

America - Key Architect of Russia - Ukraine War

- "In this time of uncertainty, we have a clear way forward: Help Ukraine defend itself. Support the Ukrainian people. Hold Russia accountable." Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State.

Overview of U.S. & Ukraine Relations:

i. Supporting Ukraine's Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity:

- According to U.S. Secretary of State:
"The United States' commitment to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity is ironclad."
- Since 2014, the US has committed more than \$7.3 bn in assistance to Ukraine, including security and non-security assistance.
- In addition, the US provided three sovereign loan guarantees totalling \$3 billion.

ii. Celebrating Ukraine's Unique Identity and Culture:

- The United States has spent more

than \$1.7 million to support 18 cultural preservation projects in Ukraine since 2001.

- "This shows our respect for Ukrainian cultural heritage and Ukraine's contributions to world culture." (Bill Taylor → Former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine).
- For 20 years, the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) has supported more than 1,000 projects in 120+ countries, including Ukraine.

iii. Reaffirming the Value of Democratic Principles and Institutions:

- "We are resolute that a democratic, prosperous, and secure Ukraine is in the interest not only of the people of Ukraine, but also of the United States and International Community." (US Secretary of State).
- The U.S. + Ukraine relationship serves as a cornerstone for security, democracy, and human rights in Ukraine and the broader region.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance:

- The United States is closely coordinating with international partners to monitor the situation in Ukraine, and address humanitarian needs in Ukraine.
- U.S. humanitarian assistance includes providing food, safe drinking water, shelter, winterization services, emergency health care, and protection to communities affected by ongoing fighting.

v. Vulnerable Populations and Human Rights:

- The U.S. government supports organizations that work with vulnerable populations in Ukraine, including Russian and Belarusian dissidents, journalists and anti-corruption activists, members of the LGBTQI+ community, women's groups, persons with disabilities, and religious and ethnic minorities.

Reference:

United & Ukraine @ U.S. Department of State, White House, Govt. of USA.

Why have been U.S. priorities in Ukraine?

- Immediately following the Soviet collapse, Washington's priority was pushing Ukraine, along with Belarus and Kazakhstan to forfeit its nuclear arsenal so that only Russia would detain the former union's weapons.

i. Former U.S. National Security Advisor:

- Zbigniew Brzezinski, in *Foreign Affairs* in early 1994, described a healthy and stable Ukraine as a critical counterweight to Russia and the lynchpin of what he advocated should be the new U.S. grand strategy after the Cold War.
- "It cannot be stressed strongly enough that without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine suborned and then subordinated, Russia automatically becomes an empire," he wrote.
- After his article was published, US, UK, and the Russia pledged via the Budapest Referendum to respect Ukrainians independence.

and sovereignty in return for it becoming a non-nuclear state.

ii. US and NATO response to 2022 invasion of Russia in Ukraine:

- Following the 2022 invasion, U.S. & NATO allies dramatically increased defense, economic, and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, as well as ramped up their sanctions on Russia.
- However, Western leaders have been careful to avoid actions they believe will draw their countries into the war or otherwise escalate it, which could, in the extreme, pose a nuclear threat.

Why the United States Must Stay the Course on Ukraine:

- The United States must maintain its course on Ukraine because it is essential to America's national security interests and democratic values.

i. Why Ukraine matters to the U.S. national interests:

- As the one-year mark of Putin's invasion of Ukraine approaches, the

stakes loom large for the United States and the free world.

- In his State of the Union address, President Joe Biden made clear that backing Ukraine matters "because it keeps the peace and prevents open season for would-be aggressors to threaten our security and prosperity."

U.S. Interests can be advanced by the following routes:

i. Enforce greater economic costs on Russia:

- The Biden administration and its international partners must ensure even more meaningful economic consequences for the Putin regime and close loopholes that are being used to escape accountability.
- The U.S. government has additional means for cutting off Russia from trade and market access, which it has not prioritized compared to other sanctions actions.

ii. Support Ukraine's political and economic resilience:

- stabilizing and rebuilding Ukraine's economy and its governmental capacity

capacity will be critical in the near term to support Ukraine, and build political and economic resilience.

- Through bipartisan action in 2022, Congress appropriated \$13 billion to help Ukraine "withstand the immense economic, social and political pressures of Russia's aggression and keep basic govt. services like hospitals, schools, and utilities running."

iii. Further align the trans-Atlantic alliance to counter challenges from Russia and China:

- The United States should support the EU's ambition and responsibility to increase its own security within the NATO alliance.
- Russia's aggression must be met with a strong and resolute response in increased NATO defense capabilities, which, in turn, can contribute to addressing an increasingly fraught global geopolitical landscape.

Reference: Authors → Johan Hassal, Kate Donald, Laura Kilburg, and Samata Reynolds @ Centre for American Progress.

Russia's War on Ukraine: U.S. Policy and the Role of Congress :-

- The United States, member states of NATO and the European Union (EU), and other partners regard Russia's war against Ukraine as "unprovoked and unjustified".
- The U.S., the EU, and the UK, among others, have coordinated efforts to impose a series of increasingly more severe sanctions on Russia, and have provided substantial military and economic aid to Ukraine.
- Congress may consider additional actions and oversight with respect to these and related issues.

Sanctions on Russia:

- The United States, the EU, other countries in Europe, have responded to Russia's war on Ukraine with sweeping sanctions.

Economic Sanctions against Russia:

- In response to Russia's aggression, the United States, along with its ~~over~~

allies and partners, is imposed severe and immediate economic sanctions on Russia.

February 28, 2022:

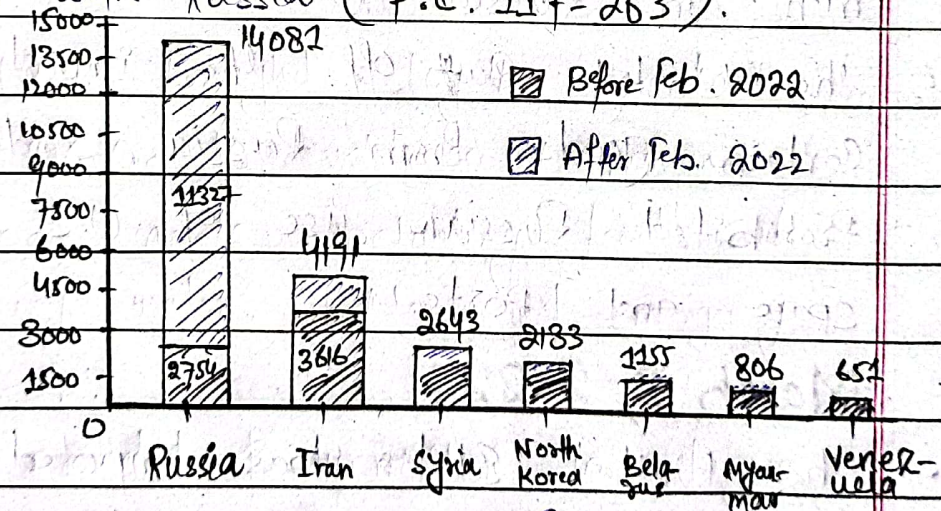
- U.S. Sanctions since February 2022, include restricting the Russian central bank from drawing on its dollar-denominated reserves, prohibiting most major Russian banks from conducting transactions in U.S. dollars or with U.S. persons, and barring new U.S. investment in Russia.
- The United States cut off the import of certain goods from Russia, and prohibited Russian use of U.S. airspace and ports.

March 3, 2022:

- The United States has imposed economic sanctions on about 1900 Russian individuals and entities and banned entry into the United States for several thousand Russian officials, military personnel, government connected business people, and others.

Congress Cut off Trade Relations with Russia:

- The action taken by the executive branch, the 117th Congress suspended normal trade relations with Russia and its ally Belarus (P.L. 117-110), prohibited the import to the United States, of Russian oil and other energy products (P.L. 117-109), and established sanctions on foreign persons who engage in gold transactions with Russia (P.L. 117-263).



As of Feb, 19, 2023, Source: Castellum.AI

Assistance to Ukraine:

- The United States and allies also have responded to Russia's 2022 invasion with military and economic assistance for Ukraine.

i. Economic Assistance to Ukraine:

In FY-2022 and FY-2023 to date, Congress has appropriated a total of \$113 billion in Ukraine-related emergency supplemental funds.

Through the World Bank's Public Expenditure for Administrative Capacity Endurance mechanism, the United States has used it to provide budget support on a reimbursement basis to Ukraine.

The EU (\$55 billion), IMF and World Bank (\$17 billion), and UK (\$7bn), collectively \$85 billion in support to Ukraine (According to Kiel Institute of the World Economy).

ii. U.S. Security Cooperation with Ukraine:

Since Jan 2021, US has invested more than \$30.4 billion in security assistance to Ukraine (\$29.8bn, since Russia's invasion).

Allies and Partners have delivered 10 long-range Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), 359 Tanks, 628 armoured personnel carriers and infantry fighting vehicles.

(IFVs), 824 short range air defense missiles, and 88 lethal UAVs.

- Since Feb 24, 2022, Allies and partners worldwide have provided or committed over \$13 bn in security assistance.

iii. U.S. Humanitarian Assistance to Ukraine:

- After Russian invasion in Ukraine, the U.S. responded quickly to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, providing more than \$1.9 billion to Ukrainians in need of assistance.
- The U.S. brought together partners and NGOs to address Ukrainian's critical needs, including food, safe drinking water, shelter, and emergency healthcare.
- U.S. provided \$340 million in refugees assistance to European partners who continue to host millions of Ukrainians.

iv. U.S. Energy Assistance with Ukraine:

- U.S. and its allies partners provided energy assistance, restoring power, heating homes, and enabling the people of

Ukraine to focus on the defense of their sovereignty.

- Together with its allies and partners, the U.S. provided critical electricity equipment to help Ukraine make emergency repairs to its power system and strengthen the stability of Ukraine's grid in the face of Russia's targeted attacks.

v. Democracy, Human Rights, and Anti-Corruption Assistance:

- To defend human rights in Ukraine and its neighbors, President Biden launched the European Democratic Resilience Initiative (EDRI) in March 2022.
- Through EDRI, the U.S. provided nearly \$220 million for Ukraine to support media freedom, to counter disinformation.
- To strengthen democratic and anti-corruption institutions, and support accountability for human rights abuses and violations of international law.

vi. Military deployment in Europe:

- According to Department of Defense of US, since February 2022, the US has deployed

about 20,000 additional armed forces in Europe.

- Deployment of about 10,000 troops to Poland, and 3000 troops to Romania.
- Since Feb. 2022, NATO has expanded its troops from 5000 to about 40,000 allied soldiers.

America's Strategic Interest in Ukraine:

- US supported efforts to reduce Europe dependence of energy on Russia.
- The U.S. has encouraged Ukraine to diversify its energy sources and develop its own domestic energy resources.
- The U.S. sees its support for Ukraine as part of its broader effort to counter Russian influence in the region.

Holding Russia Accountable:

- Justice and accountability are central pillars of the U.S. policy on Ukraine.
- Russia chose this war, and the US and its partners are holding it accountable for its attacks and atrocities against the people of Ukraine.

- Based on a careful analysis of the law and available facts, the Secretary of State recently determined that members of Russia's forces and other Russian officials have committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine.
- The U.S. continues to support a range of international accountability mechanisms, including the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Moscow Mechanism, and the Joint Investigative Team on Ukraine.

Potential Policy Issues for Congress:

- Related issues that Congress may seek to address could include the following:
 1. Monitoring oversight of U.S. assistance to Ukraine in disposition of military equipment, and consideration of the U.S. role in contributing to the cost of reconstruction.
 2. Monitoring levels of international assistance and coordination efforts.
 3. Assessing the impact of sanctions on

Russia's economy and warfighting capabilities, as well as on the U.S. and global economy.

4. Identifying conditions under which sanctions could be tightened, maintained, or eased, as well as conditions that could lead to possible resolution of the war.

5. Consideration of whether and how to support U.S. firms and allies adversely affected by sanctions.

6. Addressing U.S. responses to countries that seek closer ties to Russia.

7. Consideration of the viability and benefits of sustained European and NATO support for sanctions, assistance to Ukraine, and military deployments in Central and Eastern Europe.

References:

1. Russia's War on Ukraine: US Policy and the Role of Congress @ Paul Belkin, Rebecca M. Nelson, and Cory Welt Published by: Congressional Research Service

2. Fact sheet: One year of Supporting Ukraine @ WH.GOV (The White House).

3. America's Interest In the Ukraine War @ Joshua Chidinson by The National Interest. Babar Paper Product