

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

March 9, 2015

The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

We write to ask that you immediately submit to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee a report on the provision of lethal military assistance to Ukraine as required by the Ukraine Freedom Support Act. The February 15, 2015, deadline found in the law, which was unanimously passed by Congress in December 2014 and subsequently signed into law, has now passed. The provision of lethal assistance attracts broad bipartisan support in both the Senate and House. We urge you to submit this report to Congress as soon as possible.

Now is the time for the United States to provide Ukraine with the means to defend itself from continued Russian aggression. We should not be misled by Vladimir Putin's repeated efforts to exploit nominal ceasefire agreements. As Ukraine negotiated the second Minsk ceasefire in good faith, Putin sent dozens of tanks, armored vehicles, and rocket launchers to the Russian-backed rebels in eastern Ukraine mere hours before he consented to the supposed ceasefire. Since the agreement was signed on February 12, 2015, the rebels have retaken the strategic railway hub of Debaltseve, launched offensives near Mariupol, and reportedly organized terrorist attacks in the city of Kharkiv, which threatens to spread the conflict beyond the current area of hostilities.

We often hear that no amount of lethal military assistance to Ukraine would be sufficient to defeat the rebels and their Russian sponsors, but our objective is not to provide Ukraine with enough weapons to overwhelm the Russian military in a direct confrontation. Rather, the provision of lethal assistance aims to increase Ukraine's defense capabilities in a way that will give Kyiv the ability to produce conditions on the ground favorable to a genuine peace process.

By equipping Ukraine with the means to impose a greater military cost on Russia, the United States will be contributing to a quicker, fairer, and more stable settlement of the conflict. After countless broken promises by the Kremlin, it is clear that Moscow's aggression in Ukraine can only be stopped if Putin realizes that the United States and Europe are unequivocally committed to helping Kyiv impose this military cost on Russia.

We respectfully urge you to fulfill the provisions of the Ukraine Freedom Support Act, recognize the strong bipartisan majority in Congress that favors U.S. lethal assistance to Ukraine, and move quickly to provide the Ukrainian government with the capabilities that will allow Kyiv to inflict serious military costs using defensive weapons against the Russian forces that are destabilizing its eastern regions. Given the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's jurisdiction over U.S. policy

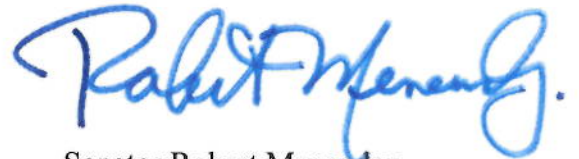
in Ukraine, including over any arms transfer or sale, we also urge your administration to work closely with the Committee and its members during this critical period.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob Corker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Senator Bob Corker
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Menendez". The signature is cursive and includes a period at the end.

Senator Robert Menendez
Ranking Member