



United States Must Continue to Provide Effective Assistance to Ukraine Help Ukraine Thwart Putin's Quest for Total Victory

Bottom Line Up Front:

- Russia continues to make very [limited and costly progress](#) in eastern Ukraine. However, Ukrainian forces have proven capable of holding ground and inflicting heavy casualties on the invaders. Ukraine has also launched a limited counter-offensive in the vicinity of occupied Kherson in the country's south.
- Military aid from the United States (U.S.) and Europe has been critical to evening the odds, [especially advanced missile and artillery systems](#) that allow Ukraine to strike Russian units deep behind the front lines.
- The U.S. believes that [over 15,000 Russian soldiers](#) have been killed fighting in Ukraine since February. Other estimates range as high as 35,000.
- Moscow is increasingly desperate for [new troops](#) to replace its battlefield losses. The Kremlin is reportedly [taking steps to annex parts of Russian-occupied southern and eastern Ukraine](#), but growing Ukrainian resistance is hampering Russia's ability to consolidate control. Increasingly, U.S. aid is critical to help Ukrainians drive back Putin's forces.

Background:

On February 24th of this year, the Russian military launched an unprovoked and unjustifiable multi-front invasion of neighboring Ukraine with the stated intention of decapitating Ukraine's government and installing a pro-Russian regime. Contrary to the expectations of many Western analysts, the Ukrainian Armed Forces and a mobilized civilian population successfully defended the capital—Kyiv—and other key cities, forcing Russian troops to withdraw and thwarting Putin's plans for a quick, decisive war.

Now entering its sixth month, the war has evolved into a grinding battle of attrition in Ukraine's eastern provinces. Russian forces currently occupy between 20 and 25 percent of Ukraine's territory, but are struggling to gain more ground. Russia has been credibly accused of committing numerous war crimes in Ukraine, including the [mass execution of civilians](#) in occupied areas and deliberate missile and air strike on [hospitals](#), residential neighborhoods, and fleeing refugees. The U.N. estimates [over 11,000 Ukrainian civilians have been killed or injured](#) in the fighting and [12 million have been forced to flee their homes](#).

The current invasion is the continuation of the Russian invasion of 2014 and Moscow's subsequent illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and creation of separatist puppet regimes in two eastern Ukrainian provinces.

Key Issues:

- **Western Weapons Make a Difference:** Weapons supplied by the U.S., E.U., and our NATO allies have been used to great effect by the Ukrainian Armed Forces to turn back the Russian advance. Early in the fighting, shoulder-mounted *Javelin* and *Stinger* missiles destroyed hundreds of Russian tanks and aircraft. More recently, [powerful long-range rocket systems](#) are helping Ukraine stabilize the front line. By contrast, [Moscow's inventory of guided missiles is fast depleting](#), limiting Russia's combat effectiveness.
- **Americans Want to Help Ukraine:** An overwhelming [bipartisan majority of Americans](#) support additional aid to Ukraine. [Seventy-one percent](#) of Americans believe the U.S. should continue sending weapons and ammunition to Ukraine and [seventy-five percent](#) want to maintain strict economic sanctions on Russia. Congress must ensure that military equipment and humanitarian assistance continues to flow to Ukraine when the current aid package expires in September.
- **Oversight Helps Ensure Victory:** Strong and sustained U.S. military, economic, and political support to Ukraine must be accompanied by rigorous oversight and accountability of taxpayer dollars. Robust oversight ensures that vital assistance to Ukraine is used efficiently and effectively to help the Ukrainians fight and win.
- **Putin Wants Total Victory:** Russian President Vladimir Putin and his senior officials regularly reiterate their demands for full Ukrainian surrender. Preparations to annex the newly-occupied parts of Ukraine demonstrate Moscow's intransigence. Putin seeks total victory, not an off-ramp. The West must help Ukraine defeat him.
- **Beijing is Watching:** U.S. defense experts believe that the People's Republic of China [could invade Taiwan within five years](#). Beijing is watching how the West responds to Russia's war of aggression—relaxing pressure on Putin now or insisting Kyiv cut a deal with Moscow would encourage China to think it could avoid the consequences of invading Taiwan. Beijing is already taking steps to sanctions-proof its economy.
- **Russia Weaponizing Food and Energy:** [Russia has restricted natural gas exports to Europe](#) in response to E.U. and NATO assistance to Ukraine, causing energy prices to skyrocket across the continent. Russian forces have also deliberately attacked and blockaded Ukrainian ports, grain fields, and storage facilities to prevent Kyiv from exporting the country's annual grain harvest. Because [Ukrainian exports feed over 400 million people annually](#), Russia's blockade threatens to drive multiple countries in Africa and the Middle East towards famine. Moscow hopes that food and energy crises will force the West to stop supplying aid to Ukraine or to pressure Kyiv to agree to a settlement favorable to Russia.