligence community that this was going to happen.

First of all, we were about the only country in the world that thought it was going to happen. Even the Ukrainians themselves, right up literally to the day of the invasion, thought that we were exaggerating the intelligence and that this wasn't actually going to happen.

So from pretty much a dead stop, the Biden administration had to pull together a massive coalition to do something that almost all of the countries involved in that coalition had never contemplated doing, and certainly had hoped they would never have to do.

And we've done that with a remarkable, remarkable outcome. The way that coalition was pulled together and the forces that have been given and the weapons that have been given to Ukraine to enable them to be as successful as they have been, combined of course with their unbelievable courage and tenacity, is really a remarkable accomplishment. And I think we need to understand it in that perspective.

Obviously, we would like Ukraine to win tomorrow, Russia to be completely pushed out. But I think we also have to be realistic about the challenge that we faced and how we've gone about meeting that challenge, and really how effective we've been in doing that.

Now, the purpose of this hearing specifically is on oversight. I think we have had a lot of oversight on this effort from the very beginning. And that is part of the reason why the effort has been so successful.

There are—there are constant efforts to sort of spin stories, primarily coming from Russian propaganda, about corruption and weapon systems going where they're not supposed to be. But people who have looked at this, and I know the chairman has done this in great detail, have found that there is no instance of that happening. We have seen the effectiveness.

And the best evidence of this, clearly and unequivocally, is the fact that the Ukrainians have been as successful on the battlefield as they have been. If the weapons and equipment and support that we were sending them was being sent elsewhere or stolen or misused, they would have lost a long time ago.

Because I think one of the other things that we forget here is even us, in the U.S., we saw the war coming, we supported Ukraine, but even us along with everybody else thought the Ukrainians didn't stand a chance. We thought that the Russians would be in Kyiv in a week or two, a month at the most.

So the fact they've been as successful as they have been is the best evidence we have that these systems and support that we are sending them is being as well used as it possibly can.

And I do want to touch upon the point that the chairman made about how the administration hasn't been quick enough. You know, one of the things that we've heard, not just from critics of the war who don't want to support it, but even from people who do support it, is that there can't be a blank check.

That's been sort of the criticism that you take if you want to sort of make it sound like you're still with Ukraine, but you want to be responsible. And I think that's appropriate, okay.

But no blank check means no blank check. It means we don't just send everything that people ask for in the blink of an eye without even thinking about it, okay. We think about it and we get the Ukrainians what they really need.

And I'm going to go ahead and hit upon one of those examples, because I think this is a really good example of the problem, and that is the F-16, which everyone has become obsessed over here in recent weeks. We have considered that request, and I've had many conversations with the witnesses before us and with the DOD [Department of Defense] as well.

And the honest truth is the cost of trying to get the F-16 up and ready to operate in Ukraine, even if we—even if we basically said there's nothing more important than that one weapon system and [inaudible] all of our time and all of our resources on doing it, best case scenario, we could maybe get some operational F-16s into Ukraine within a year, maybe 8 months if we really pushed it. And this is getting lucky, all right.

Because you don't just have to train the pilots. You have to train the mechanics. You have to have airfields that can accommodate the F-16. And you have to have the spare parts to make it work.

So we looked at that and we determined that is not a wise use of the resources that are necessary to win the fight. That's what no blank check means, you don't just send it without thinking about it.

We thought about it and reached a very intelligent conclusion that this is not the right system. And oh, by the way, a fourth-generation fighter in this particular fight is going to struggle to survive. There are isolated circumstances where the Ukrainians have been able to use the MiG-29s that they have. Very isolated, because it's a fourth-generation fighter in the face of a ton of air defense.

What we are getting the Ukrainians is those air defense systems that they desperately need to survive right now and the artillery and the HIMARS [M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System] and the weapon systems that they do need. So the administration is doing exactly what it needs to do, getting equipment as quickly and as responsibly as possible to make this work.

And I also want to make everybody aware of the fact the Russians are fighting a massive information campaign. Yes, they're fighting on the battlefield, and I'll look forward to hearing more details about that today. But they are also trying to break the coalition.

You know, the Russian military has performed incredibly poorly. The Ukrainians have performed incredibly heroically. And the war is not going the way that Putin wanted it to. But he is not giving up. And he knows his only hope is to break the coalition that is trying to support Ukraine.

And they're trying to do that in a variety of different ways. I mean, you can—you can see all the different arguments about how, well, NATO really started this because of NATO expansion and a whole lot of other nonsense arguments that are circulating out there.

But the other part of the way they're doing it is any break in the coalition they see, they're poking and they're prodding, okay. They want to undermine the Biden administration.

So why we have—while we have constructive criticism of what's going on, let's make sure that that criticism is constructive and we maintain our unity. And I know it is very, very difficult for the folks on the other side of the aisle to say anything positive about the Biden administration.

But part of holding this coalition together is to acknowledge the incredible job that has been done in the last year, and to maintain that unity and to not jump at every shiny object that seems to be criticism of the Biden administration, like the F-16.

Right now, and I've asked this question, we are getting every single weapon system that we can to Ukraine. There is not a decision being made about, eh, that might be escalatory. It's about what can we get to them. How can we maintain the support. We've spent a lot of money. There is not a limitless amount of money or a limitless amount of equipment.

So I think those decisions are being made, being made wisely. I look forward to this hearing. I think it's perfectly appropriate that we have aggressive oversight, as we've had since the beginning. And that's part of the reason why we've been as successful to date as we have been.

With that, I yield back. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the ranking member. I now want to introduce our witnesses.

The Honorable Colin Kahl is the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. Dr. Kahl has been the primary official overseeing the DOD's response to Ukraine.

The Honorable Dr. Robert Storch is the Inspector General of the Department of Defense. Together with the IGs [Inspector Generals] of the State Department and USAID [United States Agency for International Development], his office is carrying out audits and investigation of the assistance that we are providing to Ukraine.

And Lieutenant General Doug Sims is the Director of Operations for the Joint Staff. He assists the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs in developing and providing operational guidance on Ukraine and other military operations.

I welcome the witnesses. Thank you for your time. Thank you for your preparation. I know this takes a lot of effort to get ready for these hearings, and it is appreciated and helpful.

Dr. Kahl, we'll start with you.

STATEMENT OF HON. COLIN H. KAHL, UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY

Dr. KAHL. Thank you. Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, members of the committee, it's a real honor to appear before you today alongside my good friend Lieutenant General D.A. Sims over there and Dr. Storch, our Department's Inspector General.

I want to begin by expressing the unwavering support of the Department of Defense for Ukraine's sovereignty and security in the face of Russia's unprovoked and brutal invasion. I know that support is shared by and is enabled by Congress and the American people.

So I want to thank you for your crucial and continued help to get Ukraine the military capabilities and other types of assistance that it needs to remain in the fight. Thank you, too, for holding this important hearing at this pivotal time for the security of Ukraine, of Europe, and of the world.

As we mark 1 year since Russia's further invasion of Ukraine, it's clear that Russia has failed to achieve any of its objectives. Its military is paying tremendous costs. Ukraine remains united and determined to expel Russia's invading forces from its territory. And NATO unity is stronger now than it has been in decades.

We are seeing intense fighting in eastern Ukraine as Russia seeks points to exploit and Ukraine defends tenaciously. What happens in the coming months may prove decisive, and we are focused on providing Ukraine with the capabilities it needs right now to defend its people and its territory and change the dynamics on the front lines.

I'd like to take a few minutes to lay out our priority capabilities, the ones we're providing to Ukraine now and in the coming days, weeks, and months.

First, we have focused on a layered, integrated approach to air defense to counter Russia's attacks on population centers and civilian infrastructure. The Patriot capability from the United States as well as that provided by Germany and the Netherlands will give Ukraine advanced long-range capability.

These are complemented by medium- and short-range capabilities provided by the United States, as well as our allies and partners.

Second, we continue to work with allies and partners to deliver a steady flow of artillery rounds and other ammunition so Ukraine can sustain its fight.

Third, to enhance Ukraine's ability to maneuver, the United States will provide Abrams main battle tanks, the best tanks in the world. The U.K. [United Kingdom] has also committed Challenger tanks, and other European states will provide Leopard tanks.

These main battle tanks are complemented by other vital armor capabilities from the United States, including Bradleys and Stryker fighting vehicles, and other fighting vehicles from our European partners.

Finally, we have expanded U.S.-led collective training to enable the Ukrainians to better integrate fires and maneuver.

Our assistance to Ukraine is possible thanks to the tremendous bipartisan support from Congress. As you know, we have now provided \$31.7 billion in support since Russia launched its further invasion of Ukraine a year ago. And our allies and partners have now provided over \$19 billion in addition to what we've done.

The Department of Defense appreciates the most recent additional supplemental appropriations act, which provided Presidential drawdown authority, funding for the military services to replace items sent to Ukraine, and funding for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, or USAI.

Even as we focus on getting Ukraine what it needs, we've always prioritized accountability, and Ukraine has too. We have adapted our accountability practice for—practices for the combat environment to address the risk of illicit diversion, using mechanisms that go above and beyond our standard practices.

One year ago, Russia launched its brutal invasion to destroy Ukraine as a free and sovereign nation, threatening European security, transatlantic unity, and the security of the world. Today, an independent, sovereign, democratic Ukraine endures. The incredible people and the armed forces of Ukraine remain unbowed and unbroken. And NATO and the wider community of democracies around the world is stronger than ever.

The stakes for our national security remain significant. We are determined to support Ukraine's fight against tyranny and oppres-

sion, and in doing so to defend the American interests and values that are so clearly at stake.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Kahl can be found in the Appendix on page 61.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Dr. Kahl. I'd like to recognize General Sims now for 5 minutes to summarize his statement.

STATEMENT OF LTG DOUGLAS A. SIMS II, USA, DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS, J-3, THE JOINT STAFF

General SIMS. Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, distinguished members, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. I appreciate today's opportunity to update you on the U.S. military efforts to help the Ukrainian people in their continued fight against the Russian invasion.

Today marks the 369th day since Russian forces invaded and began their illegal and unprovoked large-scale invasion of Ukraine. As we meet today, the current situation between Ukraine and Russia is generally static, with both sides employing heavy amounts of artillery, resulting in minimal changes of territory and significant numbers of casualties.

In our follow-on session, I'm prepared to discuss particulars of Ukrainian disposition, but generally, and as you've seen reported in open sources, the most active portion of the battlefield today is around the town of Bakhmut.

As I have briefed before over the past 2 months, the Russian army, with assistance of private military contractor Wagner Group, has fought savagely to defeat Ukrainians—or Ukraine's defenses, employing extreme amounts of artillery and waves of thousands of partially trained mobilized soldiers and personnel contracted from prisons.

The Russians have made incremental gains at significant cost. Ultimately, as I have described before, the fighting has replicated the conditions of the First World War. Key to changing this paradigm is creating a Ukrainian armed forces capable of breaking this state of fighting.

In this regard, since I last updated this—since I last updated this committee, the concentration of U.S. effort has been focused on combining equipment and munitions with people and training. The intent and efforts of the U.S. military are designed to generate combat-credible forces capable of combining fire and movement to achieve maneuver and increase the overall capabilities of the Ukrainian armed forces.

Importantly, this training effort is not solely the work of the U.S. Armed Forces, but is a cohesive—a cohesive approach with our allies and partners. Collective training is ongoing throughout Europe and is dramatically increasing Ukrainian combined arms organizations.

All told since January, the U.S. military has trained another 1,000 Ukrainians, bringing the total by the United States, trained by the United States, to just over 4,000. As I speak, Ukrainians are training in multiple locations in Europe, working with U.S. service members and military trainers from our allies and partners.

Key to our ability to conduct collaborative training has been the recent increase in maneuver-related equipment. The U.S. provision of Bradley Fighting Vehicles, Strykers, and Paladin howitzers, combined with similar fighting vehicles and tank contributions from our partners, is notably increasing the capability of the Ukrainian armed forces.

In addition, the U.S. continues to supply critical munitions and individual equipment, from howitzers, howitzer ammunition, to medical and cold-weather gear.

Finally, and critically important to Ukraine's ability to continue to defeat Russian efforts to destroy civilian infrastructure, U.S. Armed Forces will soon complete the training and equipping of Ukraine's first Patriot battery.

As you know, our air defense experts are providing key training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. We are confident the Ukrainians will employ Patriots with the same expertise they are demonstrating every day with their current air defense capabilities.

Thank you for what this committee and this Congress have done and continue to do to provide oversight and resources in support of Ukraine as they continue the fight against the illegal and unprovoked large-scale invasion. While the Ukrainians bear the real burdens of this war, your support and that of the American people has had a profound impact of Ukraine's future.

I look forward to your questions and discussion today. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Sims can be found in the Appendix on page 65.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, General.

Mr. Storch, you're recognized.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT P. STORCH, INSPECTOR
GENERAL, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

Mr. STORCH. Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to appear today to discuss the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General's comprehensive independent oversight of U.S. security assistance to Ukraine, as well as our active participation in a whole-of-government approach to ensuring robust oversight of the full range of American assistance.

During the year following the 2022 Russian invasion, the DOD OIG [Office of the Inspector General] completed four Ukraine-related oversight projects, with a fifth report released just yesterday.

We currently have some 20 ongoing and planned audits and evaluations that are focused on, among other things, ensuring that tax dollars are used properly, that there's appropriate accountability for weapons and other material, and that U.S. stocks are appropriately replenished so they're available should they be needed elsewhere.

Additionally, the DOD OIG's Defense Criminal Investigative Service is actively engaged in conducting fraud prevention and investigative activities that play a critical role in ensuring the integrity of U.S. assistance to Ukraine.

The DOD OIG currently has more than 90 professionals engaged in oversight of security assistance to Ukraine. In 2022, we issued two management advisories that identified several areas of concern that could directly impact the DOD's ability to transparently track and report the supplemental appropriations for Ukraine.

Earlier this year, we initiated an audit about examining DOD's execution of funds appropriated to assist Ukraine. We have long been focused on end-use monitoring, known as EUM, and enhanced end-use monitoring, or EEUM, the DOD's tracking of how our country's partners employ military assistance and sensitive equipment after those assets are transferred to them.

As early as 2020, we issued a report on how the DOD was conducting EEUM of military assistance to Ukraine. In October 2022, we published a classified report that identified challenges DOD personnel responsible for EUM and EEUM face when there are limited or no U.S. personnel present and the actions the DOD was taking to address those issues in Ukraine.

As the situation on the ground has continued to evolve, we recently initiated our third evaluation on EEUM in Ukraine, and we will continue to focus on this important area.

Yesterday we publicly released our most recent report related to the Ukraine effort, making recommendations to assist the Army with its maintenance, inventory, and other processes for pre-positioned equipment in the region.

In addition to the topics above, our ongoing and planned projects cover the waterfront of American security assistance to Ukraine, addressing critical issues like the replenishment of U.S. stocks, intelligence sharing, security control for the transport of weapons and equipment, their maintenance and sustainment, awards of non-competitive contracts, and the training of Ukrainian armed forces.

And as noted at the outset, DCIS [Defense Criminal Investigative Service] agents are drawing on their experience around the world to conduct outreach and investigations to help prevent and address fraud or other criminal conduct. We are not conducting this oversight alone.

We are partnering closely with the Department of State OIG and the U.S. Agency for International Development OIG, and many others across the oversight community in a coordinated approach to ensure comprehensive oversight of all U.S. assistance to Ukraine.

Along with our oversight partners, the DOD OIG established and leads the Ukraine Oversight Interagency Working Group, which brings together 20 oversight entities in a whole-of-government approach. Just last month, my office and the State and USAID OIGs, in coordination with the larger working group, published our Joint Strategic Oversight Plan, which publicly describes our completed and ongoing work.

As detailed in the plan, we are employing the proven model that has been used for years to ensure comprehensive oversight of overseas contingency operations, and we will work together in this effort for as long as the conflict and the need for oversight continue.

At the end of January, I traveled with the leaders of the State and USAID OIGs to Germany, Poland, and into Ukraine in order to obtain the latest on-the-ground perspective, to build on our co-

ordinated approach, and to deliver an unambiguous message to American and in Kyiv high-level Ukrainian officials about the expectations for accountability for U.S. assistance.

The trip made clear that the situation is fluid and calls for continuous agile oversight. The DOD OIG, working hand in glove with our oversight partners, will continue to make independent oversight of assistance to Ukraine a matter of the highest priority. And we will continue to keep the Congress and the public informed about our work.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Storch can be found in the Appendix on page 71.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Storch.

Before we move into questions, I wanted to remind everybody that the maps that you have in front of you, while they're unclassified, we haven't been given permission by the Department yet to distribute them beyond the committee, so I'd ask you to leave those here when you leave.

And I recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Dr. Kahl, if Russia were to be successful in taking control of Ukraine, what would that portend for a potential of China taking an effort at Taiwan?

Dr. KAHL. Well, Mr. Chairman, we've seen what a world looks like when revisionist authoritarian powers go on the march and they're unchecked by the free world and they carve out spheres of influence by gobbling up their neighbors. That world was the 1930s, and it culminated in the worst human tragedy in history, the Second World—

The CHAIRMAN. So it would—enhance the likelihood that could happen.

Dr. KAHL. I think if Russia is successful in Ukraine or is seen as successful in Ukraine, it will embolden other aggressors elsewhere to do similar things.

The CHAIRMAN. That's my point. Chair now yields the balance of his time to the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Clyde.

Mr. CLYDE. I thank Chairman Rogers for his invitation to be here today and for yielding me his time to discuss this important matter of oversight of U.S. military support to Ukraine.

As we all know, the United States has authorized over \$100 billion in aid, to which our government holds a responsibility to the American people that it be used for its true, just, and intended purpose. It is the responsibility of Congress to ensure that every single penny of American taxpayer money is being effectively used as intended to assist the Ukrainian people in their fight against Russian aggression.

Just 2 weeks ago, I had the pleasure of joining the chairman to visit several of our NATO allies in Europe to receive an update on the war effort in Ukraine and the ongoing oversight work directly related to U.S. military aid. Accountability of the weapons shipped in is absolutely paramount, especially the most sensitive weapons, to ensure that they are being used for their intended purpose and not diverted for a nefarious purpose.

As a supply officer with both multiple peacetime deployments and multiple combat deployments in my 28 years of Navy service, I am fully aware of the challenges of maintaining visibility and control of critical military hardware and components when the supply lines are long and the theater is kinetic.

So Mr. Storch, I would like to start with you as a Department of Defense Inspector General. In all your inspections and oversight, in-country and out, have you found any instances of sensitive weapons, like Stinger missiles, being either lost or diverted to those not authorized to have them?

Mr. STORCH. Thank you very much for the question. I'm obviously not at liberty to talk about any investigations, but we have not substantiated any such instances, no, sir.

Mr. CLYDE. So you can confidently say that to your knowledge, every sensitive weapon is currently under control of those who should have them—who should have them?

Mr. STORCH. Well, thank you very much for the question. That's why we're engaged in a—we're laser-focused on this issue and engaged in robust oversight to make sure that's the case.

We're doing audits and evaluations that look at the weapons from the time they begin at the port, while they're transferred throughout, as they get to the transshipment points, and then they go into the country.

And then as I mentioned in my statement, we're now conducting our third evaluation of the EUM, and with regard to the sensitive assets, the EEUM, the enhanced monitoring, to ensure that the Department of Defense is conducting that monitoring in a robust way.

Additionally, as I mentioned, we have the DCIS, the Defense Criminal Investigation Service. They have vast experience all over the world in doing investigations arising out of conflict situations. And so again, we're very much alert to any instances where that sort of conduct would occur.

Mr. CLYDE. Okay. All right, moving on, as I understand it, your office is currently working on, among other things, an audit of DOD award and administration of non-competitively awarded contracts in support of Ukraine. Has there been any waste, fraud, or abuse uncovered or reported to your office in these investigations?

Mr. STORCH. So I want to—I appreciate the question. I want to be careful and not get out ahead of my skis, because the audit is ongoing.

Mr. CLYDE. Okay.

Mr. STORCH. So we are looking at those issues in our audit and we'll report out on what we find. But the purpose of the audit is to ensure that the DOD has the controls in place to make sure that doesn't happen.

Mr. CLYDE. According to your testimony, you said that there were some posters, both in Ukrainian and English, the language, sent out about a particular hotline that people could call if they wanted to report something. So without compromising any identities, have any whistleblowers come forward with information using that particular method of reporting, to your knowledge?

Mr. STORCH. So thank you for referencing the hotline. It's something we worked closely on with our partners—

Mr. CLYDE. I read your testimony.

Mr. STORCH. At [the Department of] State and USAID, and the goal is provide an avenue for people to report what they think may be wrong. We have gotten all sorts of types of allegations over that, and we're, you know, continuing to look at them.

Mr. CLYDE. Okay. Mr. Chairman, for the record, I would like to submit a—an article from USA Today. And it says, "U.S. has spent billions in Ukraine war aid, but is that money landing in corrupt pockets?" It was updated as of yesterday, February the 27th.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 81.]

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you very much—

The CHAIRMAN. Chair now recognizes the ranking member.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much.

Dr. Kahl, I want to follow up a little bit on what the—what Chairman Rogers was asking about in terms of the policy behind this. As the Under Secretary for Policy, you seem like the appropriate person to ask that question to.

This policy is not without risk, I think we all know that. First of all, it is costing an enormous amount of money in terms of tens of billions of dollars. We are also acutely aware of the fact that we do not want to get into a direct conflict with Russia, and we don't want NATO to get into a direct conflict with Russia.

But can you state for us clearly why you still believe this is the correct policy to support Ukraine in this war, what the implications are for our own national security? Because I think it's a legitimate question, the American taxpayer, you know, why are spending money.

It seems like a long way away. You know, and not to be overly crass about it, but a lot of constituents ask the question, what's all this got to do with me.

I think the policy is sound, but I want to give you the opportunity to say here's why this matters to U.S. national security.

Dr. KAHL. Well, thank you. Look, I think the entire international system is grounded on the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity. It's at the heart of the U.N. [United Nations]. And that may sound kind of wonky, except that the entire rules-based order that that undergirds is what ultimately minimizes the number of international conflicts and wars that we see.

If countries like Russia are allowed to go on the march to swallow up their neighbors, if might makes right, if the strong do what they will and the weak suffer what they must, then the rule of law will be replaced with the rule of the jungle. And we will live in a very dangerous world.

And I'll just give you one example. If you're sitting in Tehran or in Pyongyang or in Beijing, and you're contemplating aggression against a neighbor, and in all those circumstances that's conceivable, you're going to ask yourself what would be the reaction of the international community.

And had the international community stood by, had the United States not exercised its leadership to rally not only the democracies

in Europe and North America, but countries around the world to Ukraine's aid, the lesson that dictators in other countries would take is that aggression can—won't be punished. And that it pays. And that would make the world a much more dangerous place for Americans.

Mr. SMITH. Very well stated. And I think one other argument to make in this is a lot of people who are concerned about this point to our policy in Iraq. And certainly there were a ton of mistakes made there.

But the thing that a lot of people forget is on your point of sovereignty, what kicked that whole thing out was Saddam Hussein trying to take over Kuwait, and then setting his eyes on Saudi Arabia. Now, how we handled that is highly debatable in terms of the long term, both what we did in 1991, what we did in 2003.

But the principle of sovereignty and the principle of exactly what you just stated, not allowing a country like Russia or China to think that they can simply grab territory by force, is core to our own security and to the security of the world long term.

And as we speak, we are very aware of the Taiwan situation with China. But China, and I haven't added up the number of countries, but it's more than a half dozen, have sovereign territory now that China to one degree or another claims.

And if, you know, just like Russia says that Ukraine shouldn't exist, they should be part of Russia, China has the same argument in lands currently controlled by Vietnam, by the Philippines, by Japan, by India, all across the world. It kicks off a very, very dangerous situation if President Putin is successful in Ukraine.

And I think we need to remember that even while we are aware of the cost and while we are aware of the necessity of making sure that we check where this money is going. Which, as, you know, Mr. Storch outlined, I think we're doing.

But the policy itself is really crucial to peace and stability in the world, and ultimately to our own national security in the United States. None of that makes it easy. We all want peace in Ukraine as quickly as possible.

But right now, as has been stated clearly, the path to peace in Ukraine is simple. Putin can stop his war and take his troops out of sovereign Ukraine. And that stops the war in the blink of an eye. But until that happens, we have to support Ukraine to force Putin to that choice.

So I appreciate you articulating that, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the ranking member. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. Wilson, for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Chairman Mike Rogers and Ranking Member Adam Smith, for this very important bipartisan hearing on the issues of Ukraine and immediately the effect that it has on the Chinese Communist Party.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here today. I believe the world is in a global competition between democracies with rule of law opposed by authoritarians with rule of gun.

Today's conflict is war criminal Putin's mass murder in Ukraine. This I believe if—Ukraine must be victorious to deter the Chinese Communist Party from attacking the 24 million people of Taiwan.

Ukraine must be victorious to stop Iran from its efforts to vaporize Israel as it develops intercontinental ballistic missiles to devastate American families.

With that, Mr. Storch, there have been billions in U.S. weaponry and financial aid flowing to Ukraine, and more coming to stop war criminal Putin. We're all concerned about accountability.

And the American people need to know, because somehow this hadn't recognized, and that is that in all of the legislation that's passed to provide for funding, there have been 39 provisions that provide for reports to be provided to Congress on oversight and accountability.

And with that, what is the DOD Inspector General's plan, and what are the broader coordination with the State Department IG, USAID IG, and other relevant IGs, what's the structure to protect the American taxpayer?

Mr. STORCH. Thank you very much for the question. We are actively engaged on an ongoing basis with the State OIG, the USAID OIG, and all of our partners in the working group in ensuring comprehensive oversight over all aspects of assistance to Ukraine.

Obviously my office, the DOD OIG, has primary responsibility with regard to the security assistance, and we have, as we speak, approximately 20 ongoing and planned audits and evaluations that cover every aspect of that security assistance, including the broad range that I mentioned in my statement.

We're also working with our partners to make sure that there aren't any gaps with regard to the different types of assistance that are being provided. We're reporting out transparently. We did the Joint Strategic Oversight Plan [JSOP] that I mentioned.

And we're going to continue to report out. We have a report coming at the beginning of April under one of—under the NDAA [National Defense Authorization Act] that will be providing an update on our work. And we're going to continue to update the JSOP and our other work so this Congress and the American public are fully informed regarding our oversight efforts.

It's on us to ensure that there's appropriate oversight across the board to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent appropriately and the equipment is being used as intended.

Mr. WILSON. And thank you so much for what you do. But please, let's get this publicized so the American people can trust what the expenditures are.

And Dr. Kahl, I am really concerned about foreign military sales. Delivery to Ukraine? Hey, delivery to Taiwan. And our allies are making the best of their ability to provide.

And then for example, we're providing 31 Abrams tanks. Somehow the media presented that that we would not have any tanks in the future. They leave out that we have 8,000 tanks, Abrams tanks. We potentially have 22,000 actually, Abrams tanks. But the 31 was presented as just debilitating the United States.

We can do better. And so what's being done, particularly working with Chairman Mike Rogers and others, to have an expedited foreign military sales? It's absurd, with pre-positioning of equipment when we hear that it may take a year to get equipment to Ukraine.

Dr. KAHL. Well, thank you, Congressman. As you know, we predominantly use two sets of authorities at DOD to get Ukraine

weapons: PDA, Presidential drawdown [authority], which allows us to draw from stocks; and then USAI, which allows us to put things on contract.

When we draw things out of stocks, things generally arrive in Ukraine within days or a handful of weeks. When we put things on contract, it depends. Sometimes it's weeks, sometimes it's a handful of months. Sometimes it is longer than that.

So it really depends on which authority we are using. But we have surged a tremendous amount of security assistance into Ukraine. More than \$31.7 billion in a year. I don't know that there's any historical precedent for that. The vast majority of that has come out of our stocks and has come very rapidly.

I'll just say I share your frustration with the broader foreign military sales process. We are getting after that problem through a "tiger team" at the Department of Defense that has identified I think about 80 process improvements that can streamline these things. It's still too slow.

And all I would say is that there's nothing, as we draw things down from our stocks, that is making the FMS [foreign military sales] problem worse. It's a different—it's kind of an apples and oranges issue. Because FMS is more aligned with the USAI authority in terms of putting things on contract.

Mr. WILSON. We need to follow the example of the Czech Republic and then last week, Poland, providing equipment immediately. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time is expired. Chair now recognizes the gentleman, Mr. Courtney, for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And again, I want to begin by recognizing both your efforts and Ranking Member Smith's efforts to hold recurring updates and briefings for—by this committee. And in my opinion it has been that healthy process which has provided the foundation for the bipartisan votes that have passed supplemental funding really over the last year.

And again, the witnesses have been part of that process, so thank you for your contribution.

Just to—and you know, footstomp what I think my friend Mr. Wilson just indicated, is that included in those supplemental funding bills were actually specific, explicit language by Congress directed towards the Offices of Inspector General to be engaged at the maximum level.

And again, Mr. Storch, if you could just sort of confirm that for the record that, again, you've been around for a long time, thank goodness. But again, it also has been with congressional support that your efforts are taking place.

Mr. STORCH. Yes, sir, thank you very much for the question. We very much appreciate that support. And we're committed to the greatest possible transparency in our oversight efforts.

Mr. COURTNEY. So, and again, when we talk about a blank check, I mean, I think clearly we in the Congress had our eyes wide open when these large amounts of funding were authorized and appropriated, that we wanted oversight at every step of the way.

In dealing with, again, Ukraine's efforts to deal with waste, fraud, and abuse, Dr. Kahl, there's an international organization which kind of keeps score on countries', you know, efforts in terms

of dealing with corruption and fraud, and it's Transparency International.

In the last year, at the same time that this unprecedented almost infusion of money has been flowing in, not just from the U.S. but also from the EU [European Union], Ukraine's position on Transparency International's ranking actually improved. It was one of the few countries in the world. It went up six places.

And I wonder if you could just sort of, with that backdrop, talk about your perspective as far as the seriousness with which the Ukrainian government has approached this whole question of making sure that this help goes to the right place.

Dr. KAHL. Thank you. You know, I've worked the Ukraine issue now for about 9 years. And in our engagements over that entire period, corruption was the number one issue we raised with Ukrainian officials. And I think there have been improvements over time, especially in the defense sector, where—which is obviously most germane for DOD.

I will just tell you in our engagements with senior Ukrainian officials now, I was in Kyiv in January, the Secretary talks to his counterpart about every other week, the importance of accountability, of transparency, and of combating corruption are always points of emphasis for us.

But it's not just what we—what our talking points say. We have to put, you know, our effort into it. We've provided the Ukrainians with ways to track the systems we provide, to include scanners and software.

We've done, when it's safe, a remote visit, visits to sites. We don't see any evidence of diversion in our reporting. We think the Ukrainians are using properly what they've been given. But we'll continue to footstomp the importance of accountability and transparency for all the reasons you mentioned.

Mr. COURTNEY. And looking again at President Zelensky's own efforts, I mean, I would say he courageously took steps to remove officials, some very close even to his office and political supporters of his own.

Which shows, I think, you know, tremendous commitment to not just talking about trying to address this problem, but actually taking action to remove people, which, you know, again, I think just sort of demonstrates, you know, true commitment. I think, you know, that should be also acknowledged in terms of the seriousness with which, you know, he and his administration is pursuing this goal.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to, as long as we're entering newspaper articles, I would like to ask that the piece in this morning's Washington Post, "Zelensky Takes on Ukraine's Top Internal Enemy," be admitted to the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 86.]

Mr. COURTNEY. And again, that walks through the whole question of how they improved their score with Transparency International in the midst of, you know, dealing with an existential threat to their country.

And with that, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman from Connecticut. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. Lamborn, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for having this hearing. And thank you all for being here today.

General Sims, I'd like to ask you the first question I have. Last week, Vladimir Putin announced the suspension of Russia's participation in the New START treaty [Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms]. This followed an earlier declaration by the U.S. State Department that Russia was violating the New START treaty.

So it appears that Russia has taken New START hostage and is using it to get us to stop funding Ukraine. Is the Joint Staff developing plans and options should Russia further violate its limitations in New START? For instance, if it starts uploading its nuclear delivery systems above the caps.

General SIMS. Sir, thank you for the question. Sir, I'll save some fine-tuning on that question for our follow-on session, if that's okay. And certainly pass any of the policy implications to Dr. Kahl to answer.

But I would simply say we continue to maintain the strongest nuclear force in the world. We continue to monitor the nuclear situation around the world, to include Russia. And if I was an American, I would not be worried about the nuclear situation.

Mr. LAMBORN. Very good. And Dr. Kahl, if you could follow up on that. What are some of the diplomatic or other things that the administration is doing in response to Russia's latest stance on New START?

Dr. KAHL. Thanks. It's a really important question. Look, I think as a practical matter, the suspension doesn't make a lot of difference for the reason you mentioned, which is that they were already out of compliance with the inspections regime, using COVID [coronavirus disease] and other things as excuses.

It's also interesting that Putin decided to suspend as opposed to leave the treaty. And I think that's actually an indication that it's not effective leverage over us. It won't be effective leverage over the Biden administration.

Yes, we believe arms control and strategic stability matter for the safety of the American people and for the world. But frankly, Russia is in no position for an unconstrained nuclear arms race. They do not have the money, especially given the strain on their military from the war, sanctions, export controls.

So you know, I think this was a way for him to generate some rhetorical headlines. But I think as a practical matter, it has not changed the situation. Russia remains a dangerous power with a lot of nuclear weapons, and we have to be vigilant against that danger.

Mr. LAMBORN. Okay, thank you. And I do think it was a mistake for President Biden to re-up New START when he first took office without any discussions at all with the Russians. I think we could have perhaps gotten some concessions or some further understanding. So I think that was a mistake.

However, I will be—I will compliment the President, and the ranking member will be glad to hear this, I think it was right for

him to go to Ukraine recently. And I think that that sent the right signal.

We all hope and pray that—to God that there is no use of nuclear weapons by Russia in Ukraine, tactical or anything else. And we don't want to give away what our response would be should that happen, and a lot would depend on the specific circumstances.

But what would be some of the consequences to Russia should that unthinkable thing happen?

Dr. KAHL. Thank you for that, and I'm happy to talk about this at—in greater detail in the classified setting. But what I'll say here is the following.

We've made it very clear to Russian leadership at the highest levels through intelligence channels, my boss Secretary Austin to his Russian counterpart, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Gerasimov, our National Security Advisor to his counterpart in the Kremlin, that any use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine on any scale would be considered a world-changing event that would bring about severe consequences far in excess to anything the Russians have experienced to date.

And that a lot of the restraints we've been operating under would no longer obtain in a world where Russia crossed that threshold. But the good news is I don't think they're likely to do so.

Mr. LAMBORN. Yeah, and what they have to lose would be far more than what they would have to gain.

And lastly, General Sims, Russia has made some, I think, exaggerated claims that it has used hypersonic weapons in Ukraine, just as they exaggerate a lot of things about their capabilities. Can you shed any further light on that particular question?

General SIMS. Sir, we know they've employed advanced conventional—conventional munitions. I wouldn't go into detail here in this session on the particulars. I would tell you that the—they're doing so at their—at great expense. They're finding now that their weapons of all types are in—in dire straits, in many cases.

And I think what they're also seeing is that the Ukrainians have been very prepared for many of their weapons and are shooting down their weapons at a very high rate.

Mr. LAMBORN. Very good. Thank you again for being here, and I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Garamendi, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for the work that you're personally doing in reaching out and trying to make sure that the supplies are getting to where they need to go, particularly the journey that you took 2 weeks ago to Greece, Romania, and Poland.

My question first goes to you, Mr. Storch. Thank you for your detailed explanation of the various projects that you have underway, you and your colleagues have underway. I'd like you to very briefly, or as whatever necessary, summarize the reports that you have provided over the last year, or year and a half.

There seems to be two different pieces to that, one of which you have already talked to, and that is suggested improvements in the auditing, in the transfer of weapons and the like. And if you'd like to go into that a little more.

And secondly, if you would summarize the findings of those reports, following up on the question earlier about what you actually found.

Mr. STORCH. Yes, sir, thank you very much for the question. As you say, the reports that we've issued to date over the past year since the 2022 invasion really have fallen largely into two categories. A couple of them have looked at issues that we identified relating to the way in which the money that was appropriated is being tracked and the way in which it is being entered into the systems.

And so the concerns there are that if there aren't additional improvements, that those could result in a lack of transparency or impair the transparency of those funds. So the Department has been making progress in those areas. We've continued to look at that.

And as I mentioned, we've recently initiated an audit that's looking at the actual execution of the funds appropriated. So that's—that's sort of an ongoing priority, is how is the money being spent. We did identify issues with the systems and with the procedures in place, made recommendations to help to address.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Let's be clear then, is the Department following on your recommendations and making progress to achieve the goals that you've stated?

Mr. STORCH. So, yes, sir. The first management advisory didn't actually have specific recommendations. It raised a number of concerns. The second one did have one recommendation, and that related to putting in place procedures that were more robust in ensuring things were tracked properly.

The Department has made progress in that area. The recommendation remains open, we're continuing to track it. And then we'll continue to look at that in the course of the ongoing audit.

Mr. GARAMENDI. And so you continue to look for perfection, as you should.

Mr. STORCH. Absolutely, sir.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The second thing, the findings that you—beyond the recommendations for the procedures—

Mr. STORCH. Right.

Mr. GARAMENDI [continuing]. The findings. Did you find any indication that there was a diversion of equipment of any kind?

Mr. STORCH. Again, the second set of projects that we've released are evaluations looking at the controls that DOD has over this end-use monitoring and enhanced end-use monitoring. Once the weaponry goes into Ukraine, it—there needs to be appropriate accountability and tracking. And so the DOD has responsibilities to do that.

So in the first of those reports, we did make a number of findings and recommendation. Most of those have been addressed and the recs have been closed. There are a couple that are outstanding relating to night vision goggles and steps that are being taken.

The Department has made progress in those areas. And what we're going to do is we're going to look at the current state of that in connection with the newly announced EUM, EEUM evaluation that I mentioned. So there's been progress, and that's an ongoing process.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Very good. And I would just comment quickly I'm very pleased that you're setting up a very robust operation in Ukraine itself, that you're reestablishing within the embassy the various auditing groups necessary to carry it out. Is that the case?

Mr. STORCH. Well, what we have done, sir, is we've—we forward deployed a significant number of people into the region to do oversight over the supply and training mission, most of which occurs before any weaponry crosses into Ukraine.

Then using some of the same techniques, frankly, we used—not just my office, but across the IG community—during the COVID pandemic, we're doing additional monitoring relating to the EUM and EEUM and getting information from the military personnel who are at the embassy regarding what's currently being done.

If we need to go further and go in, we will. But at this point, we have it covered.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much. The bottom line is that the programs are working, that diversions are not happening, and that the equipment's getting where it needs to go, is that it?

Mr. STORCH. We're doing oversight to make sure the Department has placed all the controls it needs to make sure that happens, sir.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Didn't quite get to what I'm talking about. You've not found problems of any great significance, is that correct?

Mr. STORCH. Right. Well, again, a lot of these audits and evaluations are pending, but with regard to the areas I've mentioned, we have limited findings. The Department has been addressing them. And we're going to continue to look at the issue. So yes, that's correct.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you.

Mr. STORCH. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Wittman, for 5 minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank our witnesses for joining us today.

We look at the gains that Ukraine has made with assistance from around the world and what's happening to Russian forces. Degraded presence, about 40 percent of its pre-war fleet of tanks gone. And today, 97 percent of the Russian army is in Ukraine. And even with that, they're struggling.

The issue is for us the munitions that we're providing to Ukraine. In last year's NDAA, we provided both funding and contracting tools to accelerate replenishing our munition stockpiles, essentially our weapons magazines.

I want to talk, though, about where I think there's a strategic mismatch. We give those contracting tools, yet how we evaluate where the needs are to me is in contradiction to that. The needs are supposed to be evaluated on the threats in Europe. What's that—what's that threat scenario?

And as we see, the DOD has up to 2 years to determine that threat scenario. So if we're looking at the scenario 2 years down the road and whatever's happening at that time in Europe, and we are today accelerating the replenishing of our munitions stockpile, to me there's a mismatch.

Because what's—what—giving 2 years to determine what the needs are, what the threats are, and we're spinning up today to build weapons stockpiles that may be mismatched with what we see 2 years from now doesn't seem to me to be a good policy.

So Dr. Kahl, can you tell us, based on our force structure requirements on both munitions and ground forces in Europe, how do we make sure that we are making the right determinations about what to build today so we don't have, again, a mismatch?

I mean, we're talking about weapons magazines being depleted today, but if we're building weapons that may not have a role in where we need to be 2 years from now, how do we—how do we correct that mismatch?

Dr. KAHL. Yes, thank you, it's a very important question. So obviously we've made significant investments because of the money that Congress has generously given us and the authorities to spend it over longer periods of time to recapitalize our munitions.

That means increasing production, but it also means addressing supply chain bottlenecks and creating a longer term demand so that industry is actually responsive. I think what the Ukraine conflict showed is that frankly our defense industrial base was not at the level that we needed it to be to generate munitions.

So right now, our priorities are making sure that we are increasing production for the things that we anticipate that Ukraine will continue to need. So a good example is 155 millimeter ammunition for the NATO standard howitzers. But also the Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems, the GMLRS, that launch off the HIMARS systems.

Those are going to matter a year from now, 2 years from now, 3 years from now, because even if the conflict in Ukraine dies down—and nobody can predict whether that'll happen—Ukraine is going to need a military that can defend the territory it's clawed back and deter the Russians from doing this again.

The other investments we're doing of course are to replenish our own stocks. And there actually I think we're relatively confident we're making the investments that we made not only for Russia contingencies, but also for contingencies vis-a-vis China, North Korea, Iran, et cetera.

But beyond that, we can go into some of the specific details in the classified setting if you'd like in terms of how we're making targeted investments.

Mr. WITTMAN. Well, that leads me to the next question. The allocations that we're making today to Ukraine are based on a pre-Ukraine Russian conflict scenario. So if we are holding back those munitions based on that scenario, then are we inadvertently holding back the things that Ukraine may need based on what would be an antiquated scenario? So that I think is a question.

And then also, how are the determinations made about what we are doing to replenish our stockpiles and what we're sending to Ukraine? How is that interacting with our needs in the INDO-PACOM [U.S. Indo-Pacific Command]?

Dr. KAHL. Yes, so actually it's a very important point. So we have a total munitions requirement that is essentially a metric against which we need munitions for a whole range of contin-

gencies. So they are not pegged to any one contingency, it's a pool of munitions we can draw on from a range of different scenarios.

We have adjusted that floor to account for the fact that Russia is bogged down in Ukraine. Their land forces have been badly attrited. It has changed the dynamic for a future Russia contingency.

At the same time, we have requirements for operational plans in other parts of the world, could be North Korea, Iran, China, et cetera. So Secretary Austin is—has been laser-focused on making sure that as we draw down from our own stocks, we are getting Ukraine what it needs without taking undue risk to those other plans.

And I think we have so far accomplished that. But we also need to recapitalize so that we can build up that hedge in the event that something bad happens elsewhere in the world.

Mr. WITTMAN. Very good. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Norcross, for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORCROSS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And certainly appreciate the ongoing insight and the most recent visit to the region.

The amazing thing that the United States does better than anybody in the world, hands down, is the logistics, the ability to move men, equipment, resources is short of remarkable.

I just want to touch base, Chairman, and [inaudible] Mr. Wittman, 3 years ago there were some disturbing reports on the industrial base issues on our ammo plants, our explosives and accelerants. And we had been very much focused on that.

Had we not actually sped up the recapitalization, I think we would be even in a worse place. But we still have a quite a ways to go.

My question goes to Dr. Kahl and the general.

Putin leaves no chance when he speaks to the people of not only his country but the world but to imply the nuclear option over and over again. And it finds an audience in the United States. People are worried about what might happen.

We have seen time and time again there's a discussion about the red lines and what they are. And if we go back a year what a red line was then, certainly may or may not be the red line of today. And that is why I want to ask about the evolving or changing red lines.

The calculations that we have made, and HIMARS is one of those discussions. Early on we didn't want to do it. What calculations are going into effect that something that we are providing is or is not going to change the red lines?

How do we determine what those red lines are, and how have they changed since the beginning?

Doctor, if you could go first.

Dr. KAHL. Yeah, it is something we watch very closely, I think for all the reasons that you have mentioned. Clearly, Putin's rhetoric from the very outset of the war on nuclear matters has been irresponsible and dangerous. We have attempted not to take the bait, while in private making it clear to them that if they were to

cross certain lines of using nuclear weapons on any scale, what a world-changing event that would be.

As a general matter, I do not think that we are holding back security assistance from Ukraine at the moment, largely for escalatory reasons. I think most of the decisions we are making on security assistance are driven first and foremost by our assessment of what Ukraine needs right now, given the amount of money that the American taxpayer has given the Department to work with. How do we use that money for what they need right now?

And then the other is, you know, what can we provide that doesn't have huge impacts on our own readiness and our ability to respond to our own national security crises in other parts of, of the world.

So, really, those are the two things that we are measuring against. I think at the moment we feel relatively comfortable on where we are on the escalatory dynamic vis-a-vis Russia. But it is something that we consult with our intel—intelligence community colleagues constantly to make sure we are setting the rheostat, you know, about right without self-detering ourselves.

Mr. NORCROSS. Thank you.

So, General, when we started a year ago there has been much discussion from the committee and those in Congress about what we are able to send to them. How much of an impact has that "red line" been? And has it changed since a year ago?

General SIMS. Sir, I would tell you what we have sent over the last year has made a gigantic difference to the Ukrainians. If you start where we were last year at the onset, it was about providing things at the moment that they needed. They were Javelins. They were Stinger missiles. They were things that they needed to defeat the Russian army as they came across the border around the country.

Those things were provided in good order. They were used extremely well by the Ukrainians.

As the conditions changed, so too did the requests from the Ukrainians in terms of what they thought was necessary and, as we talked with our Ukrainian counterparts, what we thought would be most advantageous and available to them. All the while, as Dr. Kahl mentioned earlier, balancing it against our current readiness and our ability to meet any requirements around the world.

Those have certainly morphed over time. And so, as you have seen, sir, now, the provision of Bradley Fighting Vehicles, of tanks. And our partners make these same assertions. They have all been done with these things in mind.

And I feel very confident that as we go forward we will continue to do so and make decisions in a very thoughtful and understanding manner.

Mr. NORCROSS. Exactly my point, that we are not holding back because of these red lines or nuclear threats. These are actual determinations made by what is best for the Ukrainians and their use at any time.

With that, I yield back. Thanks.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee, Dr. DesJarlais.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Appreciate the panel being here for this timely hearing on the oversight of U.S. military support to Ukraine.

Mr. Storch, can you tell us roughly how much money has been given total to the Ukrainian war effort since we began last year?

Mr. STORCH. Well, it depends a little bit how you count it. But I believe it is over \$113 billion, approximately.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. How much of that is for lethal aid or what we would consider standard military equipment?

Mr. STORCH. I am afraid I don't have that number at my fingertips.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Have you got a breakdown roughly, 60/40, 20/80 in terms of what is going to the government, what is going to military aid?

Mr. STORCH. There is security assistance, there is economic assistance, there is humanitarian assistance. The numbers are in the JSOP, but it is approximately, I think, a little over 60 percent of it is the military assistance.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. And I ask this question because whether or constituencies back home are for or against this war, they don't have the benefit of the hearings that we have, the classified briefings that we have. And so, you know, we want to know that we can tell the taxpayers that our money is being spent wisely.

And this hearing today is coming on the heels of a SIGAR [Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction] report released this week titled "Why the Afghan Security Forces Collapsed," in which the Special Inspector General reports, among other things, that rampant corruption gradually eroded the capabilities of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, as well as the legitimacy of the Afghan government.

So, we need to make sure we don't make those same mistakes in Ukraine.

And a month ago John Kirby claimed, from the administration, that he has not seen any signs so far that our budgetary assistance has fallen prey to any kind of corruption.

Would you agree with that statement?

Mr. STORCH. So, on the issue of corruption, you know, one of the reasons we do all these reviews is to ensure the integrity of the systems in place and that controls are there so to help to prevent it from corruption.

And as I mentioned, we have DCIS that is there to investigate any allegations that might arise.

With regard to the Afghanistan report I would just say I am aware that has been issued. Our folks are looking at that. But it is obviously a very different situation in Ukraine, very different mission. In Ukraine there aren't large numbers of troops on the ground. It is not building the military from the ground up. It is primarily a train and supply mission, something our office is very well equipped to oversee.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Right. And the Inspector General went on to say in his report that the United States played into the hands of polit-

ical leaders and contributed to their corruption by spending money faster than it can be accounted for.

So, I think when we say we spent roughly \$100 billion, we ought to break that down and have a clearer message from DOD. And we have had hearings where we have suggested that to keep the public onboard.

I understand what the strategy is and what the benefit is, but we want to make sure the people back home get this. And it didn't help last year, for example, in a briefing unnamed senior officials said that there was about 100 Kamikaze Switchblade drones provided to Ukraine, that they couldn't tell where they were, who was using them, and didn't know if they would ever know exactly where they had come from—or where they would be used at. And so, those type of statements aren't helpful.

But I think that you had mentioned earlier that we have a proven model. And maybe you can elaborate and make us feel a little bit better that this proven model that you are referencing has worked somewhere else and that we are accounting for the equipment that we are sending.

Mr. STORCH. Yes, sir, absolutely. We do have a proven model, I believe, using the lead IG, IG model that has been used in overseas contingency operations showing how we can work together as an oversight community to provide comprehensive oversight.

So, we currently are engaged, for instance, on oversight over the operation Enduring Sentinel mission, the over-the-horizon counter-terrorism mission that has followed on in Afghanistan. And we have a number of projects at DOD OIG related to that.

We are also coordinating with our partners. We report out quarterly in public reports on our work in that area. It is obviously an area where we have done a lot of other work as well.

But the point of it is, with Ukraine we have not just the three of us, but actually 20 different oversight entities, including GAO [Government Accountability Office], including all the military audit agencies, and all the rest working together to ensure that there aren't any gaps, that we are covering the waterfront and all types of assistance—security, economic, humanitarian, other assistance. That we are doing oversight over all of it so that the American public knows that the taxpayer dollars are being spent appropriately.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Is there a specific example, like loss reports, that is due within a specific time, say 30 days? Or a condition that they give us 100 percent accuracy on inventory? Or is there anything in place that would make more clarity?

Because it seems like we all say that this is accounted for but yet there is a lot of disparity when we ask for specific examples of how we know this equipment's accounted for.

Mr. STORCH. So, we are doing a robust series of oversight projects to ensure the accountability of equipment from the very beginning until it gets into Ukraine. And then once it is in Ukraine we are doing continued work in that critical area. I mentioned that—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 139.]

The CHAIRMAN. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Carbajal, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thank you to the witnesses for your testimony today.

We recently marked the 1-year anniversary of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. During that year the United States and many other nations have stepped up to provide aid. The United States has provided approximately \$30 billion in security assistance. That has been instrumental in allowing Ukraine to keep fighting.

It is important we conduct thorough oversight of taxpayer dollars going to this cause. And I think we have been doing just that.

Dr. Kahl, we want the war to end quickly and on Ukraine's terms. You stated in your testimony that our goal is to put Ukraine in the strongest possible position for future negotiations.

Within the 5-year near-term focus areas, how is the Department working with industry to maximize production in support of Ukraine and in backfilling our defense stocks that have been leveraged to date?

Dr. KAHL. Thank you for that.

So, DOD is working with industry to increase production of certain capabilities to continue meeting the needs of Ukrainian forces while ensuring that the United States is ready to defend itself and our allies and partners. And this is that balancing act.

And DOD has identified over \$2 billion of industrial base investments to increase and/or accelerate production of things like Javelin, Stinger, HIMARS, these Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems, 155-millimeter artillery shells, and Patriot missiles.

And we are also trying to make the best use of the multiyear authorities that Congress has given to us to make sure that we are getting after the munitions challenges more broadly.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Thank you.

Dr. Kahl, while we hope for a quick end to this conflict, we must plan, obviously, for the long term. How do the five focus areas evolve over time?

And what long efforts can we start planning for deployment in the long term to ensure that Ukraine has what it needs for continued defense against Russia that doesn't seem like it is going to go away?

Dr. KAHL. Well, you know, as the President has said, we are in it for as long as it takes. You know, Putin's theory of success is that he can outlast everybody, outlast the Ukrainians, outlast the United States, outlast NATO and the rest of the world. We are going to prove that that is just the latest of a string of miscalculations by Putin.

I think as Lieutenant General Sims noted, what we have prioritized has adjusted across the course of the war. So, in the initial period of the war, when it was essential for Ukraine to win the battle of Kyiv and to use systems they could get right now, right away, we emphasized anti-armor systems like Javelin; man-portable air defense systems; loitering munitions; drones; Soviet legacy ammunition, artillery and air defense systems.

As the conflict shifted to the east, we focused on NATO standard artillery systems and, also, providing them HIMARS and the GMLRS.

This winter we have focused on more advanced air defense systems, so think NASAMS [National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System], Patriot, but also armored and mechanized systems to help them change the dynamic going into the spring and summer.

And so, we will continue that process as we move forward, as Ukraine's needs change. And I do think it is incumbent upon all of us to think about what Ukraine needs over the medium term to make sure they can defend whatever territory they claw back from the Russians, and deter the Russians from going at it again when and if there is a halting to the fighting or, you know, a peace settlement, or even if there isn't. And so, the Department is focused on constantly iterating on that analysis.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Do you think we are succeeding to that end?

Dr. KAHL. I think we are.

Look, I think that if we are all honest with ourselves about where we thought things would be a year ago when Russia launched this invasion, I think it was a pretty dire, pessimistic assessment. And while I don't know how the war is going to end, I think we already know one conclusion for sure which is Russia has lost. Russia has lost.

They intended to take over all of Ukraine. That didn't happen. It is not going to happen.

They intended to divide NATO. NATO is stronger.

They intended for Russia to emerge out of this war a great power in a multipolar world. They will emerge from this conflict a shattered military power.

And so, again, I don't know exactly where the lines, the final lines will be drawn when this conflict comes to a close, but I know our policy has been successful in keeping a sovereign, democratic, independent Ukraine alive, and ensuring that Vladimir Putin suffers a loss.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Thank you, Dr. Kahl.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Gaetz, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Storch, you are our watchdog. Ukraine has a corruption problem. Right?

Mr. STORCH. There is a long history of issues with corruption in Ukraine. I don't—

Mr. GAETZ. Infrastructure minister arrested for stealing \$400,000.

Deputy head of Zelensky's office can't explain where the sports cars came from, so he had to resign.

Deputy defense minister resigned over contracting corruption. But the Defense Ministry put out a statement that his resignation was a worthy deed.

And the wife of a former Ukrainian politician was found with \$22 million in cash crossing the border into Hungary last year.

It seems as though a lot of the zeal for enforcement of the anti-corruption effort seems to align with the Republican control of the House of Representatives in our country. Maybe that is a coincidence.

But let's get to this end-use monitoring you testified to.

The Arms Control Act of 1996 requires end-use monitoring for certain defense articles that are sold or leased. Right?

Mr. STORCH. Correct.

Mr. GAETZ. And there is no feature of anything we have passed that exempts what we have given to Ukraine from those requirements in the Arms Control Act. Right?

Mr. STORCH. Not exempts. There are different provisions as to how that plays out in different circumstances.

Mr. GAETZ. But that is controlling law, controlling policy.

And here is, here is the upshot. As you testify here today you cannot testify truthfully under oath that the DOD has complied with the policy and law regarding end-use monitoring during all times of this conflict. Isn't that right?

Mr. STORCH. So, I want to be careful here when I respond to you, Congressman, to make sure that I am clear.

We are conducting a series of evaluations that look at the controls that DOD has in place to ensure that they are taking the steps that are required.

Mr. GAETZ. I get all that.

But here is the operative question: We haven't complied with end-use monitoring according to the law with everything we have sent to Ukraine to date, have we?

Mr. STORCH. So, our 2020 report, which is our last public report on this, made a number of recommendations. All of those have been—

Mr. GAETZ. I know. I know. But you are sort of dodging the question.

You cannot testify that we have complied with the end-use monitoring requirements at all times during this conflict, can you?

Mr. STORCH. So, our, we have an ongoing evaluation right now.

Mr. GAETZ. I get that it is ongoing. I am looking backwards.

You cannot testify that everything has complied with the law on the end-use monitoring, can you?

Mr. STORCH. So, some of that gets into the classified report that—

Mr. GAETZ. Right. Right.

Mr. STORCH [continuing]. We issued previously.

Mr. GAETZ. But I think everyone watching this could see that if you could testify to that, you would. You are citing a classified report. I don't know why that report is classified. I think the American people deserve to know if this 1996 law is being followed or not. You can't testify that it is being followed. And so I think they can draw reasonable conclusions from that.

Do we have—Dr. Kahl, do we have DOD personnel in Ukraine now?

Dr. KAHL. We do. We have a couple dozen at the embassy.

Mr. GAETZ. Other than the embassy, any other personnel?

Dr. KAHL. No.

Mr. GAETZ. How about CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], are there training folks in Ukraine?

Dr. KAHL. I am not going to talk about that in an unclassified setting. Happy to talk about that further in the classified briefing.

Mr. GAETZ. Is the Azov battalion getting access to U.S. weapons?

Dr. KAHL. Not that I am aware of. But if you have information, I would be happy to hear it.

Mr. GAETZ. I seek unanimous consent to enter into the record the Global Times investigative report that indicate—that talks about training. It is from the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensics Research Lab citing the Azov battalion was even getting stuff as far back as 2018.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 89.]

Mr. GAETZ. Any reason to disagree with that assessment, Dr. Kahl?

Dr. KAHL. Is this the—I am sorry, is this the Global Times from China?

Mr. GAETZ. No. This is—

Dr. KAHL. That is what you read.

Mr. GAETZ. Yeah, it might be. Yes. Would that be a reasonable—

Dr. KAHL. As a general matter, I don't take Beijing's propaganda at face value.

Mr. GAETZ. No, no. Yeah, but just tell me if the allegation is true or false. I mean, it—

Dr. KAHL. I don't have any evidence one way or the other.

Mr. GAETZ. Okay.

Dr. KAHL. As a general matter, I don't take Beijing's propaganda at face value.

Mr. GAETZ. Fair. Fair enough. I would agree with that assessment.

April 2022 President Biden is describing the supplemental funding that we are providing to Ukraine. He says, "It is also going to help schools and hospitals open. It is going to allow pensions and social support to be paid to the Ukrainian people so they have something, something in their pocket."

So, help me understand how the U.S. taxpayer is paying for pensions in Ukraine is a good idea for our country?

Dr. KAHL. I would defer you to other parts of our government. The Department of Defense doesn't have a role in pensions in Ukraine.

Mr. GAETZ. You are a senior Biden administration official. The President said that it is really important that we keep funding the pensions in Ukraine.

I would observe that the U.S. Census Bureau says that in 2022 the U.S. pension shortfall is \$1.4 trillion. So, while we have a corrupt Ukrainian government, while we have our watchdog here who can't say that we followed the law in end-use monitoring, we have the President of the United States saying we need to fund pensions in Ukraine, meanwhile the pensions of our fellow Americans are in greater jeopardy.

Mr. Chairman, I see that my time is expired. But I seek unanimous consent to enter a number of articles into the record, if I may.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 94.]

Mr. GAETZ. Very well.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Khanna, for 5 minutes.

Mr. KHANNA. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Dr. Kahl, one of the experts that I was talking to told me that Russia has six times the artillery as Ukraine. Is that true?

Dr. KAHL. Not anymore. I think the reality is that we don't know precisely how much artillery Russia has left. But we do know that they have expended an extraordinary amount of it and that they are running low, which is why they are turning to the likes of North Korea and others in desperate search of more artillery.

Mr. KHANNA. Where would you put the ratio at now?

Dr. KAHL. It is hard to say. We could talk more about this precisely in the classified setting.

And a lot of it also depends on the assumptions you make about the viability of ammunition that Russia has had in storage for 40 or 50 years, going back to the Soviet days. So, it is a little bit of an art rather than a science.

I do think the Russians continue to have artillery. But they are, they are suffering tremendous shortages at the front of artillery, which is why they are turning to countries like North Korea.

Mr. KHANNA. And as someone who deeply admires the President's policy and Tony Blinken's role, your role, and has voted for all the aids packages, I guess my question is what is your confidence level at this point that Ukraine will be able to hold all the territory it currently holds in a war of attrition?

Dr. KAHL. I think that, as Lieutenant General Sims has testified, the front line right now is kind of a grinding slog. And you are likely to see incremental gains on both sides.

So, for example, the Russians have made some incremental gains around Bakhmut in recent weeks and months, but at the cost of thousands and thousands of casualties in these human wave attacks from the Wagner prisoners and others. So, you may see small portions of territory change hands in the coming weeks and months.

I do not think that there is anything I see that suggests the Russians can sweep across Ukraine and make significant territorial gains any time in the next year or so. And we are making sure the Ukrainians have the capabilities to stop them from doing that, while at the same time giving them the capabilities to go on the offensive themselves to claw back more territory.

Mr. KHANNA. And I assume, Dr. Kahl, your assumption is contingent on the House continuing to support Ukraine with aid, or are you saying already with what we have given?

Dr. KAHL. No, I mean, well, so, first of all the House, the Senate, the American people have been extraordinarily generous. We have spent about \$31.7 billion in security assistance over the last year. We have about \$12 billion remaining from the money that you all provided at the end of last year for the remainder of this fiscal year.

It is true that Ukraine continues to depend on assistance from the United States and our allies and partners. And that will be true for some period of time.

So, yes, if the world walked away from Ukraine, then the balance would tip in Russia's favor. But there is no reason to believe that——

Mr. KHANNA. And how many more rounds of aid do you expect? And I say this as someone who supported them and wants to continue to support them. But just in terms of the American public, how many more times do you think Congress needs to provide aid?

Dr. KAHL. You know, it is difficult. And it is difficult because we don't know the course and trajectory of the conflict. The conflict could end 6 months from now, it could end 2 years from now, or 3 years from now.

I think the President has said that the United States will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes.

I think we have had a good conversation today about why that is in the vital national interest of the United States. So, I would hope that Congress would continue to be supportive.

But we should only come and ask for what Ukraine really needs and, as this conversation has said, what we can account for and demonstrate to the American people is actually benefitting our interests.

Mr. KHANNA. And what do you think at the end is the end game? I mean, obviously we talk about a just peace. What does that look like to you? And how does—how do we get there?

Dr. KAHL. Well, of course, Ukraine has detailed its principles for a just peace. We just had more than 140 countries in the U.N. General Assembly essentially ratify their approach.

I think a just peace would involve Russia withdrawing from the territory that they have illegally occupied from Ukraine. But, ultimately, the Ukrainians are going to be the ones that determine what peace settlement is—is acceptable or not.

Our position has been to make sure that at whatever point they enter into those conversations they do so from a position of strength.

Mr. KHANNA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Waltz, for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kahl, did we successfully deter Russia from invading Ukraine? Did deterrence work?

We had a whole series of diplomatic, economic, sanctions, the most powerful sanctions the world has ever seen, not to mention our ongoing security assistance at the time. Did that work? Was it successful?

Dr. KAHL. Clearly, because he invaded Ukraine, Putin was not deterred.

Mr. WALTZ. So, it is safe to say deterrence failed in this case?

Dr. KAHL. Well, one possibility is also that Putin was not deterred as it related to going into Ukraine. He has been deterred as it relates to going after the United States or NATO.

Mr. WALTZ. So, you would postulate that no matter what we provided Ukraine, deterrence would have failed?

Dr. KAHL. I actually think our intelligence community is split on this view. Their, their assessment was that almost no amount of weapons prior to the conflict could have deterred——

Mr. WALTZ. I ask this——

Dr. KAHL. [continuing]. Putin going into Ukraine.

Mr. WALTZ. Well, I ask this in the sense that I was in Ukraine the month before, and at the time the answer that the Ukrainians were receiving, that we received was that Stingers, too escalatory; anti-ship missiles, too provocative; long-range artillery, certainly off the books and improbable. Other things will take too long to train on.

And what we have seen is Stingers, too provocative; then we provide them. Harpoons, too provocative; then we provide them. HIMARS, can't do that; then we give them. Patriots, absolutely not; then we give them. Tanks, Bradleys, heck no, takes too long; now here we are a year later, we are providing them.

I think, you know, as we are patting ourselves on the back, providing an ally the arms they need to defend themselves if we have decided it is within our interests after entire cities and whole regions have been devastated, probably isn't a good strategy. Would you agree with that?

Dr. KAHL. Well, we did provide hundreds of millions of dollars in assistance in the months leading up to the war. And then, of course, Congress——

Mr. WALTZ. Actually, if we really rewind the clock, I mean starting in 2014, we provided only non-lethal aid until 2017. Was that a mistake?

Dr. KAHL. Well, you know, I was then national security advisor to then-Vice President Biden——

Mr. WALTZ. Yes. That is why I am asking.

Dr. KAHL [continuing]. And he favored providing lethal assistance like Javelins. That is——everybody knows that.

Mr. WALTZ. And the Obama administration——

Dr. KAHL. Made a different decision.

Mr. WALTZ [continuing]. Decided. Was that a mistake?

Dr. KAHL. I think in retrospect we should have provided them Javelin missiles. That has been the position of then-Vice President Biden.

Mr. WALTZ. Which the Trump administration then provided?

Dr. KAHL. It was a complicated tale——

Mr. WALTZ. Yes, right. All right.

Dr. KAHL [continuing]. I think as you recall from the transcript.

Mr. WALTZ. Let's just, let's move to burden sharing because I think this is absolutely an issue I hear from my constituents and something we need to, we need to address as a policy matter.

The United States provided \$30 billion in security assistance. The next nearest is Germany at \$3.5, a tenth of what we have provided. U.K. less than \$3 billion. France less than a billion, they are in the hundred—hundred millions. And poor Estonia has provided three times, just by percentage of GDP [gross domestic product], what France has provided.

So, all in total, even though our economies of the EU and the United States, roughly the same, the Europeans have provided less

than half of what—what we have. And we haven't even gotten into the, you know, the rest that makes up the full \$100 billion.

Is that—is that fair? Is that effective burden sharing from your perspective?

Dr. KAHL. Well, obviously we have been working with our allies and partners throughout. And the Secretary of Defense has held now nine of these Ukraine Defense Contact Groups. They meet monthly.

Mr. WALTZ. No, I understand.

Dr. KAHL. I am going to answer your question.

Mr. WALTZ. Yes.

Dr. KAHL. If you actually take the top 20 contributors of security assistance to Ukraine as a percentage of GDP, the United States ranks tenth. And there are a number of European countries that are above the bar. You mentioned Estonia. Latvia—

Mr. WALTZ. Sure.

Dr. KAHL. [continuing]. Is also up there. But countries like Poland, Finland, Norway, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Sweden are all above us as a percentage of GDP. And then some of the countries that you mentioned are below us in terms of—

Mr. WALTZ. But I am talking about the—I mean right on the front lines, clearly in their interests, Germany in particular, what have we done to get Germany, and France, and Italy, and these large economies clearly in the heart of NATO, in the heart of Europe, and directly, if we buy into the matter that this is in our interests because if Putin slices through Ukraine he will keep going, what have we done effectively to get them to step up to the plate at least dollar for dollar or dollar for euro?

Dr. KAHL. I mean, I think the Defense Department has certainly worked alongside the White House and the State Department on diplomacy in this regard from the very beginning. That is why the Secretary of Defense holds these monthly meetings. They started in Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

The Germans as of now have provided \$3.58 billion. The U.K. has provided \$2.85 billion.

Mr. WALTZ. I read out the statistics.

Dr. KAHL. Yes.

Mr. WALTZ. I would just postulate going forward over the long term, just as we had in the Gulf War where we had an effective diplomatic effort to pay for this, this is a global issue—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Chair now recognizes—

Mr. WALTZ [continuing]. I think we need to do a lot more to [inaudible].

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. The gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Keating, for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank the Chair and the ranking member for having this hearing on an ongoing basis on an important issue of oversight.

This is an all-of-government approach that we have here. Secretary Yellen is in Ukraine right now. And we do have sanctions that no country has ever seen before.

In terms of your area particularly, Mr. Storch, or for anyone that is here, some of those new sanctions, how helpful will they be in terms of the people that are trying to skirt those existing sanctions and get around them?

And how helpful will they be in the overall effort?

Mr. STORCH. Well, I will just start from the oversight perspective. We have this working group. Part of the working group is the Department of Treasury OIG. So, it is probably more a question for them than for the DOD OIG because we have oversight over the security assistance.

In terms of a policy decision, that is not really sort of what OIG's do, so I will turn it over to Dr. Kahl.

Dr. KAHL. I will just say I think, obviously, the sanctions have put a dent in the Russian economy. We will continue to magnify that.

I think from a DOD perspective, the bigger constraint on the Russians is more likely to be the export controls which are making it very difficult for Russia to recapitalize the military that has been shattered in Ukraine.

Mr. KEATING. Just a quick question: Does Germany have different laws than we do in terms of their defense?

Dr. KAHL. I mean, all the allies and partners we work with have different constraints, different laws.

You know, Germany was not—one of the reasons we didn't provide lethal assistance back in the Obama administration was because Germany was so opposed to doing it. So, the fact that they provide any lethal assistance was a huge sea change for them.

Now, I know that is frustrating for a lot of folks who want our allies and partners to do the most they can. We share that desire. But, yes, our allies and partners all have their own domestic political constraints, their own domestic regulations. And a lot of them have had to change their own laws and practices in order to provide the historic support for Ukraine that we have seen.

Mr. KEATING. Question. You know, when we read something in the newspaper regarding someone being dismissed from his position in Ukraine and being replaced, you know, this is a sovereign issue that each country has. They make their own decisions.

But just a question, and I want to do this so we can avoid classified setting, just a question generally. If those decisions are made and they deal—do deal with something that would be a concern in our oversight and everything, is that communicated to the U.S. and their allies informally?

Dr. KAHL. I would say sometimes we are aware of the moves before they happen, and sometimes we are aware when we read about them just like you do. I think the point from our matter of U.S. policy is the importance of getting after corruption, in Ukraine or anywhere else, is at the top of our points of emphasis with Ukrainian leaders.

I do think they are taking these issues seriously. I think it is a problem they are going to continue to work on. But the fact that they are making any progress in the midst of this existential fight I think is quite remarkable, frankly.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you.

Mr. Storch, just an observation. I was a prosecutor before I was a Member of Congress. And, you know, when there is a line of questioning that occurs and your job is one of monitoring and an ongoing investigation, whether something is there or not but you are in the process of doing it, and you are asked a question publicly about what the outcome of that might be before it ever occurs, that must put you in a very difficult position to answer a question and it might give the perception you are not answering the question when, indeed, you are not able to answer the question if you are doing your job properly.

Do you want to comment on, sometimes on the difficulty of that line of questioning when it is posed in a public setting like it is here?

Mr. STORCH. I appreciate, very much, the observation. And that is exactly right, obviously.

You know, our job in the IG community is to do independent oversight. And as an old boss of mine used to say, we hit it right down the fairway. I can't do that in golf, but my office does that in oversight. So, we are looking at these issues. We are trying to determine what happens. And we are going to report out as transparently as we can.

But to try to get ahead of an ongoing audit, or evaluation, or to talk about, I can't even begin to speculate about investigations, puts me—puts us in a very difficult position. So, I appreciate the sensitivity.

If I can on corruption, I would just add when I was over in Kyiv, that was one of the things we really emphasized, both myself and my counterparts from the other two OIGs. And we met with everybody up to the prime minister and down the minister of defense and others, the importance of ensuring that corruption was being addressed and that we are being transparent about it. They all said they understood that.

Now, obviously, as a career prosecutor and an IG, you know, we are in the trust-but-verify business. But certainly they indicated that they understand that issue.

And, finally, I would just add that sort of in one of life's coincidences, I actually previously worked in Ukraine as a resident legal advisor for the Department of Justice, working on anti-corruption issues. So, I hope that perspective helps my office as we look at what is going on here.

Mr. KEATING. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Banks, for 5 minutes.

Mr. BANKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Kahl, you helped write the dangerous Obama-era Iran deal, the JCPOA [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action]. You helped negotiate it.

Last November, President Biden was caught on video saying the deal was dead. Yet, just this month the administration has renewed sanctions waivers that are key to the deal.

Why, in your opinion, is the Biden administration so hellbent on reentering the new Iran deal?

Dr. KAHL. Thank you for your question.

Just as a technical matter, I was not involved in the negotiation of the Iran deal.

Mr. BANKS. You helped write it. Is that fair?

Dr. KAHL. I didn't. But I——

Mr. BANKS. You were, you were involved with it?

Dr. KAHL. Well, I worked in the administration when the deal was negotiated.

The President, and Secretary Blinken, and others in the administration have made clear that we are not about to reenter the JCPOA any time soon.

Mr. BANKS. Why did they attempt to reenter it?

Dr. KAHL. Well, because Iran's nuclear progress since we left the JCPOA has been remarkable. Back in 2018, when the previous administration decided to leave the JCPOA, it would have taken Iran about 12 months to produce one fissile, one bomb's worth of fissile material. Now it would take about 12 days.

And so, I think there is still the view that if you can resolve this issue diplomatically and put constraints back on their nuclear program, it is better than the other options. But right now, the JCPOA is on ice because there was an arrangement on the table last summer that the Iranians were not willing to take.

And, of course, Iran's behavior has changed since then, not the least of which their support for Russia in Ukraine, which is the subject of the conversation here today.

So, I don't think we are on the precipice of reentering the JCPOA.

Mr. BANKS. So, you are declaring defeat for the new Iran deal on behalf of the Biden administration?

Dr. KAHL. I think our view, actually I am just stating what both the President and Secretary of State have already said, which is that the JCPOA is not on the horizon in the near term.

The administration's position remains that a diplomatic deal to put constraints around Iran's program remains the best alternative to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

But the President has also made clear that his policy is that Iran will not get a nuclear weapon, period. And that if a diplomatic outcome is not possible, that we have other options to deal with that problem.

Mr. BANKS. So, does it concern you that Putin and China are on the side of negotiating the same deal that you helped craft during the Obama administration?

Dr. KAHL. There are no active P5+1 [U.N. Security Council's five permanent members plus Germany] negotiations, so China and Russia being at the table or not being at the table are not terribly germane.

Mr. BANKS. Can you shed light for us on why we tapped Russians to help negotiate on America's behalf in the renewed negotiations during the Biden administration?

Dr. KAHL. It is not clear to me what you are referencing. But I think that during the Obama administration, at least, the Russians were able to compartmentalize differences that we had in some areas and the common view of not wanting Iran to get a nuclear weapon.

I think we are not in the same place right now because the Russians, because of how badly they are doing in Ukraine, are becoming increasingly dependent on Iran and, therefore, I think are a lot less likely to put pressure of any kind on Iran to accede to any diplomatic agreement because they are trying to get Iran to ship them more drones, missiles, and other capabilities.

Mr. BANKS. In 2021, did you expect the invasion of Ukraine?

Dr. KAHL. In 2021? Well, in 2021 we warned the world about—

Mr. BANKS. Before.

Dr. KAHL. I am sorry?

Mr. BANKS. You expected it? You anticipated it?

Dr. KAHL. Beginning in the fall I think it is of public record, beginning in the fall we had very good intelligence that Vladimir Putin was putting the pieces in place to be able to carry out a large-scale invasion. We began to downgrade, declassify, and share that information with the world in the fall of 2021.

Mr. BANKS. Then why—shed light for us then, why did the Biden administration lift sanctions on Nord Stream 2 if we anticipated it?

Dr. KAHL. Well, I think the timelines are different in those. You should correct me if the record is different. I believe the Nord Stream conversations were several months before. And, largely, that was in order to stay united with Germany, but also to give us a leverage point.

In fact, what is interesting is that had that not gone forward, the ability of Germany to then essentially walk away from the deal would not have been effective punishment or leverage over the Russians. But these were not linked in time.

Mr. BANKS. In hindsight should we regret the decision to lift those sanctions?

Dr. KAHL. You know, I work at the Defense Department. I wasn't involved in any of those deliberations, so I would really defer—

Mr. BANKS. You don't have an opinion about it?

Dr. KAHL. [continuing]. Those questions to the Treasury Department and State Department.

I don't have, I don't have an opinion on that conversation. No, I don't.

Mr. BANKS. Okay. Thank you.

I yield back.

Dr. KAHL. Thanks.

The CHAIRMAN. Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Pennsylvania, Ms. Houlahan, for 5 minutes.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have been a staunch advocate for providing support to Ukraine since President Putin's unjustified invasion just about a year ago. Given my past in the Air Force, it probably isn't a shock to anyone that I am particularly advocating for the transfer of American aircraft. In fact, I started doing that in April of last year and, most recently, in a letter with my colleagues from the For Country Caucus.

We asked President Biden to transfer specifically F-16 aircraft to the Ukrainian military, as President Zelensky requested.

I understand that on Friday that President Biden said in an interview that Ukraine "doesn't need F-16s now." And on Sunday,

NSA [National Security Advisor] advisor Jake Sullivan emphasized that “F-16s are a question for a later time.”

Last year I also proudly co-led a bill with our former colleague Rep. Kinzinger to authorize funding to provide training for Ukrainian fighter pilots, recognizing that, of course, training may need to happen before they are ready to fly our jets, and in the event that we ultimately do transfer them.

We submitted this language for inclusion in last year’s NDAA. And the final law included that language authorizing the United States to provide training for Ukrainian soldiers, both on manned and unmanned aerial capabilities, including tactical surveillance systems, and fixed and rotary aircraft, such as attack, strike, airlift, and surveillance aircraft.

So, my two or three questions for you. Under Secretary Kahl, in your written testimony you noted that you have expanded U.S.-led training of Ukrainian air forces on combined arms and joint maneuver operations. Could you speak to whether or not this training included aircraft such as authorized by the fiscal year 2023 NDAA?

That is my first question.

My second question also for you is what exactly would a later time be as, you know, quoted by President Biden?

And we may, finally, have to save this for our classified briefing, but could you please elaborate on what information the President is relying on, or perhaps was relying on, when he said that Ukraine doesn’t need F-16s now, despite pleas from Ukraine’s own president?

Dr. KAHL. Thank you for that.

So, no, we have not started training on F-16s. Our assessment is that a delivery timeline for F-16s, even on the most expeditious timeline, and the training timelines are essentially the same, that is they are about 18 months. So, you don’t actually save yourself time by starting the training early, in our assessment.

And since we haven’t made the decision to provide F-16s, and neither have our allies and partners, it doesn’t make sense to start to train them on a system they may never get. I mean, they could end up getting British Tornados, or Gripens, or Mirage aircraft. And, therefore, you wouldn’t want to train them on F-16s.

So, it just, in our judgment, is not the appropriate time to start training.

It is true that the President has, and the National Security Advisor have said that, you know, we don’t see F-16s as the top priority right now. The President did have this conversation with President Zelensky in Kyiv last week. It is a priority for the Ukrainians but it is not one of their top three priorities.

Their top priorities are air defense systems, that is keeping their interceptors and air defense network alive against Russian cruise missiles and the like, and Iranian drones.

Artillery and fires, which we have talked about, and armor and mechanized systems.

A couple of just data points on F-16s that I think actually speaks to your second and third questions. We have looked at this very carefully about what it would take to get Ukraine F-16s. So, if we were to do new production it would take 3 to 6 years to get them F-16s. We could look at older-block F-16s that could potentially

deliver on a faster timeline, let's call it 18 to 24 months. Maybe you can even shave a few months off of that.

Then the question would be how many? The Ukrainians have at times asked us for as many as 128 fourth-generation aircraft, a mix of F-15s, F-18s, and F-16s.

Our Air Force estimates that over the long term Ukraine would probably need 50 to 80 F-16s to replace their existing air force. If you do that—if you did that with new F-16s, so say block 70, 72s, that would cost \$10 or \$11 billion.

If you did it with older block 30 or 32 aircraft, and let's imagine you only did half, 36 of those, it would still cost \$2 to \$3 billion. And just as a reminder, that would consume a huge portion of the remaining security assistance that we have for this fiscal year.

So, these are the tradeoffs that we are making in real time. Would it make sense to, you know, spend \$3 billion on a capability that will arrive a year and a half from now when that \$3 billion is needed for Patriot interceptors, or more Bradley Fighting Vehicles, or more 155-millimeter ammunition, or more GMLRS, et cetera, et cetera?

And so that is the trade—tradeoffs we are making at the moment.

Ms. HOULAHAN. I am nearly out of time. I appreciate that.

I guess my only concern is when we started talking about this 10 months ago, 10 months has gone by. And so I just don't know when the clock should start. And when we see that this—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 139.]

Ms. HOULAHAN. I appreciate it. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Johnson, for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here. Very important topic, very timely.

I had a couple more questions about the end-use monitoring for Mr. Storch.

Your office published a report in October stating that the Department of Defense was unable to provide end-use monitoring in accordance with DOD policy because of the limited U.S. presence in Ukraine. So, the report identified the challenges that the DOD personnel who are responsible for conducting end-use monitoring and enhanced end-use monitoring face when there is no U.S. personnel present, or at least limited presence there.

Have we learned any lessons or discovered any best practices to improve that end-use monitoring in Ukraine despite the lack of people there on the ground?

Mr. STORCH. So, to be clear, the report that was issued in October of 2022 was a classified report. So, happy to talk more in detail about that during the later session.

I believe it is accurate to say that what the report did is it acknowledged the challenges that are faced in those circumstances such as they were in Ukraine, and the steps that were being taken at the time to try to address those.

Now, as I say, happy to talk more.

The reason we initiated the current evaluation, and the reason I didn't want to get ahead of what we are finding, is that as the situation changes, and conditions on the ground evolve, we want to go back and we are going back and looking at what is going on now, what steps have been taken to try to address those challenges, and where they are, and how things move forward. And, frankly, Congressman, given the importance of the issue, I think that is something we are going to be looking at as long as this goes on. Right? And so, that is where we are.

Mr. JOHNSON. And I think we agree we have to do that. We owe it to all involved.

And I know that there are classified portions. There probably are unclassified things that you could discuss. But does the Department have any concerns about the self-reporting that is coming out of Ukraine?

So, you know, specifically Ukraine, we all know Ukraine has a documented history of corruption and government waste in the past. I know a lot of that is being alleviated. But what gives you confidence that the Ukrainians are being entirely forthcoming and transparent with us when it comes to what we have seen so far?

Mr. STORCH. So, you know, at some level that is why we do these audits and reviews; right? Okay, so we want to go, we want to look at the evidence, and then be able to assess independently where things are.

As I mentioned, I went to Kyiv. We met with the prime minister, we met with the minister of defense. They told us they understood the importance of addressing corruption.

When we were out there actually, coincidentally, a number of corruption cases had been announced. They very strongly pointed out those did not involve U.S. security assistance or U.S. assistance generally. But having said that, they were corruption cases. And the point they were making is they were trying to address them.

So, as I say, I have got a long history. I have been going out to Ukraine and working out there on behalf of the United States Government for more than 15 years, and in the anti-corruption area. And so, I, you know, I hear what they are saying.

And then we are in the trust-but-verify business. And the way we do that on this issue is by doing these evaluations that look at what is actually going on. Because, again, there is sometimes a misunderstanding. We at the DOD OIG, we don't go out and count the—count the missiles. Right?

Mr. JOHNSON. Right.

Mr. STORCH. We don't do the monitoring. It is up to the DOD to meet the requirements of the law and the policies that implement it regarding monitoring. And then we do oversight to make sure that is happening, that it is happening in accordance with the law, and it is happening appropriately. And we make recommendations to help the DOD to improve that.

So, that is the process we are engaged in now and, as I say, I think we are going to continue to be engaged in.

Mr. JOHNSON. There are just some inherent challenges, as we are acknowledging, that when people are—we don't have DOD personnel there. So, we want to ensure, of course, that, you know, sensitive weapons end up where they are supposed to be. And do you

think that we need U.S. inspectors on the ground to do that? Or I mean, we are trust but verify, what are the details of that, I guess?

Mr. STORCH. I am sorry, do you mean from my office or DOD personnel?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, U.S. inspectors.

Dr. KAHL. I can talk to that a little.

Mr. JOHNSON. Okay.

Dr. KAHL. I can talk to that a little bit.

So, first of all, you know, we are not just taking the Ukrainians' words for it. They are, they provide us information on their inventories, their transfer logs.

We have provided them handheld scanners. That data gets transmitted directly back to us so that we can keep custody.

We have shared NATO standard inventory and logistics software, which we also have access to that data.

And then, of course, we do have a presence at the embassy. We have an Office of Defense Cooperation. And they have done six different site visits out from Kyiv. These are day trips. That is a dangerous place, and we don't have outposts across the country. And they have seen no signs of diversion, or that the Ukrainians are not following procedure.

So, look, this is an active combat zone. And it is not like Iraq and Afghanistan where we have thousands of soldiers all over the country. So, there are inherent restrictions. But we are trying to maximize the use of technology and the people we do have on the ground to get the best site picture as possible. And then, of course, the IG will do oversight to make sure we are doing our job the right way.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from New Jersey, Ms. Sherrill, for 5 minutes.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

I recently met with many of our NATO allies and members of the Ukrainian Parliament, and two things really became clear. One is that U.S. leadership has been effective. We have overseen a lot of the support for Ukraine. And our allies appreciate that, as well as our intelligence sharing.

The CHAIRMAN. I don't think your microphone is on. Yeah, you might want to borrow Ms. Escobar's or Ms. Slotkin's.

Ms. SHERRILL. Steal Ms. Slotkin's.

The CHAIRMAN. There you go.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you.

I was saying that two things have really become clear. U.S. leadership has been instrumental in this fight and has been—that has been noted by our allies across the world, and appreciated.

But sadly, what has also become clear is the broad-scale use of war crimes by the Russians. Kidnapping of children, over 6,000 verified cases. And that is simply what we are able to verify. I would say that is very low.

Rape, rape of mothers in front of their children, young children. Rape of daughters and mothers.

As I am hearing from my Ukrainian community as they come into the district, targeting of civilian infrastructure.

And so, it becomes clear. And when you hear from the Ukrainian parliamentarians you hear that they believe this is an attempt by the Russians to demoralize them, to make them want to quit this fight, when in fact it has had the opposite effect and understanding of why this fight is so important.

And so, that is why we on this committee take our, take our job so very seriously for making sure that we can support Ukraine. And the only way we can continue to do that effectively is with the support of the American people.

And so, our understanding of the oversight, our understanding of how Ukrainians are overcoming their history of corruption is so important so we can convey it.

And I—I really appreciate your explanation of all of the measures we have in place. But I don't think what is coming through is what I heard when I was on the ground in Kyiv from the embassy, that they are seeing all—the weapons that come in get to the front. They are getting pictures of those weapons on the front lines. They are seeing them in use. They feel very confident that the weapons that we provide them at the border of Poland are in fact making it to the front. And we are certainly seeing their effective use time and time again.

Can you talk a little bit more about why we believe that the weaponry that we have sent to Ukraine is in fact making it to the front, and how we have not seen the use—we have not seen those weapons, for example, for sale on international markets?

And maybe that is a question for Dr. Kahl. I think, Mr. Storch, you are doing the aftermath of it. But how do we feel right now in time about providing all the assistance we have provided to Ukraine and our confidence that it is actually getting where we want it to go?

Dr. KAHL. So, part of it is what we are seeing and part of it is what we are not seeing.

So, what we are not seeing is any evidence of significant diversion. I think our assessment is if some of these systems have been diverted it is by Russians who have captured things on the battlefield, which always happens. But that there is no evidence that the Ukrainians are diverting it to the black market or some other [inaudible].

That is not surprising, given the intensity of the fight and the fact that they are clearly using what we are providing them and what our allies and partners are providing them to maximum effect. So, they are asking us for more because they are using everything that we have provided them.

I would just say as a general matter, you know, the inventory comes in to the various places in Europe where the security assistance flows in. All that inventory is taken note of. It is scanned, et cetera. It gets given to the Ukrainians. They are responsible for giving us the information on where it ends up and the logs of that information, sharing with us digital confirmation of where things go.

They also have scanners. That information comes back to us. And they have this NATO standard software that helps keep inventory, which we also have access to that information. And we do these site visits.

So, look, this is an active war zone. There are always going to be things that you don't know are happening or you don't see. But we are not seeing any evidence of systemic diversion of the equipment that the United States has provided.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you.

And in my final few seconds, is there more we could be doing as a committee to support ensuring that the weapons are being used appropriately?

Mr. STORCH. Well, I would just say hearings like this are great. I think oversight and transparency is really important.

The things that Dr. Kahl talks about, that is the information that we are getting as we have our teams out there doing evaluations, looking at every aspect of the security of this equipment from the beginning until it gets to the front lines in Ukraine. And to make sure that everything that can be done is being done to ensure that it is being used properly and as intended.

So, I think hearings like this are great. And we appreciate the committee's support as we do our oversight. And we will keep you informed as we go forward.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you. With that I yield back.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentlelady.

Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Michigan, Mrs. McClain, for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCLAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I would like to thank Mr. Rogers for giving me the opportunity to go on a CODEL [congressional delegation] and actually see the inventory of weapons that we are sending, and just how they are getting from point A to point B and how we are tracking them. You know, that, I can assure you, raised my level of confidence.

There is a saying: one look is worth a thousand reports.

But I want to shift gears for just a moment because although I think we are doing some things very well, I think we need a little bit of a reset with the American people, or I should just say my constituents in my district.

They have been raising concerns with me about our involvement in this war. They are worried that we are getting dragged into a never-ending war with no clear and precise outcome that has been, in their opinion, right, perception is 90 percent of reality, that has a clear end in sight.

They believe that we are spending money and resources on a fight overseas rather than getting our own fiscal house in order.

If you could, and anyone can answer, in simple terms just lay out to the American people the reasons why it is so important for Ukraine to defeat Russia in this war, particularly from the eyes of the Americans?

So, what are the implications for the United States if Russia actually does defeat Ukraine?

Dr. KAHL. I think the implications would be both in Europe and felt around the world. You know, the United States did get dragged into two world wars in Europe because aggressors weren't stopped. Aggressors, you know, initiated their conflict. The free world didn't hang together. The aggressors weren't deterred, they weren't

stopped. And so the United States eventually was dragged into those conflicts. So, we don't want to see that happening again.

Mrs. MCCLAIN. So, it is a deterrent—and I don't mean to put words in your mouth—but it is more of a deterrent so we don't end up into a world war?

Dr. KAHL. I think it is to demonstrate to other would-be-aggressors that if they engage in the type of aggression that Russia has, they would face similar consequences.

And I think it will matter very much, for example, if you are sitting in Beijing wondering about crossing the Taiwan Strait. You will ask yourself, if I do that will the world react like they did when we went after and absorbed Hong Kong, which was to just kind of—

Mrs. MCCLAIN. Yes.

Dr. KAHL. [continuing]. Look the other way? Or the way the world reacted in Ukraine?

And if it is the latter, then aggression across the Taiwan Strait is a lot less likely.

Mrs. MCCLAIN. And can you expand on that, sir, just a little bit more? What would a Russian victory or defeat mean for China?

Dr. KAHL. Well, I think, first of all, Russia is China's closest ally. They, of course, signed a strategic partnership without limits shortly before the war.

We have seen growing indications that China might be considering providing Russia with some assistance, lethal assistance, which would be very troublesome.

So, China has a stake in the outcome here. But, also, I think China would, you know, they speak a lot about the importance of sovereignty and territorial integrity. But, frankly, China would benefit greatly from a world that allowed big powers to gobble up their small neighbors.

Mrs. MCCLAIN. And would you care to comment, what would the loss of Ukraine mean for NATO?

Dr. KAHL. Well, first of all, Ukraine is not going to lose. There will be no loss of Ukraine. I think Vladimir Putin hoped that that would happen. It is not, it hasn't happened, it is not going to happen.

Ukraine continues to maintain most of its territory. They are fighting tenaciously. The Russians do not have the capacity, in my view, to take over Ukraine.

But, obviously, if they were to do so it would position Russian forces and all the developments inside of Ukraine right on Ukraine's door—I mean right on NATO's doorstep as it relates to Poland and the Baltic States, which is I think one of the reasons why you have seen Poland and the Baltic States so engaged in Ukraine.

Mrs. MCCLAIN. And can you talk a little bit about the economic impact that that would, that that would mean, or that would have on the United States?

Dr. KAHL. Well, I think, you know, you have already seen that Russia's aggression, especially their—what they have done to limit the ability of grain to get to global markets through the Black Sea, has already had an impact on global security, writ large.

Obviously, the energy instability which is generated by the war has also had an economic consequence.

So, I think the war is already having significant consequences because of Russia's aggression. And had it been unchecked, I think those consequences would have been worse.

Mrs. MCCLAIN. And we would have been farther along.

Thank you. With that time, I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Escobar, for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to express my gratitude, Mr. Chairman, to you and the ranking member for these ongoing conversations and this opportunity for us to provide oversight and for the American people to feel comfort, I hope and I believe, with the information that is being delivered.

I would like to thank our witnesses as well.

You know, I would be remiss if I didn't remark on the incredible change that I have seen happen over the last 3 years since my—since I attended the Munich Security Conference in 2019 versus the Munich Security Conference last week or 2 weeks ago, whenever it was.

When I was there in 2019, there was significant question about the West and whether the West would continue to support NATO and just the fears about how untethered things seemed. But last week, or the week before, whenever it was—sorry, time escapes me—but this year's Munich Security Conference, the incredible unity and the strength demonstrated by our allies and our friends, especially with regard to Ukraine and our defense of democracy.

And I am very proud of the role that the United States has played in rebuilding NATO and ensuring that the West has come together in a way to defend our friends and allies and help stop the Russian aggression.

And I would like to, Dr. Kahl, just in that vein, because there has been just such a lot of conversation, obviously, about the F-16s and about why the United States and some of our friends are not stepping up as quickly as some would like. My colleague, Representative Houlihan, she was about to ask a question, and I would like to follow that up, because I am curious as well.

But her question, she started as her time ran out, when should the clock start on those F-16s? You know, you laid out for us very clearly and very effectively, you know, the considerations involved, and also the financial implications as well, and that is on Congress, right, to make sure that we provide the continued support and to put our money where our mouth is.

But when should that clock start ticking for the F-16s? And is that something you can discuss in this setting?

Dr. KAHL. Look, I think it is—you know, a more modernized Ukrainian air force will be important in the medium and long term for Ukraine to continue to defend the territory that it claws back, and to deter Russia in the future. So I think there is a medium-to long-term requirement.

The challenge, of course, is even if it was a short-term requirement, we couldn't get it to them immediately anyway, and we don't assess that it is the highest short-term priority. And, by the way, neither do the Ukrainians. The Ukrainians' priorities are air de-

fense systems, so they are integrated air and missile defense systems, artillery and fires, armor and mechanized. And because every dollar you spend on one is a dollar you can't spend on another, there are real tradeoffs.

Obviously, Ukraine is going to continue having conversations with us. As I said, President Zelensky discussed this with President Biden in Kyiv last week. Zelensky has had similar conversations with our U.K. and French allies. The U.K. has announced an interest in starting to do some training, so we will see where that leads.

There are other countries in NATO—the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, I think—that have talked about potentially F-16s, that they may be offloading as they upgrade to F-35s. So I do think this conversation will continue.

I just—as I sit in the Pentagon, I have to say, what does Ukraine need right now to stay in the fight and turn the tide against the Russians in the first half of this year, which I think is going to be decisive for the conflict. It is just hard for me to tell any Member of Congress or the American people that the best use of that dollar spent right now is on F-16s.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you so much, Dr. Kahl. And I only have a few seconds left, but I am wondering, in terms of the replenishment of U.S. stocks, is the Department looking to utilize critical technology such as additive manufacturing to fill some of those gaps?

Dr. KAHL. I think the short answer is yes, but I think it is probably better for us to arrange a briefing by our acquisitions and sustainment folks to really go through the kind of the multilayered approach that they are taking to this, because they are the real experts on that.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Great. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Fallon, for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, our aid packages to Ukraine have included light tactical vehicles like Humvees. I have been a staunch supporter of the Humvee upgrade. You know, when we had to retrofit the Humvees because of the risk of IEDs [improvised explosive devices], of course that made it top heavy, but we have ABS [antilock brake system] and the ESC [electronic stability control] rollover kits that prevent that. And we have lost too many men and women to rollovers, and a lot have been injured as well.

So at the beginning of this fiscal year, approximately 40,000 Humvees that are either new or like new were in our fleet, hadn't received the anti-rollover technology.

And my question for the witnesses is, we are sending Humvees to the Ukraine, and where are they coming from? And more to the point, are we sending Humvees that have already been fully upgraded with the anti-rollover technology? Or are we sending Humvees that are slated to get this upgrade? Or are they coming from the demilitarized vehicle stockpile?

Dr. KAHL. I might ask General Sims if he—I don't actually know the answer to that question, but D.A. may or we may have take it to come back to you.

General SIMS. Sir, I will have to come back to you. We will bring that answer back to you. I am not quite sure.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 139.]

Mr. FALLON. Okay. Because we have Red River Army Depot that does a lot of this work, and they are starving at the vine, and we have got 40,000, you know, units that need this upgrade and I would really like to get that, because it saves about \$12 billion rather than buying brand-new ones to retrofit the ones we already have. So we want to always be good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

So for the witnesses as well, one of the initiatives we have been working on in our office with our colleague, our friend from California, Mr. Panetta, is our Ukraine Human Rights Policy Act, and this legislation would take concrete steps to hold Russia accountable for their atrocities they are committing in Ukraine.

So what evidence of war crimes have you seen in Ukraine, including any committed by the Wagner Group? And as the war rages into its second year, what can be done to hold Russia accountable for their actions? And then what can be done during reconstruction?

Dr. KAHL. You know, I think our colleagues at the State Department would probably be better at cataloguing all of the horrors, but we have all seen it. There has been a systematic targeting of civilians in Ukraine, clearly a callous disregard for civilian welfare, but, you know, this winter the targeting of critical infrastructure, literally intending to starve and freeze tens of millions of people for no military purpose other than to try to compel the Ukrainians to give up, but certainly in violation of the laws of armed conflict.

We have seen Russian troops engage in terrible atrocities, killing civilians, killing detained forces, and of course we have also seen the deportation of Ukrainian children back to Russia, which is among the most heinous of war crimes.

Mr. FALLON. Doctor, how many are we talking, do you think, roughly?

Dr. KAHL. Thousands, but beyond that, I don't have the numbers in front of me. I would encourage you to get a brief from the State Department. They have catalogued all of that.

Mr. FALLON. General, as far as the Wagner Group goes, do you know any more specifics on that? Could you shed some light?

General SIMS. Sir, I don't. Again, as Dr. Kahl said, I think the State Department could answer that better. But as you and the rest of the country have seen, we are certainly concerned with what we see reported in the news. And just as—and I don't mean to segue, sir, but there was a comment earlier about the—about Russian atrocities, Russian acts.

I think, you know, what separates our military, what separates Western military certainly from the Russians, is our concentration on treating people, you know, the way they should be treated, with dignity, on the laws of armed conflict that Dr. Kahl mentioned. And I know that—I know that we work hard to talk to the Ukrainians about the same things.

Mr. FALLON. Is Russia a signator, General? Do you know? Is it a signator to the Geneva Convention?

General SIMS. Sir, that is a great question.

Mr. FALLON. Just kind of thought about that. I don't know.

Dr. KAHL. So they are. And even if they weren't, the Geneva Conventions are treated as customary international law, and so binding even on states that don't abide—you know, sign up to them.

Mr. FALLON. And, General, is it your professional opinion that the Wagner Group is something you would be more concerned about because they are not Russian military regulars?

General SIMS. Sir, I think the Wagner Group has given plenty of reason to be a concern. I mean, you know, the fact that they are recruiting members from prisons certainly gives an indication of what kind of character that they are willing to recruit.

Mr. FALLON. But, General, they say they are not doing that anymore.

General SIMS. Yes, sir.

Mr. FALLON. Should we believe them?

General SIMS. You know, sir, I am not sure I would trust the words that are coming from the Russian side right now.

Mr. FALLON. So you are saying, in effect, that authoritarian regimes should not be taken at their word, regardless of whether it is, say, in Beijing or in Moscow?

General SIMS. Sir, I would agree that, you know, we have a system in which I would trust, and they don't have that same trust.

Mr. FALLON. I hope all Members of Congress just heard you. Thank you.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Before we go to the next questioner, I want to remind everybody that we have a hard stop at 12:30 to go to the classified portion of this hearing.

The gentleman from Maine, Mr. Golden, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDEN. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to start by looking back to May of last year and point out that a bipartisan group of Members of Congress, including members of this committee, have sent the administration letters, and that has gone on since April of last year, all the way right up to right now, calling for the supply of advanced military capabilities to Ukraine quite consistently. So 10 months ago, a number of us called for anti-ship missiles, HIMARS, Abrams tanks, as well as training on and transfer of F-16s.

About 5 months ago, once again, a bipartisan group of members of this committee called for a long-term defense commitment to Ukraine, to include surface-to-air missiles, MLRS [Multiple Launch Rocket System], anti-ship missiles, howitzers, and, again, training on and transfer of advanced aircraft such as the F-16. In my opinion, these letters represent differing opinions—policy opinions—about the speed at which the United States should seek to deliver advanced fighting capabilities to the battlefield in Ukraine.

Now, I really appreciate the conversation that has been going on. Just thinking about things such as F-16 or ATACMS [MGM-140

Army Tactical Missile System] or previously Abrams or HIMARS, I think what we have seen is that there are sometimes policy questions and debates and differing opinions. Then there are logistical challenges, maintenance, and the training and capabilities of the Ukrainian fighters themselves, different than policy opinions of a differing nature.

And, of course, I respect the opinion brought forward by Dr. Kahl about authorizations, appropriations, and how do we get the greatest ROI [return on investment] on the money that you have in hand right now to meet the top priorities of the Ukrainian military. But, certainly, given enough money, they would prefer to have their top 5 or top 6 or top 10 needs or capabilities met.

And the conversation about authorizations and appropriations is really I think a question for Congress as opposed to questions of policy or logistical concerns and challenges.

Of course, over the weekend the President, the President's national security team, said now is not the right phase of the war for providing Ukraine advanced aircraft. That sounds like a policy decision. And they have also pointed out that the assessment of military commanders advising the President is that we need to focus on tanks, armored personnel carriers, and infantry fighting vehicles, and such.

I don't think anyone disagrees with that, sir. And you have articulated, really, that this is about how much money do we have now, what is the greatest need that they have. But Ukraine has articulated a desire to advance their long-range fighting capabilities in the form of ATACMS and F-16s.

So just about over a week ago, the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe, U.S. European Command, briefed Members of Congress—Senate and House reportedly—and said that he believed we should send aircraft, drones, ATACMS, to enhance the deep fight capabilities of the Ukrainian military.

Setting aside all the concerns about logistics or maintenance, or the readiness of the Ukraine military, General Sims, would you agree with his assessment that this would help Ukraine to win the war ultimately?

General SIMS. Sir, I have no doubt that the continued provision of advanced conventional weapons would help Ukraine on the battlefield. No doubt. And I certainly have been extraordinarily impressed, as most have, with General Cavoli's work in Europe.

On this side of the Atlantic, the conversation continues to be around—certainly about policy decisions, but—

Mr. GOLDEN. Sure.

General SIMS [continuing]. In our conversations with the Ukrainians, as recent as yesterday with General Zaluzhny and the chairman, we do hold fast to the view that what they need right now are the things in front of them—that F-16s is a good example, would not help them today; but things like air defense, artillery, fighting vehicles, tanks, is what we need to ensure we are providing.

Mr. GOLDEN. So you don't agree with the EUCOM [U.S. European Command] commander that possession of F-16s and ATACMS and other long-range capabilities would help them to win the war.

General SIMS. No, sir. I think that advanced conventional weapons would help anybody win a war.

Mr. GOLDEN. Yeah. Absolutely.

General SIMS. Yes, sir.

Mr. GOLDEN. Is there a policy objection to giving them longer range fires at this time?

Dr. KAHL. So I think both the F-16s and the ATACMS issues I think are slightly different animals in the field.

Mr. GOLDEN. Slightly different; but in general, is there a policy objection?

Dr. KAHL. No. Because the F-16s issue is less about a long-range capability. I think there is a general recognition that it will make sense for them over time to transition to fourth-generation aircraft. It is more about the tradeoffs. The ATACMS question—

Mr. GOLDEN. Just a few more seconds. But just, with that, I would just point out, why not expand this conversation beyond the near term and the limits of the dollars that you have in your possession now and come to Congress with a plan that includes near term, medium term, and long term, given that whether they win the war now or it drags on for several more years, the Russian threat will still remain. So I just think we have got to expand the conversation.

Dr. KAHL. Happy to brief you on that. And, frankly, if you come to the classified session, we can also provide some more details on it, because we have done some analysis on kind of the future Ukrainian force and what that might look like.

Mr. GOLDEN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from South Carolina, Ms. Mace, for 5 minutes.

Ms. MACE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Smith, for hosting this very important hearing.

And I want to thank the gentlemen who are here today as well to take all of our very important questions. We are here to address a critical matter of national security and foreign policy in regards to Ukraine, the need for oversight of assets, weapons, munitions, and other aid, lethal aid, being provided to Ukraine.

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia has highlighted the critical need for rapid aid and support that we are providing to that region. The conflict has resulted in heavy losses for both sides, but we have seen the Ukrainian forces—they have demonstrated their resilience and ability to conduct offensive operations, I believe, over the last year to everyone's surprise.

There is no price for resiliency and their belief in their freedom and their fight for freedom. They have been on the world stage, I think have encouraged and inspired many folks around the world. However, their capacity to defend their sovereignty and security is dependent on receiving timely and effective assistance.

In particular, we have seen a troubling pattern of delays and bureaucratic hurdles, policy decisions that have slowed the delivery of aid to Ukraine. I have witnessed this first-hand. I have witnessed the State Department slow rolling in some cases, particularly at the beginning of the invasion of Russia into Ukraine. And it is my belief in the meetings I have had, both publicly and pri-

vately, and in the SCIF [sensitive compartmented information facility], that Ukraine just doesn't have a lot of time. And we want to make sure that our investment in their fight, that they are going to win.

It is more important than ever, seeing what Russia is trying to do. They want to now take away Poland's borders and other countries. Ukraine can't lose this fight, in my estimation.

The situation in Ukraine demands urgent action, a commitment to ensuring the lethal aid and support be provided expeditiously. Congress and DOD need to take the steps to remove any hurdles or address them to ensure the necessary resources are available to fight—for Ukraine to fight for sovereignty and security.

Failure to do so would not only endanger Ukraine but also undermine global stability, global security, and it is my estimation Ukraine is just, I believe, under the gun and just does not have very much time left in this endeavor.

My first question is for Under Secretary Kahl. I am concerned about the time it took for the U.S. to fully leverage some of our existing processes, like convening the Senior Integration Group for Ukraine, SIG Ukraine, to disperse military aid to Ukraine.

And thinking ahead, China and Taiwan, we all know that China is watching. Are there any specific improvements you would make to the Department's decision-making process to ensure the U.S. is proactively readying this important partner rather than simply reacting with support? Some of the lessons learned? How long did it take to stand up SIG Ukraine? Some of what you learned over the last year in this process.

Dr. KAHL. Thank you for that, and I will just say we share your sense of urgency. And there is always going to be red tape, but we have blasted through a lot of it. And if you had I think told us a year ago that we could have executed on \$31.7 billion in security assistance to anybody, I would have said that was bureaucratically impossible, and it is precisely because we tried to blast through as much red tape as possible.

Most of that assistance has come through PDA, Presidential drawdown authority. And typically because we pre-position things and get our ducks in a row, a lot of that equipment starts flowing in within days of the President signing the PDA, and Lieutenant General Sims can talk to you more about that.

In terms of our internal processes, we have two. We have something called the cross-department working group, which is essentially the group that my office runs, but it has got stakeholders from all the services, the Joint Staff, the combatant commands, et cetera, to rack and stack Ukrainian priorities and figure out the priorities for various PDA and USAI packages.

So that is really about kind of teeing up for the Secretary ultimately these recommendations that then go over to the White House. We then have the SIG process, which you—

Ms. MACE. How long did it take to stand up the SIG?

Dr. KAHL. You know, I would have to get back to you on the exact date. I think the SIG was stood up within a couple of months of the war.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 139.]

Ms. MACE. Is that fast enough in your opinion?

Dr. KAHL. Well, I think that we have—I mean, we have stood up a lot of processes that are new.

Ms. MACE. Do you think that Taiwan has a couple of months if they—

Dr. KAHL. We already have a SIG for Taiwan. So to your point, so—

Ms. MACE. Set up and ready to go? So it is all—

Dr. KAHL. It meets—

Ms. MACE. It is there?

Dr. KAHL [continuing]. It meets monthly, chaired by the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Ms. MACE. Excellent. And then on the working group, their cross-department working group, is that working better now than it has been before because of the urgency with Ukraine? Have you all learned over the last year how to improve some of the red tape? I guess, what red tape was removed to make it work better, faster, more, in this case?

Dr. KAHL. Well, just traditionally, we did not provide—you know, Presidential drawdown authority has been used to provide things in the amount of, you know, hundreds of billions of dollars at the upper end, not—

Ms. MACE. Yeah.

Dr. KAHL. [continuing]. Tens of billions of dollars. So there was a lot of learning curve. Essentially, what we figured out was to make sure all of the stakeholders were involved, you had an iterated process that culminates in a four-star meeting that I chair about every 10 days, and then that pushes recommendations up to the chairman and the Secretary, who then push those recommendations over to the White House.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Chair now recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina—

Ms. MACE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Mr. Jackson for 5 minutes.

Mr. JACKSON OF NORTH CAROLINA. General Sims, good afternoon. I was wondering if you could help me—help me paint a picture for my folks back home of what life would look like for Ukrainians were we to step aside, were we to withdraw our support, were the coalition that we lead to crumble upon our withdrawal of our support, and then were the Russians to gain a decisive advantage on the battlefield, what that would mean?

And I ask you because based on your remarks, you said that the fighting has replicated the conditions that we saw during the First World War. There was a recent conversation about plentiful examples of war crimes that have been committed, and I think it is important for me in explaining my support to folks back home, to give them a sense of what it would look like if our effort no longer existed. Could you help me do that, please?

General SIMS. So, sir, I will leave the geopolitical conversation to what Dr. Kahl was mentioning earlier, and I would tell you a couple of things. First would be, as an American, this is what we do. This is what we do. This is what we have fundamentally done for decades.

When people are wronged, we stand up for them. And in this case, the invasion of Russia, everyone has said it was illegal. Everybody says it was wrong, and that is what we do. And in this case, we came together with the allies in Europe in a way that we haven't done, really, haven't done in the past 50, 60 years.

I mean, I was—so a year ago today, sir, we talked about a year ago on the 24th was the invasion, a year ago today I deployed with my division headquarters as the division commander 1st ID [Infantry Division] to Central Europe. And I spent a lot of time in Europe—battalion commander, brigade commander—and so I have worked a number of times with our allies.

I had never worked with our allies where the desire, the intent to work together, was as firm as it was in the time I was deployed. That has not changed. I have been back multiple times.

We were talking earlier about the contributions of our partners. There is more than dollars, I would argue, that is part of this. We have partners that have skin in the game, and so they may not be dedicated in—you know, dedicating the same percentage of GDP, but in some cases are dedicating individuals who are making critical, really important, contributions to what we are doing in terms of security assistance, intelligence, working in terms of advising and training with our partners.

That is what we do. We are Americans. And when somebody says this is—you know, this is how the world should be, and it is not, we say no.

Dr. Kahl has talked about the rules-based order. Why is this important? Because after the Second World War, we came together with the majority of the world and said this is—this last 5, 10 years, is not how we wish to live in the world. And we established the geopolitics that exist today, and we need to tell people, we need to do something when people go in the wrong direction.

Why is it important to Americans? Because we believe in this group in here, sir, in this oversight process, I—no politics. I am an Army guy. No politics. American politics, field of study at the Academy. And I would tell you watching the oversight here, watching what has occurred in DC, all the way to the young man or woman in Poland who is transitioning that equipment forward to a Ukrainian who plans to use it, that is what we exist for. That is why it matters, sir.

Mr. JACKSON OF NORTH CAROLINA. Now that last piece I would like you to expand on. Could you help us visualize what it looks like when we make the decision to send them light tactical vehicles, all the way to that material being fielded. Give us a sense of what that process looks like, how quickly it is now moving.

General SIMS. Well, sir, and as Dr. Kahl was talking with Representative Mace earlier, we are learning all sorts of lessons. I mean, listen, where we were a year ago today and where we are now, it is a lightyear's difference, and it is because we have smart, capable men and women who are working to make the processes more effective and efficient.

What we have done in terms of moving, it is literally—I will say literally moving mountains. If you were to stack up all of the things that we have provided, we have literally moved mountains,

from not just the United States but from places that we have that we are working with partners around the world.

And we have moved that incrementally across oceans, in the air, with hundreds and hundreds of aircraft and ships, moved that to Europe and then it is moved further by our partners and by men and women that we all are so proud to have there, all the way to a point where a Ukrainian man or woman takes it and brings it forward to use it.

And I know a number of you have seen that, sir, but it is pretty impressive.

Mr. JACKSON OF NORTH CAROLINA. My time is over. It has been an extraordinary logistical accomplishment on top of other accomplishments.

The CHAIRMAN. Chair now recognizes our final questioner before we go into classified brief, and that is the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. Gallagher.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Lieutenant General Sims, to what degree do the operational plans within DOD rely upon the assumption that we would be only forced to defeat an adversary in one theater and deter an adversary in another theater?

General SIMS. Well, sir, not to jump into the policy side, but, I mean, that is what we are saying we are doing. Yes, sir.

Mr. GALLAGHER. So given the growing no-limits security partnership between Beijing and Moscow in the year since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, can we reasonably argue that planning for a confrontation with only one adversary is becoming an increasingly dangerous presumption?

General SIMS. Sir, I would argue that the fact that the Chinese and the Russians are having conversations about ways that they can improve their connections is dangerous to all of us as Americans, but I think the current work that we are doing takes into account where we are around the world.

Mr. GALLAGHER. If Xi Jinping makes the foolish decision of arming Russia with weapons, what is on the table in terms of our response?

General SIMS. Sir, that one I will definitely leave to Dr. Kahl.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Dr. Kahl. You could make news here.

Dr. KAHL. So, first of all, I don't think China's leadership wants their intentions and plans to be made public.

So one of the things we have made clear to them is if we have information that they are doing this, we will make it public. And this actually, it matters because, as you know, China is on a bit of a charm offensive to get back into good graces of Europe. That is not going to work, I don't think, period, but certainly not if they are providing large amounts of lethal assistance to Russia.

We have also signaled, Secretary Blinken with his counterpart at the Munich Security Conference and through other channels, that there would be significant costs.

I am happy, in the classified session, to talk about what some of that might look like, but it would be the similar tools we have used to impose on others that have violated U.S. sanctions.

Mr. GALLAGHER. So we are actively trying to deter the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] from providing lethal assistance to Russia.

Dr. KAHL. Yes.

Mr. GALLAGHER. And, of course, at a broader level, we are actively trying to deter the CCP from invading Taiwan by force, if necessary.

Dr. KAHL. Yes.

Mr. GALLAGHER. I think this is a perfect example—and I know you have talked—well, I just came back from 4 days in Taiwan, and I was struck by the—all the national security leaders there talked about this increasing strategic convergence between Russia and China. I am curious if you see it in the same way.

It is sort of my contention that increasingly Putin is Xi's junior partner in a de facto alliance against the West, and I think we initially understood the no-limits partnership to be a piece of paper, and increasingly it is something real. But I would love to get your comment on how you see these two problem sets as connected.

Dr. KAHL. Yeah. I think that is insightful and on the money. I think, basically, you know, Russia for a long time has not wanted to be China's junior partner, and I think that held alive the dream in Washington that you could drive a wedge between these two actors.

I think the war in Ukraine has essentially ended that proposition as realistic in the foreseeable future, because Russia is going to have to turn to China for technology, for economic assistance, to help them reconstitute their military after the war, and they are already turning to them now.

But, by the way, this same calculus is driving them—them, the Russians—to have greater convergence with Iran and North Korea as well. And so I do think because of how attrited the Russian military has been, they have no choice but to, you know, move closer to some of these other actors.

Mr. GALLAGHER. You have said recently, I believe, though, that you don't see a PLA [People's Liberation Army] invasion of Taiwan as imminent within the next 2 years.

Dr. KAHL. Yeah, I think that is right. I just see no indications that Xi Jinping thinks his military is ready or that the PLA thinks they are ready. I think he has put a date on the dartboard for them to be ready—that doesn't mean they have made the decision to do it—and that is 2027.

I think in the interim period, I do not see indications that they are likely to make a leap to invade the island of Taiwan.

Mr. GALLAGHER. But just so I understand, your assessment is based on the absence of evidence that—you don't see an indication that they are getting ready to invade. I guess—

Dr. KAHL. Actually, this would be a really interesting thread of the conversation for us to talk about in the classified setting.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Got it.

Dr. KAHL. Because it is not just about that.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Interesting. And just out of curiosity, did you—2 years ago, did you view a Russian invasion of the rest of Ukraine as imminent?

Dr. KAHL. As imminent, I did not. But, of course, we had indications and warnings, first in April, and then of course in the fall, that it was a possibility. And, you know, my assessment is based on the information and intelligence that I have at the moment. If information and intelligence change, then my assessment—

Mr. GALLAGHER. Sure.

Dr. KAHL. [continuing]. Would be updated.

Mr. GALLAGHER. And so you disagree a lot of time with General Minihan's recent assessment that 2025 is the danger zone.

Dr. KAHL. I do.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

We will start questioning in the classified portion with those members who haven't been recognized for questions in the public portion.

So right now we stand in recess for 5 minutes, as we move to 2212 for the classified portion of this hearing.

[Whereupon, at 12:33 p.m., the committee proceeded in closed session.]

A P P E N D I X

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Statement for the Record
House Armed Services Committee
Dr. Colin Kahl, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy
February 28, 2023

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

It has been more than one year since Russia's further invasion of Ukraine last February – an unprovoked war of aggression that has created the worst security crisis in Europe since the end of the Second World War. The outcome of this war is profoundly important to the security of the larger transatlantic community.

America's objective is simple and clear: an independent, sovereign, democratic Ukraine with the means to defend its territory and deter aggression. Last week, we saw resounding support for that objective around the globe, reflected in our actions at the United Nations and among G7 and NATO countries.

Russia has so far failed to achieve its objectives in Ukraine. Its military is paying tremendous costs. Ukraine remains united and determined to expel Russia's invading forces from its territory – and the United States and our allies and partners remain united in supporting Ukraine's cause. We have been clear that we will support Ukraine's fight as long as it takes.

In the last few months, Russia has attempted to plunge Ukrainian citizens into cold and darkness with air attacks on Ukraine's power and energy systems. Ukraine's air defenses and infrastructure, however, have proved to be resilient, with thanks in part to U.S. and Allied-provided equipment.

We are now seeing intense fighting in eastern Ukraine as Russia seeks points to exploit and Ukraine defends tenaciously. With heavy fighting along the front lines, the war has reached a critical stage.

Our near-term goal is to help Ukraine change the dynamic on the ground in the coming months by helping Ukraine such that it can simultaneously defend while it prepares to advance in what we expect will be an eventual counteroffensive.

We are working toward that objective in a focused U.S. plan while also working with allies and partners to provide new and significant capabilities and training.

First, we have focused on enabling a layered and integrated approach to air defense. The United States, Germany, and the Netherlands each have committed to send Patriot systems. This long-range capability will complement other medium- and short-range air defense capabilities we have also provided, such as NASAMS and Avenger systems. Last week, Italy and France announced that they will also provide Ukraine with the SAMP/T system. Given the unrelenting nature of Russia's aerial attacks, air defense remains an urgent need and priority going forward. It also includes providing Ukraine with counter-UAV systems.

Second, to enhance Ukraine's ability to conduct complex maneuver warfare, we are providing important armor capabilities. These include Challenger tanks from the UK; refurbished T-72 tanks from the United States, the Netherlands, and the Czech Republic; and Leopard battle tanks from Germany, Poland, Canada, Portugal, Spain, Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands. They also include major contributions from the United States of Bradley infantry fighting vehicles, Stryker armored personnel carriers, and other armored vehicles.

Third, we have expanded U.S.-led training of Ukraine's forces to focus on combined arms and joint maneuver operations. This collective training is designed to integrate infantry, armor, artillery, and enabling capabilities. U.S.-led training will complement separate, specialized training conducted by the European Union and individual allies.

Fourth, we continue to deliver a steady flow of artillery rounds and other ammunition to ensure Ukraine can sustain its fight against Russia's forces, which continue to rely on mass artillery fires.

We are putting all of these pieces together to provide full, lasting, and combat-credible capabilities – covering every step from the donation, to the training, to maintenance and sustainment.

In addition to focusing on the near-term fight, we are also undertaking measures to ensure our assistance to Ukraine is sustainable in the long term. With congressional support, we are ramping up defense industrial base production of critical munitions and equipment. In many cases we have doubled or tripled capacity. Allies have bolstered global production as well. Recently, for example, France and Australia announced that they will work together to increase 155-millimeter ammunition production to support Ukraine.

At the same time, we are acting to ensure that our donations continue to be used as intended. The U.S. Government has not seen any credible evidence of the diversion of U.S.-provided weapons. But we are aware of this risk, and we are working with Ukraine

to ensure all of the equipment we are providing continues to reach troops on the front lines. The Department of Defense is proactively taking concrete steps to adapt its equipment accountability practices for the combat environment, in cooperation with Ukraine and U.S. Government partners. These measures include enhanced self-reporting mechanisms, extraordinary site inspections, and engagement with allies and partners to promote multilateral cooperation to prevent arms trafficking.

The United States is at the forefront of a global coalition supporting Ukraine. Secretary Austin has marshalled more than 50 nations through the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, which has now met nine times. Above and beyond the support provided by the United States, since last February, allies and partners have committed \$19 billion in security assistance to Ukraine, including in the critical areas of air defense, armor, and artillery.

Meanwhile, our transatlantic defense alliance is stronger than ever. NATO has bolstered its forward defenses and enhanced its forces. Since last February, we have deployed or extended more than 20,000 additional U.S. forces in Europe, and established the first permanent U.S. forces on NATO's eastern flank. We look forward to Finland and Sweden joining the Alliance and the increased defense capabilities they will bring to it.

Russia's war against Ukraine has demonstrated that aggression is not worth the price paid by the aggressor. That lesson should put second thoughts in the minds of would-be aggressors everywhere. Instead of a world where spheres of influence are imposed by brutal force, we want to live in a world where disputes are resolved peacefully, borders are honored, and civilians are protected.

Ultimately, our coalition is working toward a just and lasting peace that preserves Ukraine's sovereignty and upholds the principles of the UN Charter. The best thing we can do now to achieve this goal is to help Ukraine succeed on the battlefield, so it can be in the strongest possible position for any future negotiations.

Ukraine's extraordinary success is due to the resilience and tenacity of the Ukrainian people, but it would simply not be possible without the support of Congress. Our ability to provide Ukraine's forces with the capabilities they need rests on continued bipartisan support. I want to thank you for your leadership, and I look forward to working closely with you to advance the cause of a free and secure Ukraine in a more stable and decent world.

Dr. Colin H. Kahl
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Dr. Colin H. Kahl was sworn in as the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy on April 28, 2021. In this role, he is the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense for defense policy and leads the formulation and coordination of national security policy within the Department of Defense. Dr. Kahl ensures the integration of defense policies and plans to achieve desired objectives. He is responsible for efforts to build partnerships and defense cooperation with U.S. friends and allies.

Dr. Kahl was most recently the co-director of the Center for International Security and Cooperation, the inaugural Steven C. Hazy Senior Fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, and a Professor, by courtesy, in the Department of Political Science at Stanford University.

He served as Deputy Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor to the Vice President from October 2014 to January 2017 where he advised President Obama and Vice President Biden on all matters related to U.S. foreign policy and national security affairs, and represented the Office of the Vice President as a standing member of the National Security Council Deputies' Committee. Dr. Kahl has formerly served in the Department as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East. In this capacity, he was the senior policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense for Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the Palestinian territories, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, and six other countries in the Levant and Persian Gulf region. In June 2011, he was awarded the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service by Secretary Robert Gates.

Dr. Kahl was previously an assistant and associate professor in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, a Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), and assistant professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota. He served as a Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, where he worked on issues related to counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and responses to failed states.

Dr. Kahl received his B.A. in political science from the University of Michigan (1993) and his Ph.D. in political science from Columbia University (2000).

UNCLASSIFIED

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL DOUGLAS A. SIMS II
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
JOINT STAFF, J3
BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
28 FEBRUARY 2023

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, Distinguished Members, Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning. I appreciate today's opportunity to update you on the U.S. military efforts to help the Ukrainian people in their continued fight against the Russian invasion.

Today marks the 369th day since Russian forces invaded and began their illegal and unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine. As we meet today, the current situation between Ukraine and Russia is generally static with both sides employing heavy amounts of artillery, resulting in minimal changes as to territorial control of territory and significant numbers of casualties.

In our follow-on session, I am prepared to discuss particulars of Ukrainian disposition, but generally, and as you have seen reported in open sources, the most active portion of the battlefield is around the town of Bakhmut. As I have briefed before, over the past two months the Russians, with assistance from the Kremlin-backed paramilitary group, Wagner Group, have fought savagely to defeat Ukraine's defenses. Employing extreme amounts of artillery and waves of thousands of partially trained, mobilized soldiers and personnel contracted from prisons, the Russians have made incremental gains at great human expense.

Ultimately, as I have described before, the fighting has replicated the conditions the world saw during the First World War. Key to changing this paradigm is creating Ukrainian Armed Forces capable of breaking this state of fighting.

In this regard, since I last updated this committee, the concentration of U.S. effort has been focused on combining equipment and munitions with people and training. The intent and efforts

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

of the U.S. Military are designed to generate combat credible forces capable of combining fire and movement to achieve battlefield maneuver and increase the overall capabilities of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Importantly, this training effort is not solely the work of the U.S. Armed Forces but a unified approach with U.S. Allies and Partners. Collective training is on-going throughout Europe and is dramatically increasing Ukrainian combined arms proficiency.

All told, since January, the U.S. Armed Forces have trained over 1,000 Ukrainians, bringing the total trained by the U.S. to just over 4,000 troops. As I speak, Ukrainians are training in multiple locations in Europe, working with trainers from the U.S., our Allies, and our Partners.

Key to our ability to conduct this training has been the combined effort to increase maneuver related equipment, the U.S. provision of Bradley Fighting Vehicles, Strykers, and Paladin howitzers combined with similar vehicles, and tank contributions from our partners and allies. Both of which are notably increasing the maneuver capability of the Ukraine's Armed Forces.

In addition, the U.S. continues to supply critical munitions and individual equipment from howitzer ammunition to medical and cold weather gear.

Finally, and critically important to Ukraine's ability to continue to defeat Russian efforts to destroy civilian infrastructure, U.S. Armed Forces will soon complete the training and equipping of Ukraine's first Patriot Battery. As you know, our Air Defense experts are providing key

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and we are confident the Ukrainians will employ Patriots with the same expertise they are currently demonstrating with their current Air Defense capabilities.

Thank you for what this Committee and this Congress have done and continue to do to provide oversight and resources in support of Ukraine as they continue the fight against the illegal and unprovoked large-scale invasion of Ukraine. I look forward to your questions and the discussion today.

UNCLASSIFIED

Lt. Gen. Douglas A. Sims II
Director for Operations, J3

Lt. Gen. Douglas A. Sims II is currently the Director for Operations, Joint Staff, at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, and assists the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in developing and providing operational guidance, and in fostering clear communication between the President, Secretary of Defense, unified commands, and services.

EDUCATION

United States Military Academy – BS – Political Science
 Webster University – MA – Management

MILITARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED

Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses
 United States Army Command and General Staff College
 Senior Service College Fellowship - Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Joint and Combined Warfighting School

PROMOTIONS DATE OF APPOINTMENT

2LT	1 Jun 91
1LT	1 Jun 93
CPT	1 Jun 95
MAJ	1 May 02
LTC	1 Jun 07
COL	1 Oct 12
BG	2 Aug 17
MG	2 Jun 20
LTG	Frocked

ASSIGNMENTS

Jun 22 - Present, Director for Operations, Joint Staff, J-3
 Aug 20 - May 22, Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, Fort Riley, Kansas
 Jun 18 - Jun 20, Deputy Director for Regional Operations and Force Management, J-3, Joint Staff, Washington, DC
 Jun 17 - Jun 18, Director, Operations, Readiness and Mobilization, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, United States Army, Washington, DC
 Jun 16 - May 17, Deputy Commanding General (Support), 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas and Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, Afghanistan
 Aug 14 - Jul 16, Chief of Staff, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, Colorado
 Jan 13 - Jul 14, Commander, 2d Cavalry Regiment, United States Army Europe, Germany and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan
 Aug 11 - Jun 12, Senior Service College Fellow, Security Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts
 Jan 09 - Jul 11, Commander, 1st Squadron, 2d Cavalry Regiment, V Corps, United States Army Europe, Germany and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan
 Jul 08 - Jan 09, Deputy Regimental Commander, 2d Cavalry Regiment, United States Army Europe, Germany and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq
 Sep 05 - May 08, Branch Chief, Concepts Development, later Executive Officer to the Director, Center for Knowledge and Futures (J-7/J-9), United States Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida
 May 04 - Sep 05, Operations Officer, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division

(Light), Fort Lewis, Washington and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq
 Jun 03 - Jun 04, Executive Officer, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Light), Fort Lewis, Washington
 Aug 02 - Jun 03, Student, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
 May 01 - Jul 02, Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General, United States Army Military District of Washington, Fort McNair, Washington, DC
 Mar 00 - May 01, Commander, C Company, later Assistant Operations Officer, 3d United States Infantry (The Old Guard), Fort Myer, Virginia
 May 98 - Feb 00, Commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 172d Infantry Brigade (Separate), Fort Richardson, Alaska
 Apr 96 - May 98, Assistant Professor of Military Science, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
 Nov 95 - Apr 96, Student, United States Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia
 Apr 94 - Aug 95, Platoon Leader, C Company, 2d Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Lewis, Washington
 Nov 91 - Apr 94, Platoon Leader, B Company, later Scout Platoon Leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3d Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS

Deputy Director for Regional Operations and Force Management, J-3, Joint Staff, Washington, DC, Jun 18 - Jun 20, Brigadier General/ Major General
 Commander, Task Force Forge, Resolute Support Mission, Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, Afghanistan, Sep 16 - May 17, Colonel
 Branch Chief, Concepts Development, later Executive Officer to the Director, Center for Knowledge and Futures (J-7/J-9), United States Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, Sep 05 - May 08

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Commander, Task Force Forge, Resolute Support Mission, Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, Afghanistan, Sep 16 - May 17, Colonel
 Commander, 2d Cavalry Regiment, United States Army Europe, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan, Jul 13 - Apr 14, Colonel
 Commander, 1st Squadron, 2d Cavalry Regiment, V Corps, United States Army Europe, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan, Jun 10 - May 11, Lieutenant Colonel
 Deputy Regimental Commander, 2d Cavalry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, United States Army Europe, Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq, Jul 08 - Nov 08, Lieutenant Colonel
 Operations Officer, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division (Light), Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq, Sep 04 - Jul 05, Major



INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. Department of Defense

STATEMENT OF ROBERT P. STORCH
INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE
FOR A HEARING ON

**“OVERSIGHT OF U.S. MILITARY
SUPPORT TO UKRAINE”**

BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Good morning, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you for inviting me to appear before you to discuss the Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Inspector General's (OIG) ongoing oversight of U.S. assistance to Ukraine. Since Russia's invasion in February 2022, the DoD OIG has completed four Ukraine-related oversight projects, with 21 ongoing and planned oversight projects to ensure proper use of U.S. taxpayer dollars. Additionally, the DoD OIG's Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS) is conducting extensive fraud prevention and investigative activities to ensure the integrity of U.S. security assistance to Ukraine. Moreover, as detailed below, we are actively working with our oversight partners from the Department of State (State) OIG, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) OIG, and many others in a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to conduct independent oversight that ensures the accountability of U.S. military, economic, humanitarian, and other assistance to Ukraine.

Congress has appropriated approximately \$113.4 billion for Ukraine response efforts over the past year across the federal government. These funds support the provision of equipment, weapons, training, and intelligence for Ukraine's military and national security forces, as well as economic and humanitarian assistance to the government and people of Ukraine as they fight against the Russian invasion of their country.

My testimony today will provide details on the Ukraine Oversight Interagency Working Group's whole-of-government approach to ensure comprehensive oversight of U.S. assistance to Ukraine and a summary of the DoD OIG's past, present, and future oversight of all aspects of U.S. security assistance in this dynamic and evolving area of operations.

Ukraine Oversight Interagency Working Group

Along with our federal oversight partners, we established the Ukraine Oversight Interagency Working Group (the Working Group) to ensure an integrated and comprehensive whole-of-government approach to oversight of the U.S. Government's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The DoD OIG has facilitated and led the Working Group since it was established in June 2022.

Today, more than 160 staff members from 20 U.S. Government oversight organizations, including auditors, evaluators, investigators, and inspectors, participate in the Working Group. The Working Group communicates regularly and meets on a monthly basis, with participants including representatives from the Offices of Inspector General for the DoD, State, USAID, Intelligence Community, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Justice, Department of the Treasury, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, Export-Import Bank of the United States, International Development Finance Corporation, Defense Logistics Agency, U.S. European Command, and U.S. Army Europe and Africa, as well as the Government Accountability Office, the Defense Contract Audit Agency, and the Air Force, Army, and Naval Service Audit Agencies.

While not all of these agencies are actively conducting oversight related to Ukraine assistance, each has equities related to the broader national effort, and the working group ensures open lines of communication and situational awareness across department and agency boundaries. This

breadth of U.S. collaboration facilitates comprehensive oversight that avoids potential gaps in coverage, prevents duplicative oversight projects, and strengthens the oversight community's outreach and real-time information sharing on Ukraine oversight matters.

As of today, agencies that participate in the Ukraine Oversight Interagency Working Group have issued 15 products related to security assistance and coordination, non-security assistance, and management and operations. The Working Group's participating agencies have 69 ongoing and planned projects related to Ukraine assistance, a number that continues to grow as the nature and scope of the assistance changes and our oversight efforts evolve to address them.

Joint Strategic Oversight Plan

The DoD is responsible for executing some \$62.3 billion in assistance to Ukraine, but spending this large sum does not occur without extensive coordination. The U.S. Military and DoD civilians are working alongside their counterparts at the State Department, USAID, and other federal agencies, who are providing assistance to Ukrainian law enforcement and border security partners; investigating and documenting war crimes; clearing explosive remnants of war; and delivering life-saving humanitarian assistance to the civilian populations who are suffering the worst consequences of Russia's aggression. All of these activities are being carried out in the same general area of operations.

Just last month, the DoD OIG, State OIG, and USAID OIG, in coordination with the larger Working Group, published a Joint Strategic Oversight Plan (JSOP) that provides a compendium of the completed and ongoing oversight projects related to U.S. assistance to Ukraine across the federal government. The JSOP—available to Congress and the public on the DoD OIG's website—also details a comprehensive set of oversight projects that Working Group partners plan to conduct throughout the year, and we will continue to update it as our plans evolve to address changing circumstances and requirements. In creating the JSOP, the DoD, State, and USAID OIGs, along with other U.S. Government agency partners, identified strategic oversight areas and selected projects to ensure accountability across the full range of U.S. assistance efforts.

Oversight of the \$113.4 billion appropriated for the Ukraine response is a top priority for the IG community. As detailed in the JSOP, the DoD, State, and USAID OIGs and their partner oversight agencies are using the oversight model that the three OIGs have successfully employed, and continue to employ, for overseas contingency operations across the globe. This proven model ensures regular collaboration and facilitates coordinated oversight of our individual agencies' programs and operations. By relying on a tested interagency construct, we were able to initiate agile whole-of-government oversight as soon as the conflict began and we will continue to do so as long as the conflict and need for oversight continue. Even the end of war will not mean the end of accountability, and we will continue this important work as long as long as U.S. assistance is being expended in the region.

Effectively and transparently communicating our plans and the results of our work to Congress and the public is essential to our oversight mission. The JSOP is an integral step in fulfilling that purpose. As we complete additional oversight projects and adapt to changing circumstances, we

will periodically update this joint plan, consistent with our shared commitment to comprehensive, relevant, and timely oversight that promotes transparency and ensures the accountability of U.S. assistance to Ukraine.

Leading from the Front: IGs Meet with U.S. and Allied Personnel Downrange

Late last month, I traveled to Germany, Poland, and Ukraine with the leaders of the State and USAID OIGs. The purposes of this trip were to obtain the latest on-the-ground perspective of the evolving security and non-security assistance provided to Ukraine; to build on our coordinated, whole-of-government approach to oversight of the United States' significant investment in this effort; and to deliver an unambiguous message to both American and Ukrainian stakeholders about the expectations for accountability for such assistance. In Kyiv, my colleagues and I personally delivered this message in meetings with the Ukrainian Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Finance, the Prosecutor General, and other key Ukrainian leaders and counterparts.

The following are among the key takeaways from the three IG trip.

- The evolution of the nature of U.S. security assistance to Ukraine has created a constantly-changing situation on the ground that requires continuous, agile, and robust oversight.
- Accountability and anticorruption efforts are critical to Ukraine's future.
- Materiel sustainment and restock issues must be closely monitored.
- International oversight coordination to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of assistance from all NATO members and other donors to Ukraine is essential.
- Persistent oversight to ensure appropriate visibility of defense items once they cross the Ukrainian border and into the battle zone will be critically important.

Any active armed conflict necessarily presents certain challenges to conducting oversight, and those observed in Ukraine are not entirely unique. Building on our past experience collaborating with our partners on whole-of-government oversight in Iraq and Afghanistan, we are adapting our oversight to meet the needs presented by this dynamic environment. In doing this work, we also recognize and account for important differences between providing oversight in Iraq and Afghanistan and the oversight of U.S. assistance to Ukraine. One major difference is that U.S. troops are not actively engaged in Ukraine, where the DoD has only a very limited footprint. Most of the training and other activities in which the U.S. military is engaged in support of Ukraine are conducted in other parts of Europe and the United States. Because of the nature of this mission and the resulting distribution of DoD activity outside of Ukraine, we are able to leverage our regional and domestic staff to perform agile and comprehensive oversight in real time, and we continue to evaluate our posture and make changes as appropriate to ensure that we are optimally postured to conduct agile, comprehensive, and impactful independent oversight in a fluid situation.

Furthermore, the U.S. bilateral relationship with the Ukrainian Armed Forces far predates the current conflict, enabling the DoD to build on that existing familiarity. Unlike in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. military is supplying and supporting an existing military force rather than

building a new one from the ground up. The DoD OIG has substantial experience in conducting oversight of a mission such as that currently underway in Ukraine, and we are bringing it to bear to ensure comprehensive oversight that leverages our prior work and the skills and talents of our staff at appropriate locations to conduct our work in a timely manner.

Oversight Results to Date

The DoD OIG has been conducting oversight of assistance to Ukraine since before the Russian invasion. As with all of our work around the world, our audits, evaluations, and reviews promote the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of DoD programs and operations. Through our reports and other agile products, we make findings and recommendations that get to the root causes of the problems we find and drive positive change.

Since before the invasion, the DoD OIG has been focused on end-use monitoring (EUM) and enhanced end-use monitoring (EEUM)—tracking how our partners across the world employ U.S. military assistance and sensitive equipment after these assets are transferred by the DoD. This critical task is made even more difficult for the DoD under the conflict conditions in Ukraine. However, EUM and, particularly, EEUM are vitally important to ensure that the lethal and non-lethal tools the U.S. supplies to its partners are accounted for appropriately and being used for their intended purpose.

As early as 2020, the DoD OIG issued a report on how the DoD was conducting EEUM of military assistance to Ukraine, including Javelin missiles, Javelin command launch units, and night vision devices. We found that EEUM was being conducted largely in accordance with the law and DoD guidance, and that Ukraine’s storage of Javelin missiles and launch units met physical security requirements. However, we found that information in the DoD’s database about the quantity, location, and condition of night vision devices was inaccurate because the Armed Forces of Ukraine did not always report the loss, theft, or destruction of these devices, as required. Additionally, serial number stickers on some U.S.-supplied night vision devices became illegible or fell off, especially during operational deployments or combat, making it difficult to conduct serialized inventories of these articles. The evaluation included recommendations for how the Defense Security Cooperation Agency could improve Ukrainian reporting practices and have them come into compliance with DoD EEUM requirements.¹ The DoD agreed to all of these recommendations, and most of them have since been closed.

More recently, in October 2022, we published a report that identified the challenges that DoD personnel responsible for conducting EUM and EEUM face when there are limited or no U.S. personnel present. Our classified report identified the requirements for EUM and EEUM and outlined the actions the DoD was taking to account for U.S. equipment provided to Ukraine.² We recently initiated our third evaluation on this important topic, which will address unresolved recommendations from our previous reports and assess the current state of EUM and EEUM in

¹ Report No. DODIG-2020-121, “Evaluation of Department of Defense Enhanced End-Use Monitoring for Equipment Transferred to the Government of Ukraine,” August 27, 2020.

² Report No. DODIG-2023-002, “Evaluation of the DoD’s Accountability of Equipment Provided to Ukraine,” October 7, 2022.

Ukraine. We will continue to focus on this issue to ensure appropriate accountability for U.S. security assistance as the situation on the ground evolves.

Additionally, on June 10, 2021, we issued a report on the U.S. European Command's munitions storage practices, including sites in the vicinity of the Ukraine area of operations. The details of this audit are classified, but in general, our auditors identified fire hazards, degraded infrastructure, unreliable or nonexistent communication capabilities, and insufficient soil coverage over earth-covered magazines—all of which resulted in significant and unacceptable risks to DoD personnel, equipment, and nearby civilian populations. The report included 20 recommendations to 10 different components for improving conditions locally at each of the sites visited and across the Department.³ The DoD agreed to implement the recommendations, and more than half of them have since been closed.

In 2022, following the Russian invasion, the DoD OIG issued two management advisories that informed DoD leadership and Congress of several areas of concern that directly impact the DoD's ability to transparently track and report the supplemental appropriations for Ukraine. Findings included that the systems used did not feed directly into Advana, the official reporting system for Ukraine supplemental appropriations, and the DoD lacked standard operating procedures for reporting the information.

In addition to these and other reports and advisories, DCIS—the criminal investigative component of the DoD OIG—has focused on potential criminal exploitation of Ukraine security assistance. DCIS leadership recently deployed two special agents to supplement the OIG's presence in Eastern Europe and, in particular, to work with counterpart agencies and establish a presence in the area where equipment is transferred for shipment into Ukraine. Additionally, DCIS has established a Ukraine Program Manager within its National Security Division to coordinate relevant activities. While we cannot comment on the substance of any particular investigation, the DCIS currently has more than a dozen open matters related to allegations involving assistance to Ukraine. Our experienced agents also routinely work with U.S. Government agencies and international partners on Ukraine-related issues. Of particular note, at the request of the Security Assistance Group – Ukraine, DCIS appointed a Liaison Officer to de-conflict allegations of substandard parts and materials, non-conforming materials, and other fraud concerns, and we have drawn on our extensive background investigating contracting and other types of fraud in war zones to provide dozens of fraud awareness briefings throughout the region.

We have heard and heeded the calls from Members on this panel and in both chambers of Congress for robust oversight of the unprecedented U.S. assistance flowing to Ukraine. We are conducting oversight at the speed of war, emphasizing agility in producing reports that are both authoritative and timely. Our reports identify issues and make recommendations that policymakers can implement to address problems promptly and in a lasting manner. To this end, we will continue to avail ourselves of every opportunity to produce agile products in the course of conducting our audits and evaluations, thereby providing essential timely feedback to the DoD while our independent oversight work is ongoing.

³ Report No. DODIG-2021-090, "Audit of Munitions Storage in the U.S. European Command," June 10, 2021.

More than 90 DoD OIG staff members across all of our components are currently hard at work in this endeavor. In the coming months, we will produce reports of audits and evaluations on critical issues like the replenishment of U.S. weapons stockpiles, intelligence sharing in support of Ukraine, maintenance and sustainment of weaponry and equipment provided to Ukraine, awards of noncompetitive contracts for assistance to Ukraine, and the training of Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Priorities and Commitments

The DoD OIG has one of the largest oversight mandates in the federal government, responsible for overseeing more than \$800 billion in annual defense spending. I can assure you that Ukraine assistance is very much “Job One” as my office plans our internal and interagency projects.

We will continue to work with our partners across the oversight community to monitor, detect, and address any instances of waste, fraud, or abuse in the U.S. mission to support Ukraine. Consistent with our emphasis on transparency, we will strive to the greatest extent possible to make our oversight work releasable to the public. We also are working with our partner agencies to expand and apply our substantial data analytics capabilities to sift through voluminous information to identify issues for audit, evaluations, and investigations and to inform the results of our work. Additionally, the DoD, State, and USAID OIGs have produced a joint Hotline poster in both English and Ukrainian for distribution in the region to better facilitate whistleblower reporting of malfeasance, and we already have started to receive contacts from this potentially important source of information.

As we look to the future, the DoD OIG is committed to working with all of our oversight partners to adapt and employ our existing oversight frameworks to share real-time knowledge, avoid duplication of effort, and ensure effective oversight through a robust whole-of-government enterprise that provides full coverage of U.S. assistance to Ukraine. Oversight teams are building on their experience and relationships developed in similar interagency efforts, such as those related to Iraq, Afghanistan, and the coronavirus disease–2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, to plan and conduct comprehensive oversight of Ukraine assistance. Interagency information sharing and collaboration—early and often—has a proven track record of ensuring timely, actionable, and comprehensive oversight. I will continue to work with my State and USAID OIG partners, and our counterparts through the working group, to keep the Congress and the public apprised of our ongoing efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and to share the work of the DoD OIG and the broader oversight community regarding U.S. assistance to Ukraine. I look forward to answering your questions.

The Honorable Robert P. Storch
Department of Defense Inspector General

On December 6, 2022, the Honorable Robert P. Storch assumed his duties as the Department of Defense Inspector General (DoD IG). Mr. Storch is the first Presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed DoD IG in nearly seven years.

Prior to coming on board as the DoD IG, Mr. Storch served for close to five years as the first Presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed IG for the National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA), where he worked to enhance the impact, independence, and transparency of the office's work. He also spent several years at the Department of Justice (DOJ) OIG, where he served as the Deputy IG and as the DOJ OIG's first Whistleblower Ombudsperson, leading efforts related to whistleblower rights and protections that he continued to emphasize at NSA OIG.

Prior to joining the IG community, Mr. Storch was a DOJ prosecutor for over two dozen years, working on a variety of cases focusing most heavily on public corruption, civil rights, and white-collar crimes. He served most recently as Deputy Criminal Chief and Counsel to the United States Attorney for the Northern District of New York (NDNY), where he was an Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA) for over 17 years. During his time at the U.S. Attorney's Office in the NDNY, Mr. Storch held a variety of other positions, including serving as the District's initial Anti-Terrorism Coordinator from September 2001 through March 2003, as Appellate Chief and Senior Litigation Counsel from January 2004 through September 2005, and as Civil Rights and Hate Crimes Coordinator from 1995 to 2002. He also served at various times as District Ethics Advisor, Financial Fraud Coordinator, Election Officer, Bankruptcy Fraud Coordinator, and Public Information Officer.

Mr. Storch received his undergraduate degree from Harvard, graduating magna cum laude in 1982, and obtained his law degree from Columbia as a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar in 1985. After graduation, he served as a law clerk to U.S. District Judge William D. Keller in Los Angeles, California, and then worked for the law firm of Covington and Burling in Washington, D.C. before becoming an AUSA in his hometown of Jacksonville, Florida in May 1987. In 1990, he transferred to the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division in Washington, D.C. and then moved to Albany in 1994, where he worked at the law firm of Bond, Schoeneck and King before returning to the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1995. He received a number of commendations and awards as a prosecutor, including from the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division and two case-related commendations from the Director of the FBI.

Mr. Storch has traveled extensively for DOJ and the FBI on a variety of anti-corruption and other programs. From December 2007 through December 2009, he was posted on detail to Ukraine as a Resident Legal Advisor working to help develop measures to address official corruption. He returned to Kyiv in 2014 to assist in the development of legislation that was adopted in October of that year and calls for the establishment of a new anti-corruption regime, and again on several occasions in 2015 to serve as an advisor to the U.S. Embassy on other anti-corruption initiatives.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

FEBRUARY 28, 2023



POLITICS

U.S. Congress [Add Topic](#)

US has spent billions on Ukraine war aid. But is that money landing in corrupt pockets?

Tom Vanden Brook and Rachel Looker USA TODAY

Published 5:00 a.m. ET Feb. 19, 2023 | Updated 11:56 a.m. ET Feb. 27, 2023

WASHINGTON – With more than \$100 billion in U.S. weaponry and financial aid flowing to Ukraine in less than a year – and more on the way to counter Russia's invasion – concerns about arms falling into terrorists' hands and dollars into corrupt officials' pockets are mounting.

The special inspector general who has overseen aid to Afghanistan since 2012, and some House Republicans, warn of the need for closer oversight of the military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine. The scale of the effort is massive. The \$113 billion appropriated by Congress in 2022 approaches the \$146 billion spent in 20 years for military and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, though the cost of sending U.S. troops there was far higher.

"When you spend so much money so quickly, with so little oversight, you're going to have fraud, waste and abuse," John Sopko, the special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, said in an interview. "Massive amounts."

The Pentagon rejects that narrative, saying safeguards have been put in place to ensure that U.S. weapons are accounted for by the Ukrainian forces after they are transferred.

"The department takes our commitment to Ukraine seriously, which is why we implemented strong measures to track the capabilities we are providing to equip Ukraine," said Sabrina Singh, the Pentagon's deputy press secretary.

Stay in the conversation on politics: Sign up for the OnPolitics newsletter

More: 140,000 Russians killed in Ukraine war; Kyiv desperate for Western tanks, technology.

Among the American public and on Capitol Hill, support for Ukraine's resistance to Russia's invasion remains strong. But it is softening. An Associated Press poll in late January showed

at 48% of U.S. adults say they favor the U.S. providing weapons to Ukraine, with 29% opposed and 22% saying they're neither in favor nor opposed. That's a drop from May 2022, when 60% of U.S. adults said they were in favor of sending Ukraine weapons.

Support could erode further among Americans and Ukrainians, according to members of Congress and Sopko, without greater transparency and accountability for the tens of billions spent. The costs to American taxpayers can be expected to increase as the Biden administration sends increasingly sophisticated and expensive arms to Ukraine, including Abrams battle tanks.

Assuring that the aid ends up in the right hands, they say, demands greater oversight.

More: Joe Biden makes surprise visit to Ukraine ahead of Russian invasion anniversary

U.S. struggles to account for billions sent to Ukraine

The Pentagon spent \$62.3 billion in 2022 on Ukraine for weapons, ammunition, training, logistics, supplies, salaries and stipends, according to the Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Ukraine Response report. Inspectors general for several agencies released the report in January.

The State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development spent \$46 billion for activities ranging from border security to basic government services such as utilities, hospitals, schools and firefighting. Other government agencies, including the Department of Agriculture, spent another \$5 billion.

The report noted the difficulty U.S. agencies had accounting for the billions spent.

The Pentagon, for example, was "unable to provide end-use monitoring in accordance with DoD policy" in Ukraine, according to a report by the Pentagon's inspector general. "End-use monitoring" includes tracking serial numbers of weapons and ammunition to ensure they're used as intended.

In Afghanistan, the Pentagon had troops on the ground to monitor military aid with 100,000 service members there at the peak of U.S. involvement. It was also far more costly: Overall U.S. spending for the war and reconstruction in Afghanistan is estimated at \$899 billion, according to a Pentagon report. In Ukraine, the U.S. involvement is mostly limited to

embassy staff. In Ukraine, there are no U.S. combat troops on the ground, and President Joe Biden has pledged to keep them out of the fighting.

Among the thousands of weapons and millions of rounds of ammunition, the Pentagon has sent more than 1,600 portable Stinger anti-aircraft missiles. Without adequate safeguards, they could fall into the wrong hands, said Sopko, who supports the U.S. effort to help Ukraine with its war with Russia.

"If those things get diverted, who knows what could happen?" he said.

More: Support for providing weapons to Ukraine fading in US; 97% of Russian army in Ukraine

Ukraine aid: EU chief supports missiles, fighter jets; Gaetz introducing resolution to end US aid for Ukraine

With few U.S. troops or State Department personnel in Ukraine, keeping inventories is difficult, the report said. Moreover, the vast amount of money complicates the effort. The report notes the danger of corrupt officials siphoning it off.

"The State Department is overseeing unprecedented levels of security assistance in Ukraine, presenting significant risk of misuse and diversion given the volume and speed of assistance and the wartime operating environment," according to the report.

Singh, the Pentagon spokeswoman, said Ukraine is helping monitor the use of U.S. weapons.

"Through our dedicated personnel, we make comprehensive records of U.S. weapons donations at our distribution nodes immediately prior to transfer to Ukraine and then once in country, the Ukrainians log and track U.S. items and provide expenditure and damage reports," Singh said.

That's not enough, said Rep. Michael Waltz, R-Fla., a member of the House Armed Services Committee. The Pentagon needs more inspectors on the ground in Ukraine to ensure the weapons are used properly.

"That kind of eyes-on versus the kind of self-reporting that's going on from the Ukrainians is incredibly important," he said.

More: They counted the days until they could return to Ukraine. Now, they're not sure they'll go back

Lack of Ukraine oversight draws parallels to Afghanistan corruption

Ukraine has a history of corruption, and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has made stamping it out a priority.

Ukraine ranks 116th out of 180 nations on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index. On Feb. 14, the defense minister named new deputies after news reports showed officials in the defense ministry had bought food for troops at inflated prices.

Corruption corrodes the public's faith in government, said Sopko, the special inspector general for Afghanistan. Elites in Afghanistan skimmed U.S. aid money, and the obvious corruption alienated Afghans.

The Taliban took Kabul almost without a fight in 2021 because Afghans had little faith in their government.

He warned the same thing could happen in Ukraine without a watchdog.

More: NATO secretary general says Russia has started spring offensive against Ukraine

Ukrainian Olympic head on Russian rival: 'He is my enemy'

"We also enabled a lot of oligarchs in Afghanistan – warlords," Sopko said. "The fear is if we don't get our ducks in a row, and we don't send a message about serious oversight, we're going to be doing the same thing in the Ukraine. What will happen is you're going to lose the support of the Ukrainians, citizens, the Ukrainians who are fighting and dying, bleeding, just like the Afghans lost faith in their government because of the corruption and the abuses by these oligarchs."

'Need truth tellers': Republicans demand more oversight

Sen. J.D. Vance, R-Ohio, and Rep. Dan Bishop, R-N.C., drafted a letter to the White House requesting an expansion to a congressionally required report on the amount of security assistance sent to Ukraine. The lawmakers called for more details on how much money has been sent to Ukraine and how it's used.

"The American people deserve to know exactly where their money is going," Bishop said in a statement. "A detailed, transparent accounting is an absolute necessity."

James Comer, chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, said Congress must conduct oversight of taxpayer dollars sent overseas. The committee will work to determine whether there was waste or misuse.

"We owe it to the American taxpayer to account for how their money is spent," Comer said in a statement to USA TODAY.

More: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visits UK to lobby for more military aid, fighter jets

'Little by little they are winning': Tide turns in key Ukraine city: Updates as Russian offensive begins.

Biden administration officials – including from the U.S. Agency for International Development, offices of the inspectors general for the Department of Defense, the Department of State and the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine – visited Kyi/v last month in an effort to provide more oversight of Ukraine's war response, according to a release from the USAID.

Sopko supports a new office of special inspector focused solely on aid to Ukraine. Inspectors general for the Defense and State departments are already spread too thin, he said.

"Somebody who is independent who could speak truth to power and isn't worried about upsetting his boss in Washington," Sopko said. "That's what you need. You need truth tellers."

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Opinion Zelensky takes on Ukraine's top internal enemy



By **Max Boot**
 Columnist | [+ Follow](#)

February 27, 2023 at 2:15 p.m. EST

Ukraine is widely assumed to be preparing a spring offensive to take back lost territory from Russian invaders. In the meantime, President Volodymyr Zelensky has already launched another offensive of great importance to the country's future. He is battling what Andrii Borovyk, executive director of Transparency International Ukraine, described to me, in a telephone interview from Kyiv, as "our internal enemy number one: corruption."

The enemy might be internal, but the issue has serious implications for Ukraine's international relations. In the United States, for example, Republican critics of Ukraine often cite corruption as a reason not to give Kyiv a "blank check." Ukrainian leaders realize they are almost totally dependent on foreign aid and are keenly aware of the damage that any scandal could do to their country's future.

In recent weeks, the Zelensky government has taken action against a number of senior officials who were accused of wrongdoing. Deputy Defense Minister Vyacheslav Shapovalov was fired and arrested after a Ukrainian news site reported that the armed forces were paying double and triple the market prices for foods such as eggs and potatoes. Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov's job was also in jeopardy from the scandal — he was accused of lax management, rather than corruption — although he seems to have survived for now.

A deputy infrastructure minister, Vasyl Lozynsky, was fired and put under house arrest after prosecutors claimed he had taken a \$400,000 bribe in connection with the purchase of electrical generators that Ukraine desperately needs to recover from Russian attacks on its electrical infrastructure.

Follow Max Boot's opinions



Even more significant — because it hit closer to home — was the forced resignation of Zelensky's own deputy chief of staff, Kyrylo Tymoshenko. He was reported to have commandeered an SUV that had been donated by General Motors for humanitarian purposes for his personal use, and he had been spotted driving a new Porsche, costing about \$100,000, which belonged to a prominent businessman. Several regional governors close to Tymoshenko, who oversaw regional policy, were also sacked.

Opinions on the war in Ukraine after one year

One year ago, Russia invaded Ukraine. Post Opinions is marking the anniversary with columns looking at all that has transpired and what may lie ahead.

Perhaps the most significant move of all was the raid that Ukrainian security forces conducted on Feb. 1 at the home of billionaire oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky, one of Zelensky's most influential backers and the owner of the television network that made Zelensky a star by airing his comedy series, "Servant of the People." A former regional governor, Kolomoisky had been placed under U.S. sanctions in 2021 because of his alleged involvement in "significant corruption," but he had been considered untouchable in Ukraine — until now. It remains unclear, however, whether he will be charged with any crimes.

Corruption remains a serious problem in Ukraine, but Transparency International reports that real progress has been made in recent years. Ukraine is still assessed as more corrupt than neighbors such as Poland and Romania, but it is considerably less corrupt than Russia — whose badly led and badly equipped army is paying the price for so much high-level speculation. Surveys show that the number of Ukrainians who reported paying a bribe in the previous year fell from 27 percent in 2013 to 19 percent in 2021.

Borovyk told me that progress has continued since the start of the Russian invasion on Feb. 24, 2022; Ukraine is one of the few countries in the world to improve its corruption score in the past year. He marveled that even in the first few months of the war — when Kyiv was in danger of falling — the anti-corruption courts continued to function in the capital. "Even for me, it sounds weird," Borovyk acknowledged. "I was in Kyiv all the time, and I remembered what it was like, but they continued working."

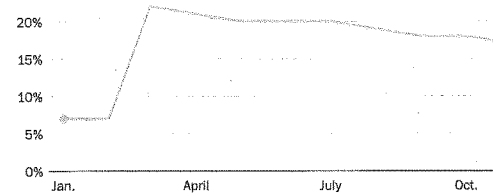
Ironically, Ukrainian attempts to root out corruption only serve to elevate the issue in the West, and provide further fodder for Republican critics of U.S. aid to Ukraine. In fact, U.S. and European officials say they have found no evidence of any foreign aid being siphoned off in Ukraine, but the United States does have painful experience in the recent past with how U.S. aid for an embattled ally can be misused.

In Afghanistan, as Sarah Chayes detailed in her book "Thieves of State: Why Corruption Threatens Global Security," pervasive corruption fueled by U.S. spending helped to undermine popular support for the Kabul regime. History cannot be allowed to repeat itself in Ukraine, and so far it isn't.

In Afghanistan, corruption was a product of tribalism. In Ukraine, it is a legacy of the old Soviet system. In most of the former Soviet republics, the end of communism created a new class of oligarchs who became fabulously wealthy by appropriating state assets and utilizing the power of the state against their rivals. Russian President Vladimir Putin has fueled corruption by spreading around vast numbers of rubles to buy influence in Kyiv, among many other places.

Percentage of Ukrainian territory held by Russia

Before the war, Russia already held 7 percent of Ukraine's territory, including Crimea and parts of eastern Ukraine.



Source: Institute for the Study of War and American Enterprise Institute's Critical Threats Project, analysis by The Washington Post

The fight against graft in Ukraine began in earnest in 2014 after the Revolution of Dignity toppled a pro-Russian president, Viktor Yanukovich. The Ukrainian parliament established new corruption-fighting institutions — the National Anti-Corruption Bureau, the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office and the High Anti-Corruption Court — with help from Western governments. By one count, Ukraine has passed 127 laws against corruption since 2015.

"Ukraine has the most intrusive asset declaration policy in the world," William B. Taylor Jr., a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, told me. "Government officials must list assets — cars, apartments, watches, cash — owned by them or members of their families. And the declarations are available online for aggressive journalists to compare to the officials' salaries."

Of course, it's one thing to have institutions in place to fight corruption; it's another thing to utilize them. John Herbst, another former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, told me that "there were serious steps taken against corruption" in the first year of Petro Poroshenko's presidency (2014-2015) and the first year of Zelensky's presidency (2019-2020). Then, in both cases, the anti-corruption fight lagged behind other priorities, and there was a return to business as usual.

Now, Zelensky seems to be making the battle against graft a priority once again. He is aided by a free press and civil society organizations that uncover official wrongdoing in ways that would never be permitted in Russia. There is less tolerance now for officials lining their own pockets when Ukraine is fighting for its very survival and tens of thousands of Ukrainians have given their lives for the country.

Ultimately, Herbst told me, the "big blow against corruption" will be struck only if Ukraine wins the war and makes real progress toward European Union membership. The lure of joining the E.U. made it possible to overcome entrenched interests and clean up corruption in other Eastern European states that were once under Moscow's thumb, and it will be no different in Ukraine. But in the meantime, Zelensky is showing that he is serious about preventing corruption from undermining the Ukrainian war effort.

[\(https://subscribe.globaltimes.cn/\)](https://subscribe.globaltimes.cn/) [\(http://www.facebook.com/globaltimesnews/\)](http://www.facebook.com/globaltimesnews/) [/most](#)

[\(http://www.facebook.com/globaltimesnews/\)](http://www.facebook.com/globaltimesnews/) [/most](#)

WORLD (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/world/>) / EUROPE (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/world/europe/>)

GT investigates: Evidence suggests US may have supported neo-Nazi Azov Battalion

By Huang Lanlan (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/author/Reporter-Huang-Lanlan.html>) and Cui Fandi
Published: Mar 07, 2022 07:50 PM

[f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [v](#)



Members of Azov Battalion hold flares during a protest in Kiev on March 1, 2016. Photo: AFP

[Click here to stay tuned with our live updates on Ukraine tensions.](https://www.globaltimes.cn/special-coverage/Ukraine-Tensions-Timeline.html)
(<https://www.globaltimes.cn/special-coverage/Ukraine-Tensions-Timeline.html>)

The Azov Special Operations Detachment, also known as Azov Battalion, an infamous Ukraine-based neo-Nazi military regiment founded by white supremacists, garnered worldwide attention after its members were seen involved in the ongoing Ukraine-Russia crisis. Earlier, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared that Russia's military operation in Ukraine aimed to "demilitarize" and "de-Nazify" Ukraine.

Last week, the Azov Battalion sparked outrage for an insulting and racist video shared by the National Guard of Ukraine (NGU) on Twitter, which appeared to show Azov members greasing bullets with pig fat. "Azov fighters of the National Guard greased the bullets with lard against the Kadyrov orcs," said the NGU account. NGU later deleted the offensive video from its account following criticism by numerous Twitter users.

Azov Battalion is reportedly a unit of the NGU, backed by Ukraine's Ministry of Internal Affairs. Despite its possible official background in Ukraine, Azov

Battalion is known in the West for its extreme neo-Nazi stance, and for its suspected involvement in a number of terrorist attacks and separatist incitement incidents in various countries and regions, including the riots in China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2019.

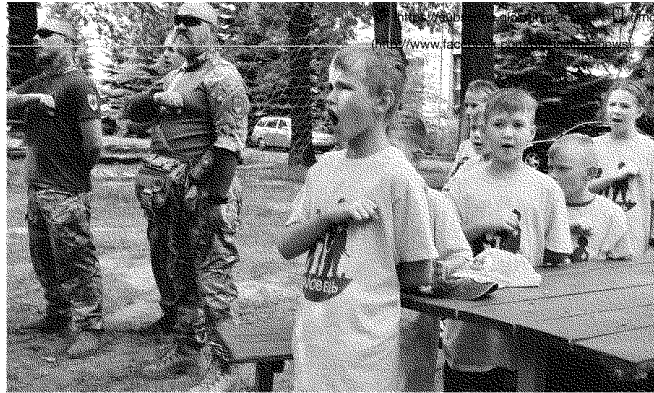
Ironically, despite being widely regarded as a threat to world security and an enemy of human civilization, Azov Battalion was found to have ties not only with the Ukraine authorities but also with the US. After looking into the public information from the US government and some investigative reports by Western journalists, the Global Times discovered that American politicians, military and intelligence officers were highly likely to have had cooperation with the Azov Battalion, in order to foster extremist forces in Eastern Europe against Russia.

What is the US behind?

Since Azov Battalion was founded in 2014, many American media outlets have revealed its potential connections with the US authorities.

According to a Yahoo News article from January 2022, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has been secretly training forces for Ukraine since 2015. The CIA has been overseeing a secret intensive training program in the US "for elite Ukrainian special operations forces and other intelligence personnel," the article quoted "five former intelligence and national security officials familiar with the initiative" as saying.

The multi-week program includes training in firearms, camouflage techniques, land navigation, tactics like "cover and move," intelligence and other areas, said the former officials. In addition to the above-mentioned, the CIA also started "traveling to the front in eastern Ukraine to advise their counterparts there by 2015," Yahoo reported.



Vacationing children undergo military training at a base of the Azov battalion in Kiev on August 14, 2015. Photo: AFP

Also in 2015, the US Congress removed a ban on funding neo-Nazi groups like Azov Battalion from its year-end spending bill, said an article by *The Nation* magazine in January 2016. In July 2015, two Congressmen drew up an amendment to the House Defense Appropriations bill that limited "arms, training, and other assistance to the neo-Nazi Ukrainian militia, the Azov Battalion," but the amendment was removed in November following "pressure from the Pentagon," an insider told *The Nation*.

"Considering the fact that the US Army has been training Ukrainian armed forces and national guard troops, ... Congress and the administration have paved the way for US funding to end up in the hands of the most noxious elements circulating within Ukraine today," commented the article's author James Carden, suggesting that the US military had also engaged in the training of NGU, which may include Azov Battalion members.

Not surprisingly, observers reportedly saw American weapons in Ukraine "flowing directly to the extremists of Azov." In December 2017, Richard Vandiver of American weapon manufacturer AirTronic told VOA that its sales of lethal weapons to Ukraine were conducted in "very close coordination" with the US Embassy, the US State Department, the Pentagon and the Ukrainian government. Weeks later, the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab confirmed in a January 2018 report that Azov Battalion was a recipient of the transfer.

There must be some connections between Azov Battalion and the US, especially US intelligence agencies, said Li Wei, an expert on national security at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations.

 (<https://subscribe.globaltimes.cn>)  (/most)

"Supporting Ukraine's neo-Nazis serves the US' own interests," Li told the Global Times. "By inciting conflicts between Ukraine and Russia, the US has weakened Russia and further pushed Ukraine to NATO; it has also improved its relations with Europe, which has become more strategically dependent on the US. The US is really the biggest beneficiary of Russia-Ukraine tensions."

In late 2021, the US was one of just two countries to veto a United Nations (UN) draft resolution "combating the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fueling contemporary forms of racism." The other was Ukraine. "Both countries have consistently voted against this resolution every single year since 2014," wrote an article of American magazine Jacobin in January 2022.

With its Cold War mind-set, the US has been fanning anti-Russia flames in Eastern Europe, being very much conniving with the neo-Nazi forces there, international relations scholars criticized.



"We've seen the US support or assist terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and Islamic State (ISIS)," Li said. "The US messes with the world for its own geopolitical interests."


Evildoings around the world

In December 2019, some Ukrainian neo-Nazis including Azov Battalion members were seen at separatist riots on the streets of Hong Kong, causing panic among local citizens, Hong Kong media reported.

It was not the first time that Azov Battalion members were involved in terrorist or violent incidents. In March 2019, 51 people were killed at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand in a mass shooting by Australian Brenton Tarrant. Tarrant, who displayed a symbol used by Azov Battalion during the attacks, claimed in his manifesto that he had traveled to Ukraine, according to an article published on the website of the Atlantic Council in February 2020.

US media in September 2019 reported an attempted terrorist attack by an America soldier who tried to bomb a major American news network. The soldier Jarrett William Smith, arrested by the FBI, said that he "planned to travel to Ukraine to fight with violent far-right group Azov Battalion," ABC News reported that month.

 (<https://subscribe.globaltimes.cn>)  (/most

<http://www.facebook.com/globaltimesnews>) 

Inside Ukraine, Azov Battalion is also infamous for its evil in the eastern region. It was accused of displacing residents after looting civilian properties between November 2015 and February 2016, according to a 2016 report by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The report also accused Azov Battalion of raping and torturing detainees in the Donbass region during the period. It violated international law as well as the Minsk Agreements, said the report.





BBC




Menu

[World](#) | [Africa](#) | [Asia](#) | [Australia](#) | [Europe](#) | [Latin America](#) | [Middle East](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

Top Ukrainian officials quit in anti-corruption drive

 24 January

Russia-Ukraine war



EPA

| Ukrainian investigative journalists have accused Kyrylo Tymoshenko (L) of living a lavish wartime lifestyle

By James Waterhouse and Phelan Chatterjee

Several senior Ukrainian officials have resigned as President Volodymyr Zelensky begins a shake-up of personnel across his government.

A top adviser, four deputy ministers and five regional governors left their posts on Tuesday.

Their departures come as Ukraine launches a broad anti-corruption drive.

Recently, authorities have seen bribery claims, reports of officials buying food at inflated prices and one figure accused of living a lavish lifestyle.

Senior aide Mykhailo Podolyak said Mr Zelensky was responding to a "key public demand" that justice should apply to everyone.

The president has already banned state officials from leaving the country unless on authorised business.

The first to resign on Tuesday was Kyrylo Tymoshenko, the president's deputy head of office, who oversaw regional policy and had earlier worked on Mr Zelensky's election campaign.

After Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine last February he became a frequent spokesperson for the government.

He was accused by Ukrainian investigative journalists of using several expensive sports cars throughout the war - though denies any wrongdoing.

In a Telegram post, he thanked Mr Zelensky for "the opportunity to do good deeds every day and every minute".

Deputy Defence Minister Vyacheslav Shapovalov also resigned, following reports he oversaw the purchase of military food supplies at inflated prices from a relatively unknown firm. The department called this a "technical mistake" and claimed no money had changed hands.

The defence minister himself - Oleksii Reznikov - has been under scrutiny for the same reason.

A host of other top officials were dismissed on Tuesday, including:

- Deputy Prosecutor General Oleskiy Symonenko
- Deputy Minister for Development of Communities and Territories Ivan Lukerya

- Deputy Minister for Development of Communities and Territories
Vyacheslav Negoda
- Deputy Minister for Social Policy Vitaliy Muzychenko
- And the regional governors of Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Sumy
and Kherson

Ukraine has a history of corruption and in 2021 Transparency International ranked the country at 122 out of 180 countries in its ranking of corrupt states.

A crackdown is one of the EU's key demands if the country is to advance its application to join the bloc.

In an address on Sunday, Mr Zelensky promised there would be "no return to what used to be in the past, to the way various people close to state institutions" used to live.

His comments followed the arrest of Ukraine's Deputy Infrastructure Minister Vasyl Lozinskyi on Saturday on suspicion of accepting a bribe worth over \$350,000 (£285,000) over the supply of electricity generators. He has denied the charges.

David Arakhamia, the head of Mr Zelensky's Servant of the People party, has said that corrupt officials could face jail.

"Officials at all levels have been constantly warned through official and unofficial channels: focus on the war, help the victims, reduce bureaucracy and stop doing dubious business.

"Many of them have actually listened, but some, unfortunately, did not," he said in a Telegram statement.

"If it doesn't work in a civilised way, it will be done according to the laws of wartime. This applies both to recent purchases of generators and to fresh scandals in the ministry of defence."

While there have been anti-corruption reforms in recent years, the stakes are high for Kyiv - which is receiving billions of dollars worth of financial aid from Western allies.


Related Topics

[Russia-Ukraine war](#)

[Volodymyr Zelensky](#)

[Ukraine](#)

Ukrainian tycoon's wife 'carried £22 million in cash through a refugee border crossing into the EU'

 [dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10637997/Ukrainian-tycoons-wife-carried-22-million-cash-refugee-border-crossing-EU.html](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10637997/Ukrainian-tycoons-wife-carried-22-million-cash-refugee-border-crossing-EU.html)

Will Stewart

March 22, 2022

Ukrainian tycoon and politician's glamorous wife 'carried \$29million in CASH through a refugee border crossing into the EU'

- Money was spotted by Hungarian customs in baggage of Anastasia Kotvitska
- Criminal probe launched into failure to declare removal of sum from Ukraine
- Controversial ex-MP Igor Kotvitsky claims she was leaving country to give birth
- Statement from his daughter Violetta, 24, said the story was 'fake and rumours'

By Will Stewart for MailOnline

Published: 22:05 EST, 21 March 2022 | Updated: 20:42 EST, 22 March 2022

-
-
- e-mail
-

6.8k shares

5

View
comments

The glamorous wife of a prominent Ukrainian tycoon and politician 'carried £22 million in cash through a refugee border crossing into the EU', it is alleged.

The money - in US dollars and euros - was spotted by Hungarian customs in the baggage of the spouse of controversial ex-MP Igor Kotvitsky, 52, say reports.

A picture shows the suspected cash haul.

A criminal case has been opened into a failure by Anastasia Kotvitska to declare the removal of the large sum from the war-ravaged country, say reports in Kyiv.

Kotvitsky - once Ukraine's wealthiest MP - said his wife was leaving the country to give birth, but denied reports she was carrying \$28 million and 1.3 million euros.

'All my money is in Ukrainian banks, I did not take anything out,' he said, before closing his social media account.

A statement from him carried on the social media of his Swiss-educated daughter Violetta, 24, said the story was 'fake and rumours'.

Kotvitska, who reportedly travelled with two Hungarian men and her mother, has not commented on the frontier incident.

The allegation is that she did not declare the huge cash sum exiting Ukraine at the Vilok checkpoint, but the money was found by Hungarian customs officers, said Obozrevatel newspaper.

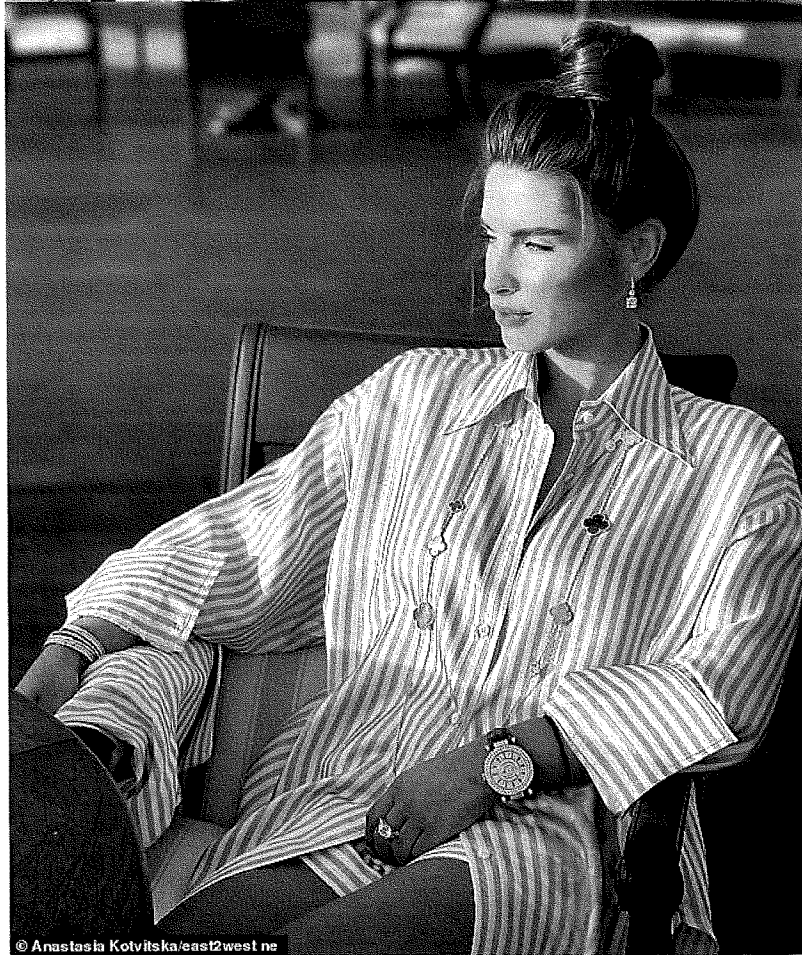
She then made a declaration that she had brought the sum into Hungary, an EU country.







The huge sum of money (pictured) was spotted by Hungarian customs. A cabin has now been opened



Ms Kotvitska, who reportedly travelled with two Hungarian men and her mother, has not commented on the frontier incident

There is huge sensitivity in Ukraine about the wealthy elite seeking to take their fortunes abroad evading capital flight curbs at a time when the country's fate hangs in the balance.

Kovitsky reportedly controls via associates Nuclear Energy Systems of Ukraine, and uranium deposits in the country, which has been partially invaded by Russia.

He is also seen as having close business and political links with ex-Interior Minister Arsen Avakov.

The names of the customs officers and border guards who do this are well known in narrow circles.

There are now calls for a criminal investigation into border guards at the crossing in the country's Transcarpathian region, where it is alleged a blind eye has been turned to cash flowing out of the country.

Kyiv businessman Seyar Khushutov, who revealed the Kotvitska case, said there was a tariff of bribes levied by customs officers enabling cash to leave the country.

These illicit payments amount to 'between 3 to 7.5 per cent', depending on the amount and level of the applicant.

'In other western regions, the situation is no better.

'The names of the customs officers and border guards who do this are well known in narrow circles.'

Share or comment on this article:

-
-
-
-
- e-mail
-
- 6.8k

shares

Add your comment



Ukraine's Zelenskyy fires top-level officials in anticorruption purge, with more to come, he warns

[foxnews.com/world/ukraine-zelenskyy-purges-top-level-officials-anticorruption-purge-more-come-he-warns](https://www.foxnews.com/world/ukraine-zelenskyy-purges-top-level-officials-anticorruption-purge-more-come-he-warns)

Caitlin McFall

Ukraine

Published January 24, 2023 8:29am EST

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy implements vacation ban on outside travel for government officials as war enters 11-month



Video

Ukraine should 'strike first' against badly-beaten Russia: Former Ukraine ambassador

Former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine William Taylor joins 'Fox News Live' to analyze Ukraine's strategy against Russian advances.

Ukraine saw a series of resignations among top officials Tuesday as Kyiv looks to tamp down on cases of corruption with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warning more will likely come.

"We have already made personnel decisions - some today, some tomorrow - regarding officials of various levels in ministries and other central government bodies, in the regions, and in the law enforcement system," Zelenskyy said in his overnight address.

The Ukrainian president did not mention which officials would resign or had been terminated, but according to Reuters a deputy prosecutor general, a deputy defense minister and the deputy chief of staff in Zelenskyy's office vacated their positions Tuesday morning.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Presidential Press Office, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, looks on as he meets soldiers at the site of the heaviest battles with the Russian invaders in Bakhmut, Ukraine, Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2022. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Office via AP)

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK: SHAKING DOWN 'SCOUNDRELS' WHEREVER THEY ARE

The news comes just two days after a deputy infrastructure minister was arrested over accusations of corruption by allegedly stealing \$400,000 from funds received under contracts for generator purchases as Ukraine struggles to keep energy supplies going across the country.

The arrest was one of the first major corruption cases announced by Kyiv since the war began 11 months ago.

Deputy Defense Minister Vyacheslav Shapovalov stepped down in what Ukraine's defense ministry reportedly described as a "worthy deed" amid accusations of corruption after media reports claimed the ministry had overpaid for food.



BAKHMUT, UKRAINE - DECEMBER 31: Ukrainian soldiers are seen in a trench on New Year's Eve in Bakhmut, Ukraine on December 31, 2022. (Photo by Diego Herrera Carcedo/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images)

LAWMAKERS CALL FOR SENDING ABRAMS TANKS TO UKRAINE AS RUSSIA WARNS OF 'GLOBAL CATASTROPHE'

The defense ministry has rejected these claims and said Shapovalov's actions were done to retain civilian trust in the ministry.

Deputy Prosecutor General Oleksiy Symonenko has also been removed from office after facing criticism for a vacation to Spain he took as the country continues to grapple with Russia's deadly invasion.

He also faces tax evasion accusations according to the Kyiv Independent.

Zelenskyy implemented a travel ban according to his address Monday night and said government officials, including "law enforcers, people's deputies, prosecutors and all those who are supposed to work for the state," will no longer be able to travel abroad for any non-government related matters.

"If they want to rest now, they will rest outside the civil service," he added.



Ukrainian servicemen examine an RPG rocket as they stand in a trench on a frontline position in the Donetsk region on January 23, 2023, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. (Photo by ANATOLII STEPANOV/AFP via Getty Images)

[CLICK HERE TO GET THE FOX NEWS APP](#)

A top advisor to Zelenskyy described the personnel changes as a response to criticisms facing Kyiv and said there can be "no blind eyes" as the war continues.

"During the war, everyone should understand their responsibility," Mykhailo Podolyak said in a tweet Tuesday. "The President sees and hears society. And he directly responds to a key public demand – justice for all."

Caitlin McFall is a Reporter at Fox News Digital covering Politics, U.S. and World news.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 16, 2019

The Honorable Michael Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We write to ask why the State Department has failed to include certain overseas violent white supremacist extremist groups on the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) list.

The recent attack in Halle, Germany, which killed two innocent people, is just the latest example of white supremacist terrorism. Like the previous shooter in Christchurch, New Zealand, the attack in Halle was livestreamed and the killer posted a hateful anti-Semitic manifesto, in this case to a German message board (Kohlchan, the German 4chan equivalent). As SITE Intelligence Director Rita Katz's stated: "the similarity between this video and New Zealand attacker's underscores that these are not isolated attacks by people merely holding similar beliefs. Today's attack is another installment from a global terrorist network, linked together via online safe havens much like ISIS." The spread of anti-Semitic, white supremacist terrorism from Pittsburgh to Poway to Halle is a global threat spread by foreign groups who have free reign to recruit Americans over the internet.

Today, if an American citizen swears allegiance to the Islamic State (or another Foreign Terrorist Organization on the list) and spreads their message of terror, there are several resources available to the Federal government to counter the threat. However, if that same American citizen swears allegiance to a violent white supremacist extremist group based overseas and spreads their message of terror, the Federal government does not have access to the same tools.

Terrorism is terrorism. On September 10, 2019, the Committee on Homeland Security received testimony regarding the nexus between white supremacists in the U.S. and foreign organizations. On September 18, 2019, the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence & Counterterrorism and the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and International Terrorism received further testimony detailing the transnational relationships among white supremacist extremists.

As you know, the State Department's criteria for inclusion on the FTO list are simple: be a foreign organization, engage in or retain the capability and intent to engage in terrorism, and threaten the security of US nationals or the national defense, foreign relations, or the economic interests of the United States. There are numerous examples of foreign white nationalist groups that fit these conditions. The American people deserve an explanation as to why these groups are not included on the FTO list.

For example, the Azov Battalion is a well-known ultranationalist militia organization in Ukraine that openly welcomes neo-Nazis into its ranks. The group is so well-known, in fact, that the 115th Congress of the United States stated in its 2018 omnibus spending bill that “none of the funds made available by this act may be used to provide arms, training or other assistance to the Azov Battalion.” The United Nations has chronicled human rights abuses and incidents of torture in this group’s relatively short history. Despite these facts, Azov has been recruiting, radicalizing, and training American citizens for years, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The Christchurch, New Zealand massacre was a turning point for counterterrorism efforts. In his manifesto, the shooter claimed he had trained with the Azov Battalion in Ukraine, and he routinely wore a neo-Nazi symbol associated with them. Both the Poway, CA and El Paso, TX shooters said they were directly influenced by the terrorism committed at Christchurch. The link between Azov and acts of terror in America is clear.

The Trump Administration’s National Strategy for Counterterrorism, released in October 2018, mentions two neo-Nazi groups, the Nordic Resistance Movement and National Action, whose “use of violence and intent to destabilize societies often puts American lives at risk.”

As you know, our allies are taking steps to address the threat posed by transnational white supremacist extremists. In 2016, the United Kingdom designated National Action as a terrorist organization. National Action has links to American neo-Nazi groups, including the group James Alex Fields belonged to when he drove his car into protestors in Charlottesville in 2017, killing Heather Heyer. Canada also recently added international neo-Nazi groups to its federal list of outlawed terror organizations. Law enforcement agencies may go after assets of the listed groups, and it becomes a crime to support the listed groups financially or otherwise.

This is not the first time Congress inquired about the State Department’s treatment of overseas terrorist organizations. On March 20, 2019, House Foreign Affairs Chairman Eliot Engel wrote to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to make addressing the global threat of white nationalist terrorism a foreign policy priority and suggest the State Department develop a list of white nationalist terrorist groups to designate as FTOs.

It is imperative that we understand how the State Department is evaluating the threat posed by violent foreign white supremacist groups and why these groups are not included on the present FTO list. Given that the threat picture has evolved substantially over the past 18 years since the September 11th attacks, and as we learn more about connections between certain overseas white supremacist groups and domestic terrorists, it is time we take the threat of violent white supremacist extremists more seriously.

We respectfully request a response no later than November 4, 2019.

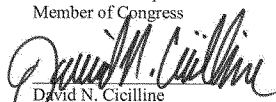
Sincerely,



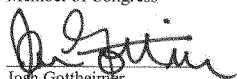
Max Rose
Member of Congress



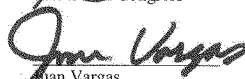
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



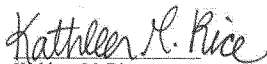
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



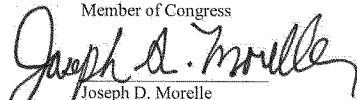
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



Katie Hill
Member of Congress



Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



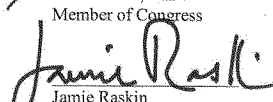
Dean Phillips
Member of Congress



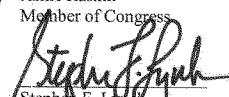
Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



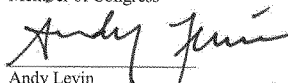
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress




Jim Cooper
Member of Congress




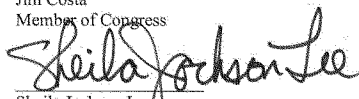
Andy Levin
Member of Congress

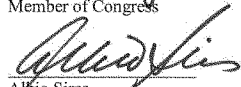


Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress


Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress

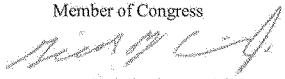

Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Kochitl Torres Small
Member of Congress


Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress

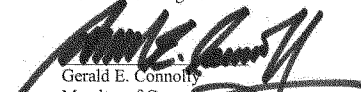

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress

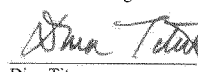

Jason Crow
Member of Congress

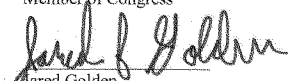

Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress

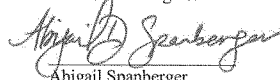

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

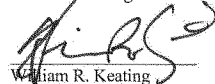

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress


Dina Titus
Member of Congress


Jared Golden
Member of Congress


Abigail Spanberger
Member of Congress

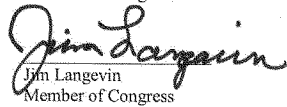

Conor Lamb
Member of Congress


William R. Keating
Member of Congress


Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Jim Langevin
Member of Congress



Al Green
Member of Congress



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

Townhall

TIPSHEET

Yes, Americans Are Paying for Pensions in Ukraine

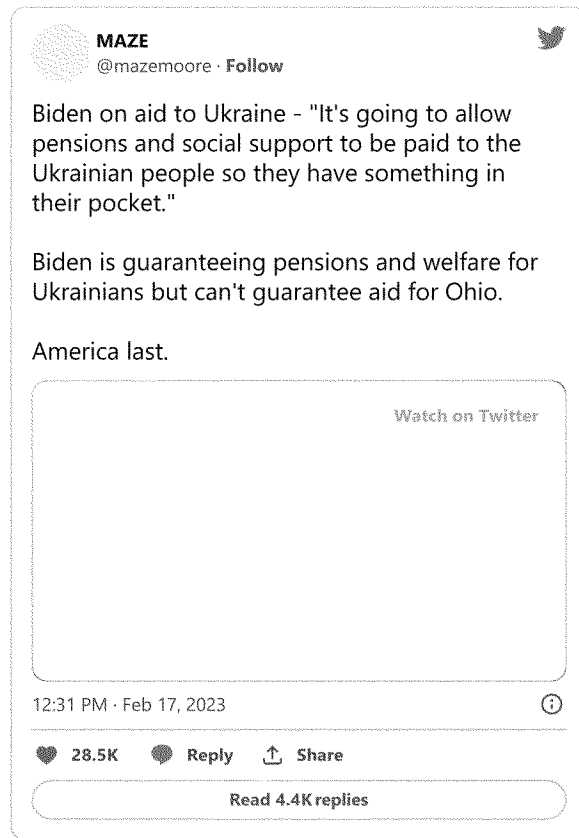


Katie Pavlich
February 20, 2023 12:00 PM

Remarks made by President Joe Biden in April 2022 are making the rounds on social media as the United States continues to fund Ukraine with billions of taxpayer dollars and after Biden made a surprise trip to the country on Monday.

"This so-called supplemental funding addresses the needs of the Ukrainian military during the crucial weeks and months ahead. And it begins — it begins to transition to longer-term security assistance that's going to help Ukraine deter and continue to defend against Russian aggression," Biden said at the White House. "It's going to deliver much-needed humanitarian assistance as well as food, water, medicines, shelter, and other aid to Ukrainians displaced by Russia's war, and provide aid to those seeking refuge in other countries from Ukraine."

"It's also going to help schools and hospitals open. It's going to allow pensions and social support to be paid to the Ukrainian people so they have something — something in their pocket," he continued.



American taxpayers have been funding pensions in Ukraine, a notoriously corrupt country, for more than a year. Today in Kyiv, Biden pledged an additional \$500 million.

Meanwhile, Social Security in the United States is on the road to ruin.

"In 2034, Social Security revenues are projected to equal 77 percent of the program's scheduled outlays, resulting in a 23 percent shortfall. Thus, CBO estimates that Social Security benefits would need to be reduced by 23 percent in 2034. The gap between scheduled and payable benefits would widen to 35

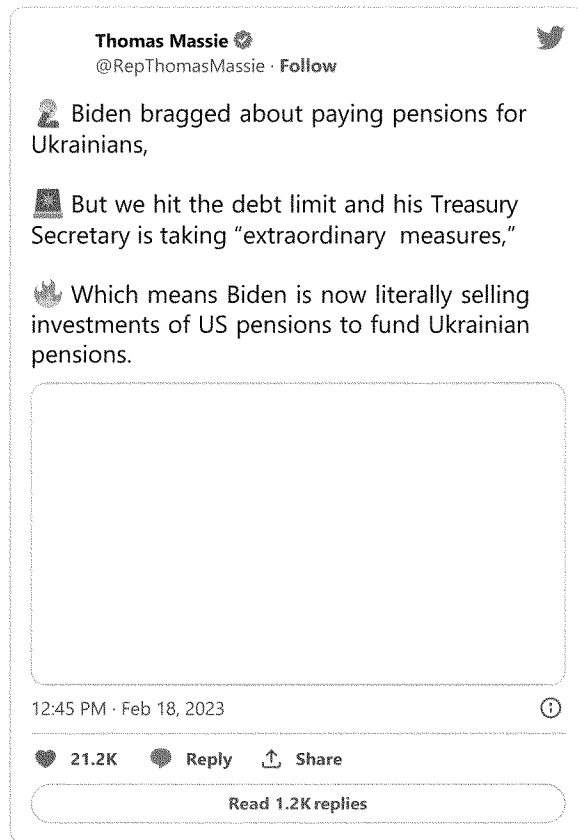
percent by 2096 and would remain stable thereafter," a report from the [Congressional Budget Office](#) shows.

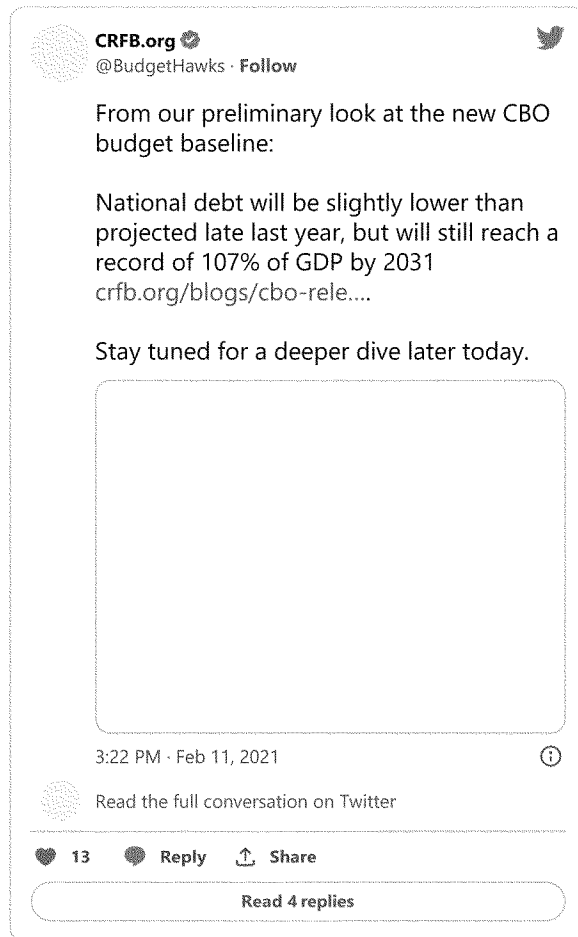
Recommended



The One 'Woke' Job That Is Fading Quickly Matt Vespa

The U.S. is \$32 trillion in debt and inflation, which is crushing American families, continues to rage.





Multiple States' Pension Funding in Jeopardy

usgoldbureau.com/news/multiple-states-pension-funding-in-jeopardy

Ryan Watkins, Op-Ed Contributor



September 16, 2022 168 view(s)

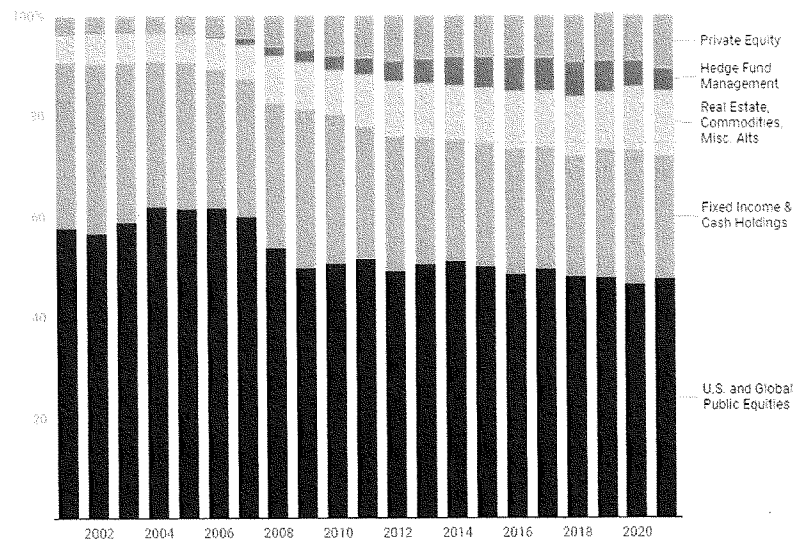
Economy Retirement

With so many crises happening simultaneously, there is an imminent financial threat not getting headlines: state pensions. Unfunded pension liabilities are growing exponentially across states. In 2007, state and municipal pensions were underfunded by \$248.8 Billion. By December 31, 2022, the number will be at least \$1.4 trillion, a 562% increase in 15 years. The number could be significantly worse depending on how poorly the market responds to raising interest rates over the next few months.

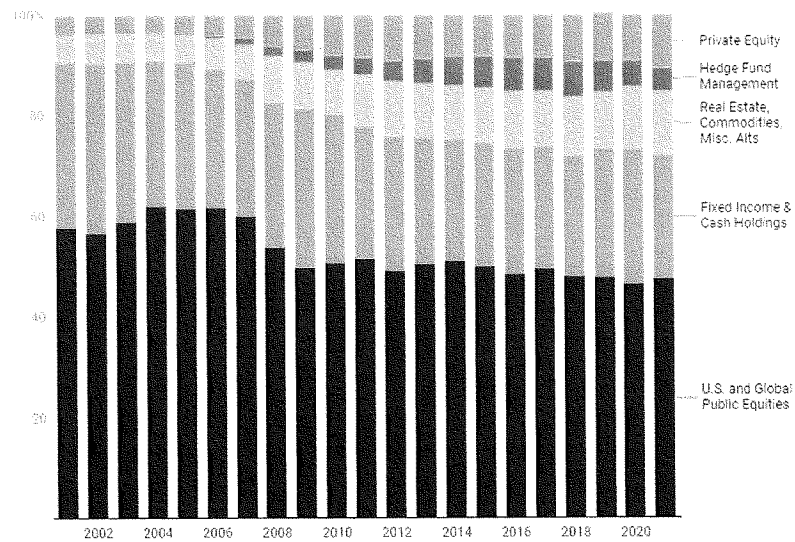
The pension model requires favorable rates of return to ensure sustainability. Over the last decade, funds have moved away from traditionally safer investments like bonds. They have sought higher-yield assets like real estate, commodities, and private equity. The reallocations were reactionary to below-expected returns and zero percent interest rates. Now the interest rate pendulum is swinging in the other direction creating vulnerability throughout the portfolio holdings.

The more prominent exposure to real estate has put the funds at risk again in 2022 as interest rates rise and housing contracts. Fund managers struggle to find yield in the current economy when rising interest rates and record-high inflation crush equities, bonds, and real

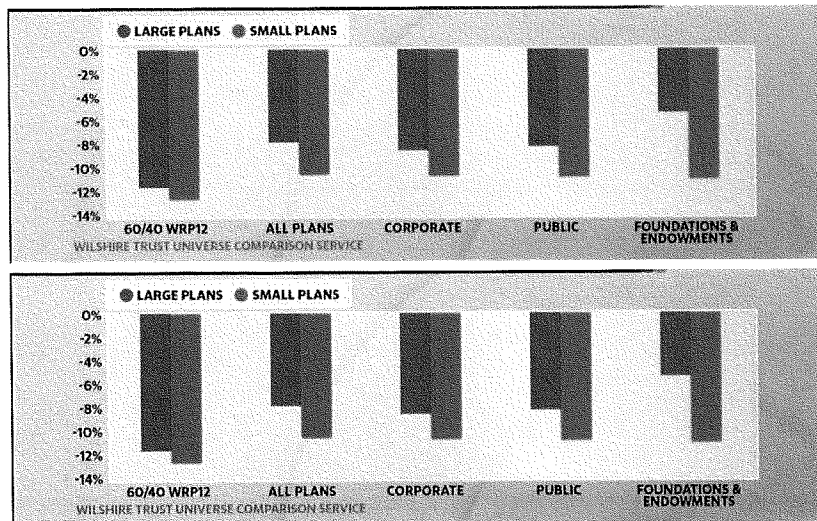
estate. For already troubled State pensions, lack of yield will make additional benefits like COLA (cost of living allowance) almost impossible for the States to give to offset inflation. The average 2022 COLA increase was 1.58% whereas the latest inflation data was 8.3%.

Asset Allocation Trend of Statewide Pension Funds, 2001-2021

Asset Allocation Trend of Statewide Pension Funds, 2001-2021



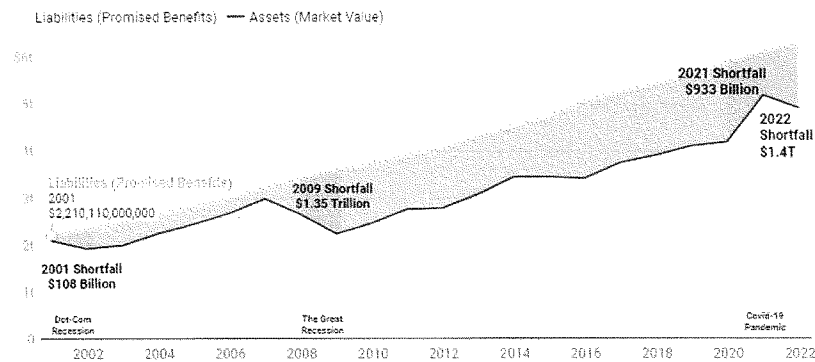
The first half of 2022 was unkind to pension plans. On average, plans containing more than \$1B lost 7.3%, and plans worth less than \$1B lost 12.1% in the first half of the year. The average loss was 10.4%. According to the Congressional Research Service, 82% of government employees participate in pension programs, and 56% of private sector civilians participate in some form of pension.



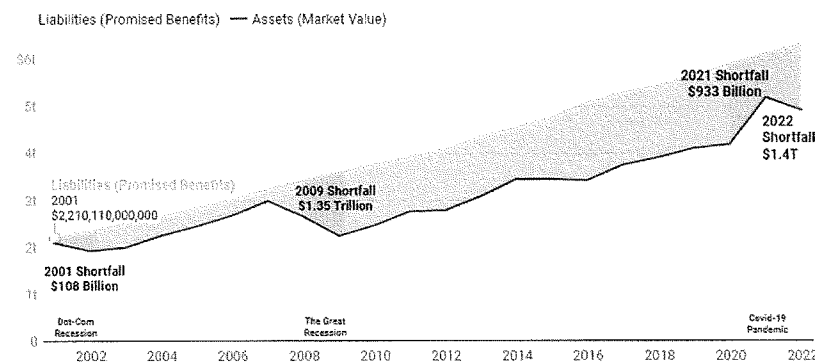
Large Plans = > \$1B Small Plans = < \$1B 60/40 = plans containing 60% Stocks and 40% Bonds

Negative returns widened the gap between funded and unfunded liabilities. Most states are drowning in debt and have billions of unfunded liabilities across their entire budget. Short-term thinking makes long-term pension funds attractive to politicians to fund short-term projects and financial emergencies. **The estimated 2022 pension shortfall will be \$1.4T.**

Total Unfunded Liabilities for State & Local Pension Plans, 2001-2021 + 2022 Estimate



Total Unfunded Liabilities for State & Local Pension Plans, 2001-2021 + 2022 Estimate



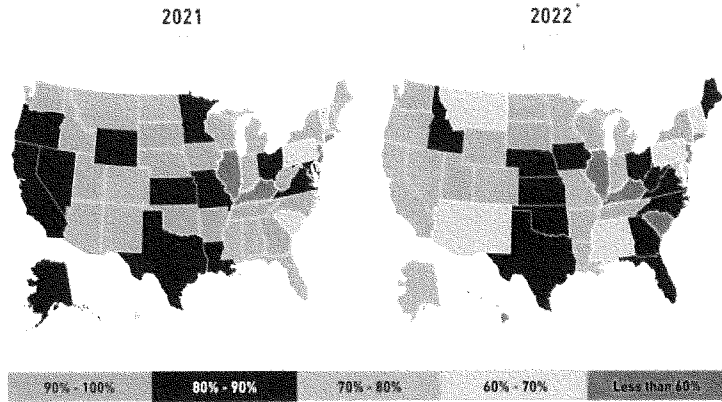
The annual report on pensions reported the worst decrease in funded liabilities since the Great Recession of 2009, and the year isn't over yet. In 2021, there were sixteen states with pensions of 90% funded or more. In 2022, there are only six.

In 2021, there were only eight states not funded at least 70%. In 2022, there will be at least thirteen states. Overall, the national pension average is 77.9% funded. Fewer states are prepared, and more are flirting with insolvency. The trends are moving in the wrong direction.

Each year, the pension shortfalls are made up through new debt. Whether you call the current economy a recession or not, government debt increased after the last four times there were two consecutive negative GDP quarters (1975, 1982, 1991, and 2009). In each of the last four recessions mentioned, the average global debt increased between 4-15%. The U.S. debt levels averaged 8% higher five years later. If history repeats, the funding gaps for pensions will be even more vast five years from now. Many states will either diminish/withhold benefits or declare insolvency/bankruptcy. It will be a roller coaster if a state tries to declare bankruptcy since that is illegal for States to do. 48 States are required to have balanced budgets.

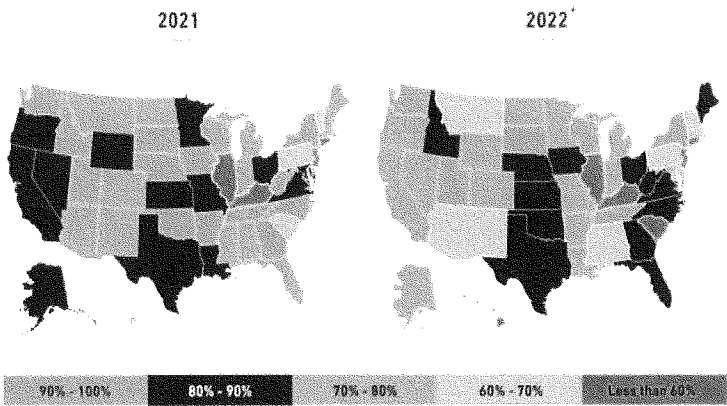
The five states with the most aggregate debt are New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Massachusetts, and California. For New Jersey, Illinois, and California, pension and retirement benefit funding are the primary drivers of debt. (California has pension funding, bond, and budget debt as its primary drivers). Pension funding is only part of the State debt problems but represents a significant portion of unfunded liabilities.

AGGREGATE STATE FUNDED RATIO (%) (FUND BALANCE / FUTURE BENEFIT PAYMENT) 2021 + 2022 ESTIMATE



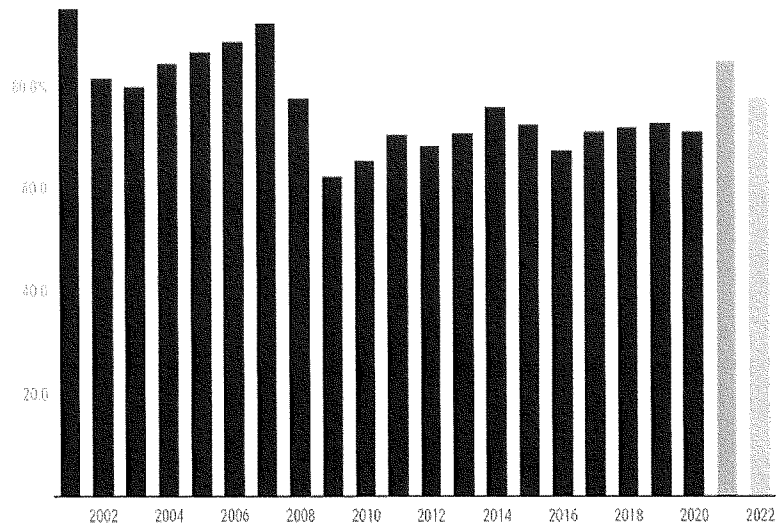
*Estimate, see Methodology in the full State of Pensions 2022 report for details.

AGGREGATE STATE FUNDED RATIO (%)
2021 + 2022 ESTIMATE

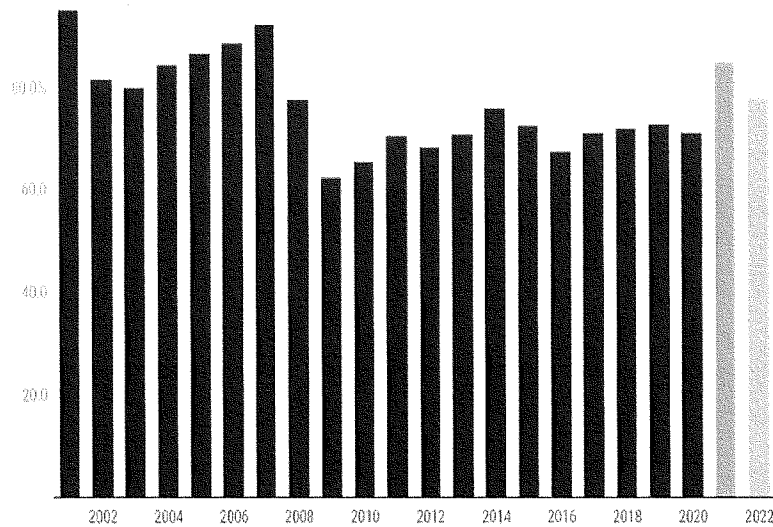


*Estimate, see Methodology in the full State of Pensions 2022 report for details.

Funded Ratio Average for State & Local Pension Plans, 2001-2021 +
2022 Estimate



Funded Ratio Average for State & Local Pension Plans, 2001-2021 + 2022 Estimate



Five of the ten largest U.S. population centers are in these five states, including the top three (New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago). California has three of the largest U.S. population centers, and retirement pensions are not 80% funded. Illinois retirement pensions are below 60% funded. Illinois already has \$187.7B in unfunded liabilities and the highest debt to revenue ratio in the nation at 468.7%. In California, the aggregate debt is more than \$1.3T. If California didn't spend another penny, each taxpayer would need to pay an additional \$77,000 in California state taxes to cover California's current unfunded liabilities. The debt isn't about the population as much as politics. The Blue States carry significantly more debt than the Red States with similar populations.

States With Highest Debt	
1.	New York
2.	New Jersey
3.	Illinois
4.	Massachusetts
5.	California

States With Highest Debt	
1.	New York
2.	New Jersey
3.	Illinois
4.	Massachusetts
5.	California

States With Lowest Debt	
1.	Texas
2.	Florida
3.	Alaska
4.	North Carolina
5.	Tennessee

States With Lowest Debt	
1.	Texas
2.	Florida
3.	Alaska
4.	North Carolina
5.	Tennessee

States With Highest Population	
1.	California
2.	Texas
3.	Florida
4.	New York
5.	Pennsylvania
6.	Illinois

States With Highest Population	
1.	California
2.	Texas
3.	Florida
4.	New York
5.	Pennsylvania
6.	Illinois

The numbers are entirely unsustainable. Short of some science fiction, game-changing, utopia-creating technology, the governments will not be able to meet their obligations except by raising taxes, confiscation, or borrowing money. As interest rates rise, debt becomes more expensive. When debt becomes too expensive, and taxes are the strategy, let's say you will "Feel the Bern."

Most people have been aware of the quickly expanding national debt but haven't noticed the dangerous levels of State debt. It could leave millions without any support in retirement. Can you imagine working your entire career expecting a pension, and no funds were available when it was time to retire? About 23% of state and local government pensions don't have funding. The local, state, and national governments employ almost 22 million people. 82% of government workers participate in the pension program. If we do some math, there is not currently funding for approximately 4,149,200 state and local government pensions. Each pension represents a person who worked their career as a public servant.

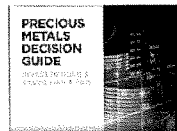
What will happen if 4 million retirees suddenly find themselves without the pension for which they worked their whole lives? Since California, Illinois, and all the other high-debt states, cannot declare bankruptcy, upon whom will their unpayable debt obligations fall? The most likely answer is a bailout from the Federal government, which means taxpayers. Where would the Federal government get the money? Unimaginable printing and unthinkable tax rates. The red states would have to bail out blue states that have mismanaged finances for decades.

The predictable need for printing makes a clear statement. High inflation probably isn't going away for years.

State debt is out of control, but you don't have to be a victim. You can take control of your finances and protect your retirement with precious metals.

Call the U.S Gold Bureau Today.

(800) 775-3504



Get Our Free
Investor's Guide

This article expresses the viewpoints of one of our precious metals specialists, based on recent news reports and opinion-based analysis of the situation. This information should in no way be taken as professional investment advice. As always, we encourage you to talk to your financial advisor before making any investment decisions.

About the Author: Ryan Watkins

Ryan is proud to be an Army veteran. After honorably serving his country, he studied finance, marketing, and kinesiology and graduated Cum Laude. Sharing a professional, practical, well-rounded investment perspective is his primary objective. Ryan invests in many different assets but admits he likes tangible assets best. His sincere passion is educating people and helping them make the most informed choices.

The Wayback Machine - <https://web.archive.org/web/20221102005154/https://www.washingtonpost.c...>

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

NATIONAL SECURITY

U.S. races to track American arms in heat of Ukraine war

U.S. monitors have inspected just 10 percent of high-risk weapons sent to Ukraine, even as the Biden administration launches new measures to stop arms smuggling

By Missy Ryan

November 1, 2022 at 12:21 p.m. EDT

U.S. monitors have conducted in-person inspections for only about 10 percent of the 22,000 U.S.-provided weapons sent to Ukraine that require special oversight.

U.S. officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide details that have not been made public previously, said they are racing to deploy new means for tracking weapons seen as having a heightened risk of diversion, including Stinger surface-to-air missiles and Javelin antitank missiles, amid what they describe as Ukraine's "super hot conflict."

They hope to achieve a "reasonable" level of compliance with U.S. oversight rules for those high-risk items, but also acknowledge that they are unlikely to achieve 100 percent of normal checks and inventories as the country's escalating war with Russia strains systems for ensuring weapons are not stolen or misused.

Since late February's invasion, which prompted the closing of the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv for several months, U.S. officials have been able to conduct just two in-person inspections of items requiring enhanced oversight at weapons depots where U.S. arms had been brought in from Poland.

"The conflict creates an imperfect condition for us to have to adjust quickly," a senior State Department official said. "We want to put some of those resources to working with our allies and partners to mitigate risk however, wherever we can."

The scramble to adapt oversight rules designed for peacetime has taken on greater importance as the volume of American assistance reaches dizzying levels and congressional scrutiny intensifies.

U.S. and Ukrainian officials say they have not documented any instances of illicit use or transfer of American arms in Ukraine since Russian President Vladimir Putin launched his invasion on Feb. 24. The State Department has acknowledged that Russian forces' capture of Ukrainian arms could lead to those weapons being smuggled on to other countries. Other weapons have gone missing; a Swedish grenade launcher, apparently pilfered from a battlefield in Ukraine, exploded in the trunk of a car in Russia in May.

Arms trade experts warn that the administration and its allies must remain on guard despite the broad Western support for Kyiv's effort to confront Putin's invasion and the brutal tactics his forces have used against Ukrainian cities and civilians.

Rachel Stohl, the vice president for research programs at the Washington-based Stimson Center, said officials also must develop longer-term plans to ensure the security of surplus U.S. weapons once the conflict with Russia ends, noting Ukraine's history as a theater for small-arms smuggling after the Cold War.

She said the demands for thorough oversight may appear to be at odds with the United States' desire to help at a moment of existential importance in Ukraine. But, she added: "We have to make sure we're not letting the pace and urgency outweigh our long-term interests."

The challenges in Ukraine echo the larger concerns about how weapons produced in the United States, the largest global weapons seller, are employed worldwide. Advocates have long complained that despite systems designed to prevent their misuse, foreign partners have sometimes employed those arms against civilians in places including Yemen. Sophisticated equipment also has fallen into adversaries' hands, allowing the Islamic State to showcase Abrams tanks and the Taliban to pilot Black Hawk helicopters.

The Biden administration is trying to highlight a new oversight push to account for any potential leakage from the large flow of U.S. weapons — particularly as congressional Republicans voice growing concerns about aid accountability and the overall volume of assistance to Ukraine.

Passing massive aid packages could become more difficult after next week's midterm elections.

Last week, the administration unveiled a plan to prevent weapons diversion in Eastern Europe. With nearly \$18 billion of U.S. military aid provided since February alone, the Biden administration's aid lifeline to Ukraine is the largest such sum since the Cold War ended.

National Security Council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson said Kyiv had been a "willing and capable" partner in arms accountability.

"While we recognize the unpredictability of combat, the United States and Ukraine have cooperated to prevent illicit weapons diversion since Russia's further invasion began earlier this year," she said.

U.S. officials say Ukraine is working hard to illustrate its compliance with arms accountability requirements from the United States and other countries, in part because local officials know that any substantiated instances of diversion could weaken the strong Western support that is vital to their fight.

Most of the equipment provided to Ukraine to date is subject only to minimal tracking requirements under the U.S. arms oversight system, known as “end-use monitoring.” For items such as small-arms ammunition or personal protective gear, seen as posing a lesser proliferation risk, a U.S. military officer in eastern Poland is assigned the sole task of overseeing the transfer of control of that equipment from U.S. to Ukrainian hands, including a process in which officials from both countries inventory the items.

As occurs in any other transfer of American military equipment, Ukraine must commit to not transferring the arms to other nations without U.S. permission. But there is little routine monitoring afterward, officials said.

More-sophisticated or sensitive equipment requires an additional set of checks including an annual inspection, conducted — under normal conditions — by a U.S. officer to ensure that weapons are securely stored and that serial numbers correspond. Those items also include Switchblade drones and night-vision devices. Those devices make up about half of the items subject to additional tracking.

Larger weapons systems, such as the HIMARS multiple launch rockets and the M777 howitzer, do not require the enhanced monitoring.

Officials acknowledged that when the war erupted, they had no blueprint for tracking weapons in a conventional conflict like the combat in Ukraine. U.S. personnel are unable to venture into the vast stretches of the country occupied by Russian forces or experiencing active fighting.

To compensate for those limitations, officials are building on technology first embraced during the coronavirus pandemic, employing scanners that would allow Ukrainian personnel to inventory serial numbers without U.S. personnel being present. The inventory information — which is captured without geolocating the items, for operational security reasons — is then downloaded and provided to U.S. officials. American personnel have begun training Ukrainian peers in Poland on the new scanner technology.

Officials are scrambling to deploy this workaround ahead of the war’s first anniversary in February, after which scores of weapons potentially will fall out of compliance. The challenges are compounded by the size of the growing, but still small, security cooperation team.

U.S. officials also are trying to account for weapons used by Ukrainian forces, by scanning spent weapons canisters and getting expenditure reports from the Ukrainian military. Ukraine also has provided “a handful” of loss reports when equipment, mostly night-vision gear, is broken, they said. While loss and expenditure reports are still received in paper form, officials hope that that, too, will be automated soon, making it easier to get a real-time picture of how U.S. weapons are being employed against Russia.

A 2020 report from the Pentagon’s inspector general found that defense officials had complied with monitoring requirements for Javelins and their launchers provided to Ukraine but had not done so fully for night-vision devices. It cited the failure of Ukraine’s military to report consistently on the loss or theft of those items and found that serial numbers sometimes fell off or became illegible, preventing proper inventories.

In Kyiv, officials say the nature of the fight — in which Russian forces regularly strike Ukrainian cities and torture Ukrainian civilians — makes arms diversion unthinkable. Oleksandr Zavytnevykh, who heads the Ukrainian parliament's defense and national security committee, said that members of a parliamentary committee set up this year to perform arms oversight visited arms depots and looked into rumors of diversion or theft but found no "real signals" of illicit activities.

U.S. officials say that Ukraine's military is now trying to update its own system for digitally tracking donated weaponry, as the military is doing for maintenance and logistics.

The Biden administration has begun briefing other nations that are supplying Ukraine about the U.S. monitoring process in Ukraine. So far, while there are new mechanisms to loosely coordinate weapons donations, there is no centralized international tracking system.

U.S. officials acknowledge that they are unlikely to be satisfied with the overall results of their evolving oversight approach — by which they hope to get to "greater than zero" assurances for U.S. taxpayers — but say that shouldn't be seen as a reason for curbing American support.

"It is our moral and ethical responsibility to help the people in the government of Ukraine, and the consequences of not doing that are much worse," the State Department official said. "So, in terms of cost-benefit, that seems very clear."

Serhiy Morgunov in Kyiv, Ukraine, and Dan Lamothe and Alex Horton in Washington contributed to this report.

**WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING
THE HEARING**

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY DR. DESJARLAIS

Mr. STORCH. The DOD OIG is conducting evaluations at several logistics nodes in Europe to assess accountability for equipment as it is transported by the DOD to Ukraine, including through ports, rail, and air transfer locations. The DOD OIG is also conducting evaluations of the DOD's end-use monitoring and enhanced end-use monitoring (EEUM) of selected equipment once it has been transferred to Ukraine. Bi-lateral agreements between the U.S. and Ukraine require Ukraine to provide timely loss reports to U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation-Ukraine representatives. In December 2022, the U.S. and Ukraine signed a Concept of Operations that requires Ukraine to provide loss reports for U.S. EEUM defense articles within four days. We expect to issue several reports that will address the DOD's accountability for equipment in transit to Ukraine, and EEUM for defense articles after they are transferred to Ukraine. [See page 26.]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MS. HOULAHAN

Dr. KAHL. We continuously evaluate Ukraine's near- and long-term needs and prioritize our support accordingly. As of right now, in close consultation with the Ukrainians, our top priorities remain air and missile defense and interceptors for these systems, fires, and armored capabilities, as well as sustainment and maintenance. [See page 39.]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. FALLON

General SIMS. [The information is classified and retained in the committee files.] [See page 47.]

Mr. STORCH. We defer to the Department to provide details on the specifications of the HMMWVs provided to Ukraine. [See page 47.]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MS. MACE

Dr. KAHL. The Deputy Secretary of Defense established the Senior Integration Group-Ukraine on May 11, 2022. [See page 51.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. ROGERS

Mr. ROGERS. How has the Department of Defense leveraged commercial publicly available and open-source data to share valuable operational information with Ukrainian and NATO forces without violating policies surrounding intelligence sharing? Are there specific lessons-learned and/or use cases from a year of war in Ukraine where these tools could augment traditional intelligence or data sources to provide real-time situational awareness in operation centers during complex emergencies or a crisis—particularly internationally where the United States might lack “boots on the ground”?

Dr. KAHL. Allies have repeatedly noted the importance of the United States sharing intelligence regarding Russia's invasion of Ukraine, particularly in the early days of the conflict. Commercially available data, including imagery, has played a significant role in enabling the United States to better inform the public of the war in Ukraine and to counter disinformation. Continued transparency and sharing with Allies, in line with current policies and procedures, in the days since has played a crucial role in continued Alliance unity.

The United States also leverages various open-source and publically available data in its efforts to help Ukraine and NATO Allies better understand the regional environment, but I am unable to comment on the specific types and sources of information that the United States shares with Ukraine or specific lessons learned in an unclassified setting. The Department will provide a more detailed response through classified channels.

Mr. ROGERS. A growing point of contention between Congress and the Biden administration remains over the White House's decision not to designate Russia as a state-sponsor of terrorism. While this was an interagency process the Secretary of State ultimately decides whether to designate a government as a state-sponsor of terrorism. Does DOD believe that Russia meets the criteria for designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism?

Dr. KAHL. DOD defers to the Department of State, as the Secretary of State has the authority to make such a determination.

Mr. ROGERS. Russia has traditionally used the tactic of blaming adversaries for attacks they have not carried out. In the past, this has included accusing Ukrainian forces of preparing to blow up a fertilizer storage facility so that the Ukrainians could then accuse Russian forces of having launched a chemical weapons attack.

Given the frequency of these accusations by the Russians, does the Department have any evidence to suggest that Russia has used chemical weapons or riot control agents on the battlefield in Ukraine?

Dr. KAHL. The Department has seen the media reports from Russian and Ukrainian sources that the Russian military has employed riot control agents on the battlefield in Ukraine. Likewise, both Russian and Ukrainian sources allege chemical weapons use on the battlefield by the other side, but the Department has not corroborated these claims.

Additional information on this question will be provided in classified channels.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. SCOTT

Mr. SCOTT. After 20 years of warfare in either Iraq or Afghanistan, the United States has created the premier treatment for wounded warriors especially in regards to double, triple and even quadruple amputees. What more could the United States do to help treat Ukraine's severely injured wounded warriors and innocent civilians especially in regards to prosthetics? What is the current DOD policy on treatment of Ukrainian wounded warriors and civilians? What DOD policy requires Ukrainians to pay for their non-medical expenses?

Dr. KAHL. The Department is committed to doing everything within our authorities to provide timely medical support to care for Ukrainian servicemembers, to aid their fight in defending Ukraine against Russia's illegitimate war. We continue to explore options to best support the Ukrainian armed forces as part of our close and continuous contact with Ukrainian counterparts and European Allies, and other

stakeholders. This includes leveraging DOD best practices in advanced combat casualty medical care to wounded soldiers.

We'd also like to highlight the extensive efforts of USAID and the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) to aid Ukrainian civilians with acute medical needs. Through implementing partners, the State/PRM has supported emergency medical teams in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and Moldova to assist with trauma care.

DOD has played a supporting role to our European Allies, particularly Poland and Germany, who lead medical support to wounded Ukrainian soldiers. DOD would consider deploying military medical capabilities to Poland, but to date Poland has not made such a request. Nevertheless, we are coordinating with Poland to determine where specialized assistance is needed. In response to a Ukrainian request to NATO for medical support in 2022, Germany established the Multinational Medical Coordination Center to facilitate medical support. If Germany or Poland cannot provide support, then patients can be referred through the Secretarial Designee Program, which authorizes treatment by DOD personnel at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. This program covers treatment for members of the military and national security forces of Ukraine for a class of conditions sustained in conflict on a non-reimbursable basis. The program allows for inpatient and outpatient medical treatment for Ukrainian servicemembers, including those who have severe injuries that puts preservation of life, limb, or eyesight in jeopardy. The program does not appropriate funds for non-medical expenses, but to date these expenses have been largely borne by both U.S. and European NGOs facilitating medical treatment.

Mr. SCOTT. Have you noticed any reluctance by the Ukrainians to ask for medical supplies since they might not be as high of a priority as some weapons systems?

Dr. KAHL. No. Ukraine has requested medical supplies from a variety of U.S. government partners. The bulk of Ukraine's requests for U.S. medical and humanitarian aid committed to support Ukraine are fielded by the State Department and USAID.

However, DOD has also provided a number of medical supplies as part of multiple security assistance packages in response to validated requirements from Ukraine's Armed Forces. This has included equipment like first aid kits, bandages, and monitors, as well as larger items like armored treatment vehicles and HMMWVs configured for medical evacuation.

In addition, Ukraine has requested support from several NATO Allies and partners. To date, more than 40 countries are providing support for Ukraine's urgent lethal security requirements, with a majority of those countries also providing non-lethal assistance to include significant amounts of medical supplies to Ukraine.

Mr. SCOTT. How has been the partnership between the Department of Defense and the Department of Health & Human Services in terms of providing medical supplies and training to Ukraine?

Dr. KAHL. The Department actively engages with counterparts at the Ministry of Defense and the Ukrainian Armed Forces General Staff to best understand Ukraine's urgent priorities. This includes providing training and key medical supplies to Ukrainian counterparts from DOD's existing stocks.

The Department is able to provide this assistance using its own authorities and does not rely on its partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services for this purpose.

Other agencies like the Department of State and USAID have played the primary role in providing Ukraine the humanitarian aid it needs to care for the broader population.

Mr. SCOTT. What internal U.S. Government processes need to improve to better support NATO and non-NATO partners?

Dr. KAHL. In line with the National Defense Strategy, early and continuous consideration, engagement, and—where possible—collaboration with Allies and partners in planning is essential for advancing our shared interests. The Department will continue to leverage current processes and procedures to ensure the necessary flow of communication and the releasability of information to Allies in order to ensure continued engagement and collaboration.

Mr. SCOTT. Have you noticed any reluctance by the Ukrainians to ask for medical supplies since they might not be as high of a priority as some weapons systems?

General SIMS. [The information is classified and retained in the committee files.]

Mr. SCOTT. What internal U.S. Government processes need to improve to better support NATO and non-NATO partners?

General SIMS. [The information is classified and retained in the committee files.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. GALLAGHER

Mr. GALLAGHER. Whether it were HIMARS, Patriots, Phoenix Ghosts, and now finally Abrams tanks—hesitancy from the administration has left Ukraine repeatedly on their heels. If you could turn back time, would you have sent these weapons when they were first asked for?

Dr. KAHL. Regular consultations with the government of Ukraine inform the capabilities that ultimately are included in U.S. security assistance packages, alongside other key considerations like U.S. readiness and resource trade-offs. As developments on the ground in Ukraine have changed, so too have Ukraine's most pressing requirements. Through Presidential Drawdown Authority and the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, the Department continues to provide Ukraine the types of equipment, arms, and munitions it needs for the fight today and to be able to defend itself well into the future.

When Russia's full-scale invasion began, the Department surged Stinger air defense and additional Javelin anti-tank missiles. These capabilities were suited to the terrain and nature of the fight, making best use of the available security assistance resources at the time and were critical to Ukraine driving Russia back from Kyiv in the early days of Russia's war.

As the war shifted to the south and east, it presented a new need for long-range fires and loitering munitions. High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems and artillery helped Ukraine take the momentum from Russia, alongside Unmanned Aerial Systems like Switchblade and Phoenix Ghost.

When Russia increased its air attacks in the fall of 2022, air defense became more important and we committed critical systems, including a Patriot air defense battery, along with counter-Unmanned Aerial System capabilities and other air defense assets.

Going into the spring and summer months, we have been laser-focused on getting Ukraine more armored maneuver capability, enabling them to retake more territory.

We will continue working in close consultation with Ukrainian counterparts to ensure we are providing the most relevant and critical capabilities to support Ukraine's efforts to push back on Russia's unprovoked war of aggression.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Our botched withdrawal from Afghanistan was quickly followed by failed deterrence in Ukraine—can you describe what forces within the Department that you assess to be paralyzing our ability to respond to aggression in a way that deters conflict?

Dr. KAHL. Regarding the statement that deterrence failed in Europe, President Biden made clear from the outset that our core military deterrence objective was to deter an attack on the United States or NATO. We have thus far been successful in sustaining and strengthening deterrence in support of this objective.

To your question about deterring conflict, we made integrated deterrence a cornerstone of the National Defense Strategy (NDS). We are aligning the Department's policies, investments, and activities to sustain and strengthen deterrence—tailored to specific competitors and coordinated to maximum effect inside and outside the Department.

Integrated deterrence is enabled by combat-credible forces prepared to fight and win, as needed, and backstopped by a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent.

The Fiscal Year 2024 budget proposal is a prime example of the Department's full commitment to providing the right mix of capabilities to achieve the vision of the NDS. DOD is modernizing the Joint Force, with a focus on building a future force that is lethal, sustainable, resilient, survivable, agile, and responsive.

Mr. GALLAGHER. LTG Sims, to what degree do operational plans within the DOD rely upon the assumption that we would only be forced to defeat in one theater and deter in another?

Given the growing "no limits" security partnership between Beijing and Moscow in the year since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, can we reasonably argue that planning for a confrontation with only one adversary is becoming an increasingly dangerous presumption? How does DOD plan to respond should China deliver weapons systems for Russia to use against Ukraine?

To what extent has the failure of deterrence in Ukraine demonstrated to the DOD the pressing need to arm Taiwan to the teeth to prevent a similar failure in the Indo-Pacific?

General SIMS. [The information is classified and retained in the committee files.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. LALOTA

Mr. LALOTA. According to recent public sources, the United States has provided approximately \$76.8 billion in aid to Ukraine. Conversely, our European allies have

provided approximately \$35.02 billion—less than half as much. At the same time, the U.S. is currently \$31 trillion in debt—a number that is 125 percent of our gross domestic product. Michael Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff famously warned, “the most significant threat to our national security is our debt.” Given the significant price tag of our debt and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, how can the administration and or Congress assist with encouraging our European allies to share more of the financial burden of this ongoing conflict?

Dr. KAHL. The United States has committed approximately \$31.7 billion in security assistance since February 24, 2022 to help Ukraine’s ability to push back on Russia’s unprovoked war of aggression. At the same time, Secretary Austin has led an effort to coordinate international support for Ukraine through the Ukraine Defense Contact Group. This brings together some 50 nations in support of Ukraine on a regular basis to coordinate assistance, sustainment, and training.

Contributions from Allies and partners have contributed key capabilities to Ukraine, totaling more than \$19 billion in direct security assistance, and often providing unique capabilities to Ukraine the United States may not have in our own inventories. This has included Leopard tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, 152mm ammunition, and multiple launch rocket systems.

When measured as a share of GDP, the generosity of Allies like Estonia and Latvia—which have made donations worth more than 1 percent of GDP—as well as other frontline states such as Poland, Slovakia, and Bulgaria is clear. By this metric, the United States ranks as the ninth largest donor.

As the Department continues to work hard to get Ukraine the capabilities it so urgently needs, the Secretary and others across government will continue urging Allies and partners to provide Ukraine with additional means to counter Russia’s ongoing aggression.

The \$31.7 billion in support has contributed to significant degradation of Russia’s military without directly involving U.S. or Allied forces.

Mr. LALOTA. According to recent public sources, the United States has provided approximately \$76.8 billion in aid to Ukraine. Conversely, our European allies have provided approximately \$35.02 billion—less than half as much. At the same time, the U.S. is currently \$31 trillion in debt—a number that is 125 percent of our gross domestic product. Michael Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff famously warned, “the most significant threat to our national security is our debt.” Given the significant price tag of our debt and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, how can the administration and or Congress assist with encouraging our European allies to share more of the financial burden of this ongoing conflict?

General SIMS. [The information is classified and retained in the committee files.]

Mr. LALOTA. According to recent public sources, the United States has provided approximately \$76.8 billion in aid to Ukraine. Conversely, our European allies have provided approximately \$35.02 billion—less than half as much. At the same time, the U.S. is currently \$31 trillion in debt—a number that is 125 percent of our gross domestic product. Michael Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff famously warned, “the most significant threat to our national security is our debt.” Given the significant price tag of our debt and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, how can the administration and or Congress assist with encouraging our European allies to share more of the financial burden of this ongoing conflict?

Mr. STORCH. We defer to the Department to explain its efforts to encourage partners and allies to provide assistance to Ukraine.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. MOYLAN

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Kahl, given that the Ukraine war offers the United States an opportunity to practice military logistics, are efforts being made to ensure that the lessons currently being learned in Europe can be applied to the Indo-Pacific theater given it’s different geographic and political challenges.

Dr. KAHL. I can confirm that the Department is continually reviewing lessons learned from the war in Ukraine, including how these lessons can be applied to the Indo-Pacific theater both before and during a crisis.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY DR. MCCORMICK

Dr. MCCORMICK. LTG Sims, many constituents and other folks I’ve spoken to worry about how sending significant quantities of materiel to Ukraine may hurt our own readiness for a major conflict. When identifying munitions and ammunition to deliver to Ukraine, is it DOD policy to, where possible, send materiel closer to its expiration date so that we retain materiel with the greatest remaining shelf life?

If not, can you speak to measures we're taking to maintain sufficient stockpiles while being fiscally responsible?

What other criteria and standards are we using to identify platforms, systems, and other material eligible for shipment to Ukraine besides them just being surplus and/or antiquated?

General SIMS. [The information is classified and retained in the committee files.]

Dr. McCORMICK. LTG Sims, for better or worse, it appears to me that our involvement in Ukraine offers an opportunity to see how our weapons systems measure up to Russian systems and how they function in that environment. Do we have the capability to track outcomes and collect performance data once Ukrainian forces have taken possession of those systems? If not, do you think we have the capability to collect that data without detracting from Ukraine's combat effectiveness? What insights have we garnered regarding the performance and resilience of our communications and command & control systems against Russian cyberattacks?

General SIMS. [The information is classified and retained in the committee files.]

Dr. McCORMICK. In recent months, President Zelenskyy has removed several officials from national and regional-level offices presumably due to instances of graft and corruption. How is the DOD assisting the Ukrainian government in preventing poor governance, rooting out corruption, and ensuring that the aid we deliver to Ukraine reaches its intended destination? Are you aware of instances where our aid and materiel has been diverted from its intended destination? What measures are in place to ensure that weapons and munitions we deliver aren't diverted to an illicit market where they could potentially fall into the hands of adversarial state and non-state actors?

Mr. STORCH. We defer to the Department to respond as to how the DOD is assisting the Ukrainian government in preventing poor governance and rooting out corruption. With regard to ensuring that the aid the U.S. delivers to Ukraine reaches its intended, in late January 2023, I traveled to Germany, Poland, and Ukraine with the leaders of the State and USAID OIGs. The purposes of this trip were to obtain the latest on-the-ground perspective of the evolving security and non-security assistance provided to Ukraine; to build on our coordinated, whole-of-government approach to oversight of the United States' significant investment in this effort; and to deliver an unambiguous message to both American and Ukrainian stakeholders about the expectations for accountability for such assistance. In Kyiv, my colleagues and I personally and forcefully delivered this message in meetings with the Ukrainian Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Finance, the Prosecutor General, and other key Ukrainian leaders and counterparts.

The DOD OIG is engaged in a comprehensive set of audits and evaluations examining the full range of issues relating to the DOD's train and supply mission, including ongoing examinations of security and accountability controls for defense items transferred to Ukraine within the U.S. European Command area of responsibility, the ground transportation of equipment to support Ukraine from port to transfer locations, land-based security controls for equipment being transferred to Ukraine, and our third in a continuing series of reviews of the DOD's enhanced end-use monitoring of defense articles provided to Ukraine. This work will examine the DOD's efforts to track American security assistance provided to Ukraine, including the tracking technology that has been deployed by the United States and Ukraine and the DOD's ability to conduct remote site visits within Ukraine. Based on our completed work, the DOD OIG has not substantiated any instances where American aid and material has been diverted from its intended destination.