



PRIMER: Peace Through Sanctions

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As Russia continues its brutal assault against Ukraine, one thing has become unmistakably clear—Vladimir Putin does not want peace. Putin continues to obstruct efforts to reach a negotiated peace while drastically escalating attacks against Ukrainian civilians, even as Russia only is achieving menial gains in territory and suffering significant casualties. The Kremlin’s war machine is sustained by the substantial revenue Russia reaps from its vast oil and gas supply, revenue primarily coming from China and India. By expanding and enforcing U.S. sanctions against Russian energy exports, [an approach supported by Trump voters](#), the United States can impose real and meaningful financial costs for Putin’s intransigence and force Russia to take peace negotiations seriously.

PUTIN IS DOUBLING DOWN, NOT BACKING DOWN

Putin has shown no interest in peace, even as 2025 has been far from favorable for the Russian military. Analysts estimate that Russia has only gained about [0.2 percent](#) of additional territory so far in 2025, after only gaining 0.4 percent in all of 2024. Yet while his ground campaign continues to stall, Putin has increased Russia’s “air terror” tactics against Ukraine, resulting in a [37 percent](#) increase in Ukrainian civilian casualties between December 2024 and May 2025. In June 2025, [Russia launched](#) a record number of drones and more than 330 missiles, including nearly 80 ballistic missiles. Victims of Putin’s war campaign are not only Ukrainian, however. As he ramps up these barbaric attacks targeting Ukrainian civilians, Putin is also slaughtering his own people in the pursuit of his expansionist delusions. Russian casualties are currently around [40,000 soldiers](#) monthly and totaling [1 million](#) overall since 2022. Despite the death and destruction he is causing for both sides, Putin appears determined to continue the violence, increasing ballistic missile production by [66 percent](#) and aiming to increase Shahed drone production from [2,000 to 5,000 per month](#)—actions of a regime doubling down on war, not one seeking peace.

RUSSIA’S ENERGY EXPORTS KEEP PUTIN’S WAR EFFORT AFLOAT AND MUST BE STOPPED

Russia is powered by oil and natural gas sales, generating approximately [\\$120 billion](#) in revenue in 2024. A staggering [70 percent](#) of this comes from just two countries: India and China. This cash flow is essential to sustaining Russia’s [\\$140 billion](#) defense budget and, by extension, its aggression against the West. Importantly, Russia has found ways to [bypass](#) current U.S. sanctions as presently constructed and continue exporting energy. The Kremlin has developed a “shadow fleet” of oil tankers to disguise the oil’s origin, and Russia often utilizes non-G7 insurers, ship owners, and financial institutions to facilitate lucrative transactions. However, we know that sanctions can work. Earlier in 2025, the United States sanctioned [183 oil tankers](#) associated with Russia, and shadow tanker use for Russian crude oil transport subsequently has [fallen](#) from 81 percent in January to 65 percent in April 2025. To prevent Putin’s ability to continue funding his senseless war, it is time to cut off this revenue stream entirely.

TRUMP VOTERS BACK THESE TOUGHER ACTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA

As The Vandenberg Coalition’s June 2025 [poll](#) shows, 75 percent of Trump voters want to see the United States get tougher on sanctions against Russia for refusing to negotiate in good faith for peace. Additionally, over three quarters of the Trump voters polled view Russia as a threat to the United States. President Trump’s recent [criticism](#) of Putin’s obstinance is right on point with the views of his base. It is time to hold Putin accountable and achieve peace in Europe.