

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 30, 2022

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Austin and Secretary Blinken:

We write to thank you for your service during this challenging time and to raise our concerns about the current state of affairs in Ukraine. We know that this has been an extraordinary time with extraordinary demands placed on every aspect of the Departments of Defense and State as you respond to the numerous needs and requests of President Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian Administration in coordination with our allies. We write to you today about a specific and urgent request from the Ukrainian government.

As you know, President Zelenskyy and his team have formally requested S-300s, a long-range missile system originally manufactured by Russia but now held by some of our allies. They have done this publicly on no fewer than three occasions that we are aware of, including on a nationally televised Congressional address on March 16, 2022. The Biden Administration has affirmed that this system is one which Ukrainians would benefit from and one that we would likely help to provide.

Among the dozens of countries that currently use the Russian-made S-300 systems are three NATO allies: Bulgaria, Greece and Slovakia. We understand that the Slovakian government is willing to transfer their systems to Ukraine if they are able to backfill them with U.S. Patriot air defense missile systems for their own continued protection. We understand that Greece has been approached to be the providers of these Patriot weapons to Slovakia. To our knowledge, the U.S. also has many Patriot systems available for exchange or transfer. Unfortunately, as far as we are aware, this transfer process of S-300s and Patriots has not been initiated in the several weeks since Zelenskyy's first request was made publicly, and Ukraine does not yet have the S-300s that they need. We understand that every NATO country is concerned about its own security and is subject to its own internal politics, and we believe these challenges are surmountable with U.S. leadership in the face of Ukraine active under threat.

With that in mind, we respectfully request the Department of Defense take all necessary steps to ensure the rapid transfer of air defense systems to Ukraine, either through the third-party transfer of the S-300 system or the direct transfer of Patriot systems. U.S. air defense systems such as these will help level the battlespace in Ukraine, and the longer we debate every possible outcome, the longer the Ukrainian people are forced to suffer Putin's bombardment and violation of their country.

We will close by reflecting on a conversation recently had between female members of the Ukrainian Parliament with the U.S. Congress' Democratic Women's Caucus. One of the Ukrainian-members pled with her U.S. counterparts that "the best humanitarian aid you can give us is the weapons that we need to defend ourselves and defend ourselves now. Humanitarian aid in European nations is good, but many people are still refugees within Ukraine itself and do not have access to this support. We can win this war but only with the long-range weapons that we need to be able to defend ourselves." If we truly want to help Ukraine survive this attack, we need to heed their calls and provide them with the support they need.

Thank you in advance for strongly considering our request. We stand ready to offer any and all assistance Congress can provide in this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

cc: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff