

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

August 8, 2023

His Excellency Sadyr Japarov
President of the Krygyz Republic
The White House
Bishkek
Krygyz Republic

Dear Mr. President:

I write to you with deep concern regarding allegations of the Government of the Krygyz Republic's assistance to the Russian Federation, or its proxies, in evading international sanctions, imposed with respect to Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine. I urge the Krygyz government to swiftly investigate these allegations and to establish more reliable processes to prevent the illicit flow of goods through your territory bound for Russia. I am also concerned that the Krygyz Republic's failure to uphold international sanctions reflects the alarming erosion in democratic governance and extensive human rights violations occurring in the country.

Since the onset of the war, Krygyzstan has dramatically expanded its import-export business with Russia. At the same time, your government's lack of enforcement or worse – complicit facilitation of trade with Russia in products that implicate sanctions, such as drones, aircraft parts, weapon accessories, and circuitry – is reportedly enabling Russia to evade international sanctions. As you know, dozens of nations joined the United States and the European Union in imposing these sanctions in response to Vladimir Putin's unprovoked, illegal invasion of Ukraine. These sanctions are a vital tool in holding Vladimir Putin to account and reducing threats to the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of other nations, including those in Central Asia.

In the face of potential threats from Russia, the United States remains steadfast in our support of upholding the sovereignty and independence of nations like the Krygyz Republic. However, assisting or permitting systemic sanctions evasion by Russia weakens their effectiveness, which could put at risk the security and economic interests of the Krygyz people.

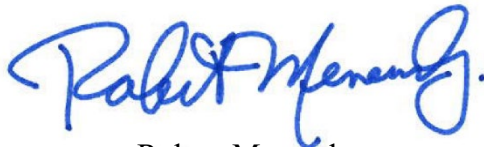
I urge your government to immediately investigate these serious allegations of sanctions evasion and to establish more reliable, robust processes to prevent the illicit flow of goods through your territory. I also ask that, to demonstrate your commitment to transparency, your government refrain from altering the format of export data published by the Krygyz Republic's National Statistics Committee and revert to using the 10-digit codes adopted widely by the international community.

Furthermore, I fear that Krygyzstan's failure to uphold international sanctions on Russia is simply a symptom of its continued democratic backsliding and widespread human rights

violations. Your government has weakened institutions, repeatedly violated the rights of journalists and independent media, harassed human rights defenders, and placed restrictions on civil society actors. A once shining beacon of democracy in Central Asia, the Kyrgyz Republic is headed down a dangerous path toward autocracy. I urge you to lift all restrictions on independent media and journalists, release imprisoned human rights defenders, and repeal measures restricting fundamental freedoms such as the freedom of association.

Your government's commitment to these matters is critical for the security and prosperity of the Kyrgyz people. We look forward to receiving your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Menendez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Robert Menendez
Chairman