

**Commission on Security & Cooperation in Europe:
U.S. Helsinki Commission**

“Has the United Nations Failed Ukraine and the World?”

Committee Members Present:

**Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC), Chairman;
Representative Steve Cohen (D-TN), Ranking Member;
Representative Marc Veasey (D-TX);
Representative Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO);
Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT);
Representative Victoria Spartz (R-IN)**

Witnesses:

**Sergiy Kyslytsya, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the
United Nations;
Thomas Grant, Senior Research Fellow, University of Cambridge;
Natasha Hall, Senior Fellow, Middle East Program, CSIS**

**The Hearing Was Held From 2:05 p.m. To 3:21 p.m., Room 2200 Rayburn
House Office Building, Washington, D.C., Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC),
Chairman, Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe, presiding**

Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2023

WILSON: Ladies and gentlemen, the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe will come to order. The hearing today is very important in regard to addressing issues relative to the United Nations. I'd like to welcome everyone. I'm Joe Wilson, a member of Congress serving as the Commission chairman. And we're joined today by Congressman Steve Cohen of Tennessee and Congressman Marc Veasey of Texas, and we will be having other members come and go based on different meetings.

But we're just so grateful to be here with such very important witnesses on such important issues that we face today. And we want to thank everyone for coming today to the hearing to examine how the United Nations is failing those it claims to work on behalf of – on behalf of.

Russia has used its permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council to block the international response to its full-scale invasion and showcase its own propaganda. It has leveraged the negotiations – aid negotiations to shore up its dictator allies and strongmen – strongarm democracies and demand deals. Dictators use the platform provided by the United Nations to present themselves as good-faith actors even as they support terrorism, murder innocent civilians, and spread outright lies. Through its human rights bodies, the United Nations has even promoted a false equivalency between the human rights records of the United States and the dictatorships of Russia, China, and the regime in Tehran. It is clear to me that the United Nations is being run by dictatorial regimes and human rights abusers under the rule of gun rather than the world's democracies under the rule of law.

It does not need to be this way. War criminal Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has made the strongest case for reform of the United Nations. We are in a conflict that we did not choose between democracies based on rule of law and dictatorships, which are countries based on the rule of gun. Now we must think creatively to ensure that Putin and others cannot continue to abuse the system from within. If the United Nations continues to be hijacked by kleptocrats and murderers, the world's democracies must look at alternative mechanisms in international cooperation.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Russia took the permanent seat of the Soviet Union. This was an informal agreement based on the expectation that we all had that Russia would abide by international law. As is so clear, it is not, and Russia has forsaken its claim to the seat. Nothing entitles Russia to sit on the U.N. Security Council. As we will hear today, it would not be difficult to remove the Russian Federation if the United States would simply pursue this option.

I'm grateful to serve as chairman of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where I have seen firsthand how war criminal Putin, the regime in Tehran, and the Chinese Communist Party weaponizes the United Nations to support dictators. For example, in the case of Syria, Putin has leveraged Russia's position in the United Nations to prop up the puppet Bashar al-Assad at the expense of the lives and livelihoods of the Syrian people living under murderous oppression. After the recent earthquake, the United Nations, backed by Russia, prohibited aid from entering through northern Syria to help areas

worst affected by the earthquake and instead sent aid to regime areas that were stolen by corrupt Assad officials. In fact, according to the U.N.'s own report of procurement, U.N. operations in Syria delivered \$4 million to Syria's state-owned fuel industry, \$5 million to the blood banks operated by the Syrian Arab Army for the benefit of its troops, and \$8.5 million to charities co-opted by members of the Assad family including a charity run by the dictator's wife, Asma, the Syria Trust for Development.

I agree with President Barack Obama's ambassador to Syria, Robert Ford, who said, quote, "It is clear that the U.N. aid is not neutral and is being used as a weapon by the Syrian government." End of quote.

It is for this reason, by the Assad Regime Anti-Normalization Act, we'd impose sanctions on Asma Assad's corrupt charity as well as the other entities that steal from the people of Syria. This bill has broad bipartisan support, including from General H.R. McMaster and former Democratic National Committee Chair Howard Dean, and was drafted in consultation with the Syrian-American organizations who understand the realities of the situation.

Unfortunately, some NGOs, such as InterAction, which has formal representation at the United Nations, continue calling for radical changes to the bill, including removing language that prohibits normalization of the brutal regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria. This is a politicization of humanitarian assistance. This stance is strongly opposed by a coalition of Syrian and Syrian-American NGOs working on the ground courageously to deliver humanitarian aid to the people of Syria and who endorse the Assad Regime Anti-Normalization Act.

I would like to submit for the record a letter sent to me by InterAction sadly asking for the Assad Regime Anti-Normalization Act to be watered down, as well as the response by Syrian humanitarian organizations working to help the people of Syria who are under oppression. And without objection, they shall be admitted.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses how we can reform the United Nations into an organization that meets the realities of the 21st century.

I am pleased to welcome Dr. Thomas Grant, the senior research fellow at Cambridge University. Dr. Grant is an expert in international law and has previously worked closely with this Commission regarding efforts to remove Russia from the U.N. Security Council.

I'm also grateful that we have Ms. Natasha Hall, the senior fellow of Middle East Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Ms. Hall is an expert on U.N. aid and institutions and Russia's manipulation of these.

And we are particularly grateful for the very courageous ambassador of Ukraine to the United Nations, Sergiy Kyslytsya, and the permanent representative of Ukraine to the United Nations. He has a long and distinguished diplomatic career.

And I want to thank you for the hearing today. We look forward to hearing from you so that we can promote positive outcomes for those suffering.

And I now will be yielding to our colleague Congressman Steve Cohen, who is going to present, and you're going to see, a very bipartisan concern and appreciation that we have for the people of Ukraine.

COHEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate your calling this hearing and particularly having this bill before us today and having these witnesses who are here, and I appreciate your attendance.

The idea of taking Russia away from its Security Council seat at first blush is kind of bold, and it is bold. But when you have to – you have to think about it, which I hope you'll respond to – and I'm sure you will in your remarks – what's the purpose of the U.N.? Is it a debating society? We've got plenty of those at Princeton and Stanford and the University of Memphis. Why do we need a debating society in New York that costs so much money? If they're supposed to be protecting world peace, protecting countries from their borders being invaded by authoritarians who are, you know, land envy, land grabbers, then we don't need the U.N. That's what we've got.

And it was Soviet Union originally, now Russia. It's not to say Russia's not a military force and a political force, but it's not what it was when it was the Soviet Union. And we certainly know that from Putin's diatribe/soliloquy, whatever it was, in St. Petersburg when he conjured up Peter the Great and how it was wonderful when they had the Soviet Union and they needed to have it again. So he knows Russia's not what it was, and of course that's part of the reason he's in Ukraine. It's because he would like to put the Soviet Union back together.

Just about every kind of effort to advance peace and humanitarian aid, it gets killed in the Security Council because of Russia. And so it's really counter to the purpose of the U.N., just like it's pretty much counter to the OSCE. They've violated just about all of the Helsinki Accords, and then they – we've stopped them from coming to meetings. They show up occasionally, and when they have showed up we just kind of talk over them. We don't allow them to vote. But they have violated every Helsinki Accord and the idea that they'd be voting on measures that would affect them and affect Ukraine's efforts to remain a free and democratic country is difficult. So it's an analogous situation.

So I look forward to you telling us what the U.N.'s purpose was, what was Woodrow Wilson thinking back with the League of Nations, what was, you know, the whole idea of bringing the U.N. together, which is kind of League of Nations part two. What's it supposed to serve? What's the Security Council supposed to serve, other than, you know, bringing together those five powers. Maybe we could take the Russia seat and let it be divided among the BRICS countries minus China, who's got their spot, and let Brazil and India have a time. You know, Russia, besides its nuclear arsenal, is really not superior to – I guess economically and in other ways – than to India, and so maybe India deserves that seat. Brazil might deserve it. But they would certainly – they would less likely be hindrances to the mission of the U.N.

So I thank you for having the meeting and thank you for your attendance. And I look forward to your statements about the U.N. and how we can go about improving the U.N.,

whether it's getting Russia off the Security Council or other ways to reform the Security Council where it doesn't blockade good measures.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time. And I hope that was bipartisan. I was thinking about Everett Dirksen all the time I was talking.

WILSON: Thank you very much, Congressman Cohen. And indeed, we've been joined by Congressman Emanuel Cleaver from the beautiful state of Missouri, and so we're very fortunate.

And so we will begin. And what we would like to do is each individual will have five minutes and then, if you have additional comments, they can be provided for the record. And then, following that, we would be asking – members of the Commission will be asking questions. And they, too, will be limited, including me; five minutes.

And so, with that, Dr. Grant.

GRANT: Good afternoon. Thank you, Chairman Wilson, and thank you, Congressman Cohen, and thank you, Congressman Cleaver. Thank you to the Commission for inviting me to testify on the question, "Has the United Nations Failed Ukraine and the World?"

My name is Thomas D. Grant. I am a senior fellow of the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law at the University of Cambridge. I also serve on the executive board of the Initiative on Leadership in International Trade and Security at the George Washington University. My testimony today is mine alone and does not necessarily reflect the views of any organization or other individual.

I respectfully ask the Commission to add my full written testimony to the Congressional Record.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine is the most serious violation of the U.N. Charter in the Charter's history. Yet, Russia continues to fill the seat of a permanent member in the U.N. Security Council.

To address this challenge, your ranking member, Congressman Cohen, and chairman, Congressman Wilson, have introduced a resolution, H.Res. 267. In H.Res. 267, Congressmen Cohen and Wilson recall the many agreements Russia has broken, threats Russia has made, and crimes Russia has perpetrated. The resolution would find Russia's continued presence in the U.N. Security Council itself to be a violation of the U.N. Charter and would urge our executive branch to pursue an appropriate remedy.

In my testimony today, first, I will address specific practical reasons we should seek to curtail Russia's presence in the Council; and second, I will suggest how we might achieve that remedy.

So, first, reasons we should seek to curtail Russia's presence. Regarding the U.N. Security Council, Russia exploits the Council as a bully pulpit. From the seat it fills, Russia tries to divert attention from its wrongdoing and it seeks to propagate factitious claims against the very countries and peoples who are the targets of Russia's aggression. But moreover, Russia wields the veto of one of the five permanent members in the Security Council. So doing, Russia blocks initiatives that would hold Russia to account. In particular, because Russia wields a veto, the Council cannot take steps on asset seizure and asset forfeiture and steps that would help make sure that it's Russia who pays for the harm that Russia has inflicted.

To move to my second point, how we might curtail Russia's presence in the U.N. Security Council. The U.N. Charter provides for the expulsion outright of a member that has persistently violated the principles of the U.N. Charter. The problem is expulsion is subject to permanent-member veto. No doubt Russia would veto an attempt to expel Russia. But that's not the end of the story.

One of the principal organs of the United Nations has used credentials procedure to curtail the presence of certain members in the U.N. The General Assembly used credentials procedure to exclude Taiwan. It was in 1971 and, unfortunately, Taiwan remains excluded from the U.N. to this day. By contrast, however, in other cases the Assembly has used credentials procedure for beneficial effect. In 1956, it used credentials procedure to prevent the USSR's puppet regime in Hungary from participating in the U.N. Then, in 1974, it again used credentials procedure, this time to reject the representation of apartheid South Africa at the U.N.

The U.N. Security Council has its own credentials procedure. Under the procedure, any member of the Council may raise objection against the presence of any other member. The vote on an objection takes place under the Council's procedural rules. As a procedural vote, the vote is not subject to permanent-member veto. If nine members vote to uphold the objection, then the objection stands and the member against whom the objection was made does not get to fill a Security Council seat. This is a remedy that the Council in principle could use in effect to curtail Russia's presence in the Council.

So, to summarize, Russia's presence in the U.N. Security Council prevents necessary action in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The U.N.'s own precedents and procedures suggest a remedy.

Thank you, Chairman Wilson and members of the Commission, for the privilege of testifying today. I look forward to the discussion on this important issue.

WILSON: Dr. Grant, thank you so much. And I can't wait to get a little bit further on the remedy that you mentioned, how positive that could be.

We now are grateful that we have Ambassador Kyslytsya, who is serving his wonderful country as the – Ukraine's ambassador to the United Nations. And, Ambassador Kyslytsya, thank you so much for being here today.

KYSLYTSYA: Well, thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank you and your fellow members of the Commission for initiating this discussion, which is an important topic for Ukraine, for the United States, and for the world.

Let us not forget that the long list of Russia's occupations – in the long list of the Russians' occupations, the first one was the occupation of the permanent seat of the USSR, followed by the occupation of part of Transnistria, followed by the occupation of Georgia, followed by attempted annexation of Crimea and temporary occupation of Crimea. But we have to remember that the first act of occupation happened in 1991 in December.

My president has addressed the General Assembly last week and the Security Council, and I will submit for the record both speeches of President Zelensky. But I would like to quote from one of his speeches last week where he speaks about the seat in the Security Council. And I quote: "this seat in the Security Council, which Russia occupied illegally through backstage manipulations following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and all of the – all of the U.N. actions that could have stopped this aggression, are shattered by the privilege granted by this seat to the aggressor. Veto power in the hands of the aggressor is what has pushed the U.N. into dead end." And more extended version members of the Commission can see in the speech.

But I would like to bring you back not even to San Francisco of May 1945. I would like to bring you back to February 1945, and that's the Yalta conference. And during the Yalta conference, there was a very memorable conversation between Stalin and Prime Minister Churchill. Stalin insisted that only three big powers should decide in the future about world affairs and that no other powers should be allowed to decide. To which Prime Minister Churchill quoted Shakespeare, and he said, "The eagle should permit the small birds to sing and care not wherefore they sing." To which Stalin agreed, and he got the idea that the future organization will be designed in a manner that would absolutely give no chance to take all the powers from the Soviet Union. And that is why invading the permanent seat in the Security Council was so fundamentally important for Russia.

We can speak hours and hours about how it happened. I can show you the correspondence between the legal counsel of the U.N. and the secretary-general. As late as 19th of December 1991, the legal counsel of the United Nations presented the secretary-general with three options. And he said, whatever the options is – will be, there is a need for the vote both in the Security Council and in the General Assembly. It never happened. You can go and you can open the report of the Security Council sent to the General Assembly in June 1992, where you will read that the letter sent by Yeltsin where he expressed his intention to continue the membership of the Soviet Union is under the chapter "Matters Brought to the Attention of the Security Council But Not Discussed in the Council During the Period Covered."

And that is a fundamental issue. The fundamental issue is how soon we in New York and in the capitals will be able to call a spade a spade and to start discussions – not necessarily in public, because some sensitive discussions should be away from journalism, from media, but they have to start these discussions. And we should not really wait until the end of military phase of the conflict in Ukraine because let me remind you that the world leaders were discussing the future world order back in February in Yalta long before the collapse and the

defeat – military defeat of the Hitler regime in May 1945. So I think that that’s a fundamental point, and I’m willing to contribute to this discussion as ambassador.

And I would like to express my profound gratitude to the U.S. Mission in New York because I believed that there were never times as today that we would cooperate so closely and that we’d coordinate and consult each other almost daily. The last meeting I had with the U.S. permanent representative in New York was this morning at 7:45 before we left for Washington, D.C.

Thank you.

WILSON: Ambassador, thank you very much. And you and the people of Ukraine are indeed a(n) inspiration to the people of the world.

And we’re so fortunate to have Natasha Hall. She’s a senior fellow at the Middle East Program of the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a person who is so familiar with the United Nations. And so, Ms. Hall, thank you for your being here today.

HALL: Thank you, Chairman Wilson, Representative Cohen, Representative Cleaver. I’m honored to share my views with you today on this important topic. Thank you for the invitation.

CSIS, I should say, does not take policy positions, so the views represented in this testimony are my own and not those of my employer. They are also informed by over 10 years of working on Syria, both from the humanitarian and civilian-protection sectors.

Congress founded this very Commission to unite the countries of Europe and the United States around core values of human rights and humanitarian principles, but what we are seeing today is that authoritarian regimes and particularly Russia are undermining these principles around the world. For many, Russia’s actions in Ukraine crystalize this threat. However, I believe that their tactics were more clearly distilled during the Syrian conflict. In Syria, the Assad regime and Russia presented a successful blueprint for how to exploit the benefits of these core principles while simultaneously undermining them. Through lessons learned in Syria, I believe the United States will be better able to confront these challenges to vital multilateral institutions and humanitarian assistance.

Early on in the Syrian conflict, the Assad regime learned to access resources and support from the very multilateral institutions they sought to undermine. Taking advantage of the United Nations agencies’ mandate to provide aid, the regime allowed U.N. agencies to stay in Damascus under certain conditions. In doing so, they extracted unprecedented compromises from the humanitarian community.

For the first time, the U.N. allowed a government-affiliated air organization with military escorts to deliver aid to areas that were in rebellion with the same government. As a result, these convoys were stopped, damaged, or diverted to loyalists throughout the war.

As the conflict dragged on, control over international humanitarian assistance in Damascus allowed the regime to provide line edits to humanitarian reports and cover up brutal sieges, effectively flipping the scripts on the conflict itself. Most infamously, the U.N. failed to publicize the siege of Madaya until international media outlets reported on the starvation of children in the area.

Seeking to stay in the good graces of the government, aid organizations have resorted to giving incentives to the regime to continue working. More recently, the Associated Press reported that the head of the World Health Organization gave gold coins, cars, and contracts to Syrian regime officials. And I have submitted other examples as part of my written testimony.

But this is a larger story than aid diversion. These regimes have learned to use humanitarian negotiations to gain legitimacy on the international stage, as high-level U.N. and government officials must curry favor with them for access when their unsavory military tactics would otherwise cause them to be sidelined.

We have seen these strategies elsewhere, including in Myanmar, Sudan, and Ukraine. For example, in Myanmar, the military junta has used these humanitarian negotiations to legitimize their role as the primary international interlocutor and decisionmaker regarding aid.

Russia and China's protection of the Syrian regime and the aforementioned actors at the international level fuels authoritarian impunity in Syria and other countries. On this point, I have tracked the budding alliance between Russia and China during the Syrian conflict as they defended the regime's right to obstruct humanitarian aid. In fact, since 1971, 10 of the 18 PRC's vetoes have been to protect the Assad regime during the Syrian conflict. Those watching Syria closely should not have been surprised by China's reaction to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Russia has also directly used these tactics with the U.N. in both Ukraine and Syria. The U.N. Security Council resolution on Syrian cross-border assistance and the Black Sea Grain Initiative were both initially hailed as great diplomatic successes to mitigate humanitarian suffering. However, Russia used these deals to maintain leverage over the international community and gain concessions. In both instances, they shortened the time between renewals in order to maintain greater control over the process. They also gradually whittled away the benefits of both deals. In Syria, they shut down border crossings. And in Ukraine, they severely constricted exports by slowing the inspection process.

Understanding the leverage that this granted Russia, a warring party, both Syrians and Ukrainians have insisted on finding alternatives. Russia then terminated both deals this summer. Still lacking alternatives, U.N. cross-border aid for Syrians is now back under the thumb of the very regime which systematically cut them off for over a decade. Ukrainians are now scrambling to find alternative routes while world food prices continue to surge. In the meantime, Russia continues to blame the United States for the resulting suffering. In other words, Russia benefits from setting the world on fire and blaming the West for lighting the match.

The answer to this dilemma does not lie in turning away from the United Nations, which is an essential diplomatic and humanitarian forum. On the contrary, this is time for the United

States to lean in. When we withdraw from the U.N., China and Russia fill the vacuum. However, relying on stultified and manipulated U.N. negotiations to deliver peace and aid for years if not decades is fueling war economies and undermining humanitarian principles.

So what should we do about it? I would provide three very feasible recommendations, and I'm happy to provide measures to actually get to these recommendations.

First, the United – the United States should aim to remove humanitarian assistance from the remit of the Security Council. Lifesaving assistance should not be subject to great-power competition.

Second, the countries where peace negotiations are stalled and U.N. agencies are cut off from populations for extended periods, the United States needs to work with its allies to find alternatives. NGOs, and local NGOs in particular, can be this alternative. Localization of aid is more cost effective, and these actors often have better access to populations that are blocked by warring parties.

And finally, funding for humanitarian aid should not be cut. On the contrary, more aid is desperately needed in Syria and worldwide. But it needs to be coupled with a coherent strategy to end conflicts and counter corruption. Without that strategy, aid can fall prey to war economies, exacerbating the drivers of conflict and instability.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I look forward to your questions.

WILSON: Thank you, Ms. Hall. Thank you very much. And thank each of the witnesses.

And we've been joined by Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut. And so, indeed, this is a very unique Commission. It includes members of the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. And then we also have wonderful staff people who are available to receive information to help the world understand how important it is that we work together as we face issues such as a(n) invasion by Ukraine.

We will now begin with the five minutes beginning with me, and they will strictly enforce it.

And so I – at this time, I want to thank Ambassador Kyslytsya. Gosh, your courage to have to be where you are is incredible.

And I want to thank you for something that you did. You immediately really began by pointing out that the invasion of Ukraine actually followed the illegal occupation of Transnistria in Moldova; Abkhazia and South Ossetia of the Republic of Georgia; and then of course it led to the occupation of Crimea, 2008; and then the invasion, 2014, of eastern Ukraine. And one thing that I regret more people don't recognize, 11,000 people were killed as the first occupation of Ukraine occurred. And then where we are today. And indeed, it's an indication with the threats that we have to the Baltic republics beginning with Estonia, then to Lithuania directly and

Latvia, and then the claims by the Russian Federation of the need to realign the international boundaries of Poland. Your success is just an inspiration to us, but as a way to deter future aggression.

With that in mind, you have a thick skin. How do you handle, as you serve Ukraine in the United Nations, the duplicity that you have to hear over and over again? And how do you work with your other – with other countries on, indeed, disclosing the truth?

KYSLYTSYA: Well, thank you. One thing I would like to mention is that if you look at the General Assembly, where 193 countries are present, it is the picture of the world as it is. And unlike the pictures in your computer, you cannot Photoshop it. Which means that every single ambassador, including myself and my American, my British, my Lithuanian colleague, we have to work 24/7 with every single country. And every single country there has its particular interests. And then we have to identify these interests, and then we have to decide how we find the balance without breaking our integrity and our national interests in order to be able to listen to them and, as possible, to accommodate their interests and engage them to work with us in return.

And I think that we all failed on many things. We all failed on Africa, for example. Everyone – the European Union, Ukraine, the United States – we all have to review what we do in that part of the world, and it requires a very continued and everyday interest demonstrated to all of them. And it requires a lot of human resources. It requires a lot of ingenuity and creativity.

The League of Nation(s) failed because the United States was not there from the very outset. It never joined, and we know the result: the Second World War broke out. It is our enemies and our opponents who would like us to be not present in the whole of the General Assembly, because then they will rule the world with our presence and we would not annoy them. So the thing is how to find this equilibrium between our immediate needs and the legitimate needs of many other countries around the world.

WILSON: Thank you so much.

And Dr. Grant, on a number of visits that I had across the Russian Federation I was so impressed by the people I met I just had such high hopes. And so it didn't surprise me that, of course, they would be the successor to the Soviet Union, but how that has just turned out so faulty with the dictatorship, your remedy just sounds incredible. Is any country taking a lead on trying to address removal of the Russian – I call it Putin.

GRANT: Chairman Wilson, that's a very important question, because to have a procedure in the abstract is one thing; to actually make it operate in reality on the ground, that's quite a different thing. It's the difference between legal procedure and the politics needed to actually generate interest in making the procedure work.

As the ambassador would understand, of course, Ukraine itself is very much in the forefront of drawing attention to Russia's malign activity in the U.N. Our own delegation and

our own permanent representative have done very good work calling out the Russians on some of their worst behavior at the U.N.

As to actually moving forward on the procedure, it would take a great deal of behind-the-scenes work. It would take a lot of very careful diplomatic measurement of the temperature, so to speak, of the various countries that you would need to get this operative procedural majority of nine members. Without the – you know, on – without being present on the ground, it would be presumptuous, you know, to take a guess of exactly, you know, how the politics is lining up.

So short answer is I think it's on people's minds. Longer answer: It would take a lot of work to actually bring together the coalition to get that procedural vote.

WILSON: Well, it certainly is intriguing, as many of us feel like we're living in September 1939 and the aggression by Hitler then and now Putin today.

As we proceed, now Congressman Steve Cohen of Tennessee.

COHEN: Yield my time right now to Mr. Blumenthal, since he hadn't had a chance to make an opening statement.

WILSON: Absolutely.

BLUMENTHAL: Thank you to my colleague from Tennessee. Really appreciate it. And thank you to the chair.

And this is a(n) absolutely extraordinary panel. Each of you has worked so hard on behalf of the humanitarian principles and rule of law and basic civil liberties and independence that are so vitally at stake in Ukraine. I've been to Ukraine four times in the last 18 months and have had an opportunity to meet with President Zelensky on numerous occasions.

The U.N. has been AWOL in this conflict. I sat last night with the prosecutor general of Ukraine talking about the kidnapping of children, the – in effect, the detaining of innocent adults as well as children in Russia and Belarus. This seems to me an ongoing war crime in real time. I visited the mass graves in Bucha where innocent women and children had their hands tied behind their back and they were shot in the head. That is a past crime. What we're seeing now is an ongoing war crime, an atrocity.

So I wonder, you know, if I can ask all of you this question: Shouldn't there be a way of raising in the U.N. – I know there's the International Court of Criminal Justice, an arrest warrant has been issued for Vladimir Putin – but shouldn't the U.N. be rallying around an effort to stop this ongoing war crime that's happening right before the world's eyes in real time? Ambassador?

KYSLYTSYA: The thing is that the United Nations is almost exclusively seen by public and by many politicians through the prism and the optics of the Security Council, which is totally blocked for a very well-known reason. But we also have to acknowledge the power of the

General Assembly, which is another pillar of the United Nations. And the General Assembly has been very powerful. I mean, the General Assembly has approved six resolutions since March 2022, and those resolutions helped inform not only public but the opinion of many parliamentarians around the world. All those resolutions are used in the national proceedings in courts or in the international courts.

But let me ask everyone present here a question, a very simple one. Imagine Russia is stripped of its veto right in the Security Council. Imagine we draft a resolution; we put it to a vote in the Security Council that literally reads stop the war, withdraw your troops; and that resolution is carried by the Security Council; and that resolution is sent to the Kremlin; and that resolution ends on the desk of Putin and he reads this resolution. What do you think happens next? Will he call Shoigu, his defense minister, and tell, oh, Shoigu, listen, there was a resolution by the Security Council; let's withdraw troops? No, it will not happen. And it will not happen because we have to deal with a dictator who cannot give monkeys about what Security Council, what U.S. Congress, what the General Assembly, what the ICJ – the International Court of Justice – believe, because we have to deal with someone who is beyond our control – unless we use real force, real hard force to stop him.

So when we discuss the future architecture of the United Nations, we have to think very carefully whether we will trust the United Nations with the leverages to deal with the kind of dictators who would not be able to escape the punishment if they do similar things.

BLUMENTHAL: Any of the other witnesses have a comment?

GRANT: Senator, thank you very much for the – for the question and the observations.

My only comment would be the ongoing war crimes are of extraordinary nature. It's the mass kidnapping of children. It's so beyond what you would expect any major country to have engaged in that it really should shine a spotlight on this question of Russia's participation in any of the international bodies that we participate in as well, including the Security Council, because it's simply so far beyond anything you would have imagined possible in the post-1945 period. You would have thought this sort of thing was in the distant past.

So only I'll just amplify the point you made. It's important, really important.

BLUMENTHAL: Thank you.

HALL: Thank you, Congressman (sic; Senator) Blumenthal.

I mean, I would just say this goes back to the original question: What is the role of the United Nations and what is the role of the United States? Because the United Nations is a composition of nations and different councils and commissions. And if the only thing stopping us is the Security Council in terms of stopping Russia's actions, that's one thing. I think if it's – if it goes beyond that, then the United Nations needs to maintain a neutral stance so that it can negotiate in the future hopefully for an end to this conflict, but also other conflicts that we know will happen in the future.

And I would simply say that – reiterate the representative’s point about the General Assembly, that this is really the time to lean into the General Assembly and be very diplomatic with a number of nations on many of the recommendations that we have, including removing humanitarian assistance from the Security Council.

BLUMENTHAL: Thank you.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

WILSON: Thank you very much, Senator.

And at this time we’ll proceed, and I’d like to go back to Congressman Cohen. He’s just been too generous, and so – to defer. Can you believe he would defer to a member of the House of Lords? But he did, OK? (Laughter.) And who have – that’s startling. And so I don’t mean to put down our other colleagues, but Congressman Cohen, please.

COHEN: My visa may expire while he’s talking, so. (Laughter.)

WILSON: Well, hey, you’re appreciated, I can assure you.

COHEN: That was easy to yield my time to Mr. Blumenthal because he does not act in a lordly fashion.

What has the U.N. done to stymie efforts with Ukraine, Mr. Ambassador? What has occurred that you would like to have seen done differently?

KYSLYTSYA: If we go back to the end of 2021 and the very beginning of 2022, and we read all the reports and statements made by the U.S. intelligence and the U.K. intelligence about the imminent nature of the threat of invasion, we can see how reluctant the United Nations as a body was to address the issue and how reluctant the membership of the Security Council beyond the United States and the U.K. was to take it onboard – how the secretary-general was making statements publicly in the press stakeouts that he was never asked to intervene into the negotiations between the United States and Ukraine and Russia and everyone. He, however, had changed dramatically his position on the night of the 23rd, which was still the night of the 23rd – the 24th already in Europe.

So the thing is that the United Nations as a body, and the Security Council in particular – because it is the Security Council that is trusted – it was trusted in San Francisco to act on behalf of everyone on the issue of prevention of conflicts. So it’s the primary responsibility of the body of the Security Council to act, and it didn’t. So that could have been done much better should the Security Council was designed differently in – and I want to go back again – in Yalta, not in San Francisco.

And we have to review this design, but we have to review that design not to undermine the strengths of democratic countries in the United Nations. But we have to undermine the ability of rogue states and of dictators to manipulate with the design to block everything.

COHEN: Was that ever brought up in Yalta, the idea that one of the five might be the invader and be the bad guy? Or was there – was there an attitude of kumbaya?

KYSLYTSYA: Well, Yalta was, as we all remember, not even the P5. Yalta was the meeting of two elderly gentlemen and one dictator. So it was the United States, the U.K., and the Soviet Union. France was invited at a very late stage. There was even a discussion in Yalta whether France should even be allowed to have the occupation sector in Germany. China was invited also at a very late stage. So the major deal was done in Yalta long before all of us landed in San Francisco, and this started long discussions about the language of what is now known of the U.N. Charter.

And I would like to remind all of us for the record that the first chapter of the U.N. Charter, which is called “Purposes and Principles,” through a tragic irony was written by the Ukrainian delegation in San Francisco. It was the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the head of the delegation of Ukraine in San Francisco who was heading the working group that prepared the draft of the U.N. Charter that is today called “Purposes and Principles.”

But once again, I say – and I repeat myself – that the major breakthroughs in the designs or architecture of the world security happened after the major conflicts. And the war against Ukraine is a major conflict, and we should not really allow that it just happened like, you know, the military phase is over; let’s go back to business as usual. That would be the most dramatic mistake.

The United Nations plans to hold the summit next September that is called the Summit of the Future. Imagine, it will take place next September. And we should work very hard not to allow that summit to end up like yet another summit, yet another marathon of statements by world leaders. If we really want to speak next September in New York about the future, we have to start a discussion about the future architecture of – global future architecture of security, and we have to discuss where the United Nations will be in the future architecture. Not to have the United Nations is not an option.

COHEN: You ever have the urge to punch the Russian ambassador? (Laughter.)

I yield back my time. (Laughs.)

KYSLYTSYA: You know, I was – I thought about it several times, but then I realized – (laughter) – then I realized that I should not allow his toxic lies to eat me from outside and I should not allow my emotions to eat me from inside, because then I would not be operational. And my government sent me to New York not to be emotional or, you know, pathetic; my government sent me to New York to defend my country.

COHEN: If you ever have that thought again, invite Mr. – Mayor Klitschko to come help you. (Laughter.)

KYSLYTSYA: Oh my God. (Laughter.) You know, I tell you – I mean, I tell you, not to praise myself but to praise the colleagues of mine who sit daily in the Security Council, that it's a very poisonous atmosphere in the Security Council. And I know some colleagues who, while listening to the Russians, they basically – they cover their face with hands because they are so disgusted. And they have a lot of sympathy, by the way, to the interpreters who have to interpret all those speeches, endless torrent of lies – of lies daily. That's terrible. So we have to show our sympathy, you know, seriously.

COHEN: Thank you, sir.

WILSON: Thank you, Congressman Cohen, even though you were provocative.

We now – (laughter) – much less provocative would be Congressman Marc Veasey, all the way from Texas.

VEASEY: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

And this is – I think this is a very interesting subject, obviously, just because of some of the dynamics that are happening right now in the international community and, you know, here in our own country and even in different parts of the world. We're trying to make sure that we shore up support for Ukraine being able to push back on Russia's unlawful invasion of the country, and so a lot of these questions about the U.N. and the role that they're playing I think is a – is a very important question to discuss.

And I was really hoping that you could kind of talk about how the structure and dynamics of the U.N. change so that democracies are more often able to ensure that international law is upheld. I don't know if Dr. Grant could maybe touch on that some, or Mrs. Hall.

GRANT: Congressman Veasey, thank you very much for that question. It's really important. That's a large part of what we're talking about today, exactly what do we do with this structure that the United States has invested so much into over 78 years, literally billions a year, and magnify that across almost three generations. Our commitment's very long and deep, so we'd like to find a way to make it work.

Difficulty is we – the United Nations has developed into a forum with 193 participating states. A great deal of emphasis has been placed simply on having an open forum for everybody on an equal footing. Now, as far as it goes, that's probably a good thing in a world with so many complexities and potential conflicts. You want a chance for everyone to have a place to speak and express a country's concerns. The difficulty, though, is with that many participants, and some of which are dictatorships, some of which are – thankfully, only a small number of which are close to Russia, it's difficult to achieve the consensus that you need on bodies that are very much consensus-driven.

The Council, because of the permanent-member veto, can only take the legally-binding Chapter VII measures with the concurring votes of the permanent members. Now, that inbuilt limit is a good thing in the sense that it makes sure the U.N. does not do too much, but it's not a very good thing when you have a crisis where you need the U.N. to do something. Which – and going back to Congressman Cohen's question, what has the – what have – what has the organization actually done since the all-out invasion began in 2022 of Ukraine, I mean, one thing which might also go to Chairman Wilson's question about measuring the politics and the support for action, the Security Council very quickly voted on procedural grounds – so that's a procedural vote not subject to veto – to convene an emergency special session of the General Assembly. Now, the emergency special session is called on request of the Council by procedural vote; it had not happened for close to two generations. That's the first time – it doesn't happen every day. Been over 40 years since that had happened. So the Council did rally to the extent necessary to call the Assembly into emergency special session.

And the second thing that we saw is once the Assembly convened in that special procedure, it did adopt these six successive resolutions supporting Ukraine, and every one of those resolutions has really big majorities. That gives me some cautious optimism.

Of all those six resolutions, one that really stands out for practical reasons is the November 2022 resolution, which I think merits a close look. In that resolution, the Assembly called for the creation of a special register of war damages to keep a tally on the harm Russia is inflicting on Ukraine, on Ukraine's citizens, and on other interests that have been adversely affected. That's unique. You don't see that every day. So the register of damages is – it's a modest step. It's not enough in itself. But it's a necessary preliminary step to start saying, look, this war that Russia has perpetrated has had enormous costs in human terms, and I'm afraid to say you can financialize that as well, and as a step in that direction. So, again, cautious optimism, but still some optimism that that sort of measure could be taken.

VEASEY: Yeah. Really quickly because the time is expiring here, do you think that there is hope for a renewed grain deal, especially with some of the success that Ukraine has had against the Black Sea Fleet?

HALL: Yeah. So I actually just heard more on this this morning. It is at an impasse, and this speaks quite a bit to the Russian extortion that I'm talking about because apparently there has been a deal to work with a subsidiary of the agricultural bank in Russia to be able to export their food, grain, fertilizer. But the Russians do not want to accept it, and they would like to work through the agricultural bank in Moscow, and so it's currently at an impasse. And I think this sort of points to a larger problem: that we rely on the U.N. quite a bit in a multipolar world, and prior to Russia essentially blowing up the deal this summer the secretary-general was essentially waiting on those negotiations to address a whole range of humanitarian issues throughout the world, hoping that it would get the Russian deal prior to that. So we also don't want, you know, peace or humanitarian aid to be held hostage to such negotiations. But it's also looking like the Ukrainians – and I'm sure the representative could speak more to that – are starting to find effective alternatives. Yeah.

WILSON: Thank you very much, Congressman Veasey.

We now proceed to Congressman Emanuel Cleaver of Missouri.

CLEAVER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me follow up with that issue raised by Mr. Veasey. You know, I find myself going back and forth on the issue of Russian participation or membership on the 15-member Security Council. And I don't – you know, I don't think they have merited participation on the Security Council. I'm not even sure they've merited being in the United Nations since they've already violated Section 2(4). And I'm just curious, is there – is there more damage being done because we have – we are simply kind of ignoring their violations as it relates to the Security Council? Is the danger greater if they're not a participant? Anyone.

GRANT: Congressman Cleaver, that's a really important question. If we're talking about a remedy, we have to make sure the remedy's not worse than the thing that we're actually trying to address.

So looking at downsides, well, the thing is, people value the U.N. as this universal forum. The thing is, within the U.N. the General Assembly, in a plan that actually succeeded in removing Russia from a voting presence in the Council would still be open. So you wouldn't be talking about a complete mute switch on all Russian participation. To take the South African apartheid example in 1974, they could still get in the building. They could still put papers in the system and receive papers. But they couldn't vote. And in a way, that seems like a sensible approach.

You wouldn't want to completely isolate even the worst country in the history of the world; you'd want some channel. And I hear your question to go to that concern, that at least, you know, we have some channel. I think this – the remedy of sort of a pause on their participation would preserve that opening so they're not completely boxed into a corner for the future.

KYSLYTSYA: If I may, before we reach the stage of expulsion or removal of the Russian Federation, that's the case with all the problems. We have to acknowledge the existence of the problem, whatever the problem is. And you can ask your staff members to make a compilation of statements of the member states of the United Nations of how many of them looked into the eye of the Russian ambassador and said, Mr. Ambassador, your actions are not compatible with the criteria of the membership, in a formal session. I can guarantee you that you would have less than half a page to report to you, because it's one thing that we have this discussion in this setting; it's another thing that we have a discussion with the expert community, journalists, members of the parliaments. But if you go on record and if you look into the record of the Security Council formal meetings, it's only me who starts – it's only I, sorry, who start every statement in the Security Council who says, I acknowledge the presence of the Russian Federation in the Soviet seat.

So we have to reach the point where we are able to call a spade a spade. We have to brave – to be brave enough to say: Mr. Ambassador of the Russian Federation, the actions of

your country are totally incompatible with your status. And we have not reached this point, unfortunately.

You know, one of the things I would like to bring your attention to, I mean, there are many, many – more than 100 groups of friends in the United Nations. I have a whole list. There is a very important group of friends on defense of the Charter of the United Nations. Do you know who are the founders of this group of friends? Belarus, North Korea, Iran, Nicaragua, Russia, Syria, Venezuela. So the level of hypocrisy in New York is extraordinary – extraordinary – and it takes real courage for many ambassadors to be able to call a spade a spade. I am sorry if I repeat myself.

CLEAVER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WILSON: Thank you very much, Congressman Cleaver.

And now we're joined by Congresswoman Victoria Spartz, who has a very unique perspective. She was born in the Soviet Union. And we're so grateful for her relocation to Indiana with her Ukrainian heritage. Congresswoman Spartz.

SPARTZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here. I apologize for being late. We're dealing with a lot of fiscal issues, and as a CPA, unfortunately, who understand finances – (laughs) – and understand numbers are very important.

But as someone who grew up in the former Soviet Union, Ukraine now, I, you know, had to get involved with a lot of foreign policy issues that I didn't plan to get involved last year. And when I – you know – you know, I know enough to be dangerous about numbers, so I'm very dangerous with numbers, but I had to go on the ground to understand a lot of things and issues that were happening in Europe, around the world in foreign policy. And now, you know, I wouldn't claim that I know enough to be dangerous about Javelins, but when I don't know about Javelins I talk to people who know. The same; when I don't know, I talk to people on the ground.

And I was very shocked, very surprised, and very disturbed to see what the United Nations is and how lack of their presence, and the money was spent, and where people were really dying. People are dying in Ukraine; I haven't seen them. We had a lot of refugees in Poland; I haven't seen them. I went to the Middle East to a lot of countries like Syria, Yemen, and a lot of other ones too. It's sad for me to see.

It was interesting for me, when we talk to some of our allies they say, Victoria, we're not giving money to these corrupt organizations. You know, American people are very generous, but we're not fools and we want to make sure that the issues we support, you know, actually go to the people. They're dealing with some real serious life-and-death situations.

So I just kind of – this hearing is very timely. I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, really to looking at that because we are actually doing funding now. And guess what? Congress has authority where we spend money. We don't use it – (laughs) – as wisely as we should. And I actually have amendment that passed through the Rules Committee and is going to be on the floor to actually not to provide unauthorized programs by Congress money to U.N. All funding that wasn't authorized by Congress should not be provided by secretary of state to the U.N. I haven't seen them serving the people. I haven't seen them using American money of American taxpayers wisely. And we borrowing a lot of money, so we want to make sure. And it is my responsibility as a congresswoman, you know.

So I have some thoughts, but I also want to get your thoughts. I know you've shared that. But you know, if you think – because, you know, American taxpayers spend a lot of money to a lot of these international organization. They failed not just Ukraine, you know. And you know, there is a huge discussion in the reform. You know, they were set up for different purposes after Cold War. But ultimately, we have a major war like that and we have millions of people dying in Africa, then it means this organization's not working and we need to be serious.

So what thoughts you have how Americans, and we as Congress, we can be wiser and better with money? And maybe we'll just go through each of you to make sure, because, ultimately, every mission is driven by money. And how we can do better? Because there are a lot of lives that are lost because maybe we're not doing as good job, too. Ms. Hall?

HALL: Yes. Thank you for your remarks, Congresswoman Spartz. I appreciate that.

As someone who has seen aid manipulation firsthand and I've reported on it for years, I think it's one thing to continue to monitor U.N. aid, which is something that I have advocated for, but the resources to do that are missing. And so we actually need additional resources to do that.

The other element that's missing – and this is – this is the critical element – is what the U.S. government and its allies are willing to do together with that information. And that has also been sorely lacking.

I think that unless resources are devoted to such an investigation and it's, again, followed up with diplomatic actions in concert with the U.N. and other NGOs, I think –

SPARTZ: Well, there's 30 seconds. So do you think maybe we should not be funding them and look how we can use money better versus giving them the money? Is it a fair question?

HALL: Well, I think it's –

SPARTZ: Because we're no good at oversight. We can barely keep up what's happening. So saying that we do oversight better is just –

HALL: Well, then I don't understand what the – what the alternative is at this point.

SPARTZ: It's not to give money to U.N. and give it – look at how we can do for different causes. Is it a solution, you think, viable?

HALL: In very complex settings like Syria, no, it is not. At this moment it is definitely not, and it would cause unnecessary human suffering.

I think that to make decisions like that, we need monitoring that we currently don't have in place. It would not be expensive, but it's very necessary.

SPARTZ: I have – my time is expired, but if Mr. Chairman can lend me a few seconds for you to answer, what do you think a solution that is feasible? Because we can talk oversight; it's not working. So how can we do better?

HALL: Well, we don't do oversight.

SPARTZ: Mr. Grant and Mr. Kyslytsya, can you please just quickly, if the chairman give you a few seconds to, because it's important for me because we'll have a debate on this issue.

GRANT: Yeah. Ms. Hall and I, I think, agree. And, Representative Spartz, I think we all agree on the target and the objectives. Ms. Hall and I might differ a little bit about means and methods. I think you do have to put it on the table that we might be taking the money off the table for the simple reason that people's imagination tends to be focused by their direct interests, and if you talk to a(n) individual or a company or a bureaucracy you as a CPA understand that bottom line matters. So I think somewhere in the background there does have to be at least some clarity that the money could go away if they don't get better at what they do.

SPARTZ: Appreciate it.

And, Mr. Kyslytsya, if you can –

KYSLYTSYA: All right. So I'm not going to comment or defend the United Nations – you can ask the United Nations to defend themselves – as well as I'm not going to speak on behalf of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations. That's their job to do.

What I can say is that the complete withdrawal or major withdrawal of the United States from the U.N. system is what our enemies want to see. That's guaranteed. That's guaranteed. There are money in this world that would replace the American money but that would come with a tail price, and then it would be very difficult to buy back certain areas of the world. You know, so the complete withdrawal is not the option.

However, I do agree with you that monitoring is very important.

SPARTZ: So what kind of monitoring we can provide? Monitor, monitor. Please give me – we monitor here, nothing gets monitored. We understand. But what –

KYSLYTSYA: This is not a format for these discussion, but we can have this many-hour discussion on that issue.

What I can also say, that it's true that at the initial stage of the Russian invasion of Ukraine the response of the United Nations system was sluggish for many reasons. Well, first of all, because the whole history of humanitarian response of the United Nations was in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. They were never ready to respond in the European context. And it's an entirely different system. It's an entirely different set of protocols how to respond in Ukraine compared to Somalia – no prejudice – where you just drop the bags of rice from the overflying aircraft, right? So it's an entirely different system.

They are improving. And they are – finally came to the conclusion that to operate in Ukraine you do not really just give cash money to people; you go to the government and government provides you with e-registry and the electronic platform so you have the whole list of households, because the banking system is operating. The IT system is operating, unlike in some other parts of the world.

So I think that it's a very difficult issue. And our enemies in the United Nations, they do not sleep. They work very hard with all the members of the United Nations. And that is why, unfortunately, an important part of the membership of the United Nations see Russia as the defender of their socioeconomic needs and rights, because Russia and some other countries just give out – give money.

SPARTZ: Right. But they do it through Wagner Group, not through U.N.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, I think money should be on the table in the authorization. I appreciate you being generous with your time. Thank you for having this hearing. And I appreciate your input.

WILSON: And thank you very much, Congresswoman Spartz.

And as we're getting close to a conclusion, I do have a question for Ms. Hall. And that is I want to thank you so much for citing the atrocities that occurred in Syria. The Russian Federation, the example that they made of Aleppo of total destruction of military, civilian targets, populations, how sad that we didn't really follow how heinous that was. And so with that in mind, we can learn from history. What suggestions do you have for any changes in the United Nations itself?

HALL: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman Wilson.

And also to respond to Ms. Spartz, I mean, I've written, as you know, dozens of pages on what to do about this in terms of monitoring assistance and then working with the United Nations to ensure that it is – it is directed towards those who need it most, but more specifically so that it is not manipulated in a way that allows the regime to flip the script on the United Nations.

I would reiterate what the representative from Ukraine, His Excellency said about this not being the time to withdraw from the United Nations. As I mentioned, the General Assembly is extremely important. And by withdrawing those funds from the United Nations at this point, we will lose friends that we dearly, dearly need as we approach what is a multipolar world. And it's going to be a very intense competition, as I'm sure you know.

WILSON: Well, thank you very much.

And, indeed, Ambassador Kyslytsya, the people of the – the bravery of the people of Ukraine is an inspiration to the world. It was sad to me that war criminal Putin had a treatise on the Kremlin website in August 2021 explaining that Ukraine didn't exist, and how people missed that I'm not sure. And then, of course, then he falsely claimed that the reason this – that there needed to be an invasion was because he did not want NATO to have a significant boundary with the Russian Federation. And then, because of the bravery of the people of Ukraine, he's got it – with Finland, 830 miles, he has NATO. And then not only that, Sweden coming – 200 years of neutrality. Again, I believe it's due to the inspiration of the people of Ukraine. And a country with 200 years of neutrality, but extraordinary manufacturing capability. And so, again, we just want to praise the people of Ukraine.

And I want to conclude with it's been very concerning to me different myths and disinformation that's being sent. And I'd like to go briefly over some myths, and then when we conclude any and all members of Congress who are still here, we want to come and get a picture with our witnesses, so if you'll stay in place.

But I want to quote Luke Coffey of the Hudson Institute. He wrote, myths that need to be addressed: the vast majority of aid to Ukraine never leaves the United States and instead supports American jobs. Quote, there are – “likely” have “never been more accountability...in place for U.S. foreign assistance” with the U.S. Ukraine Oversight Interagency Working Group of “more than 160 officials across across 20 federal oversight agencies” monitoring U.S. aid to Ukraine. Quote, “According to the Kiel Institute for the World's Economy, Ukraine's aid tracker, total European commitments are now more than double those of the United States.” And finally, quote, “Russia is China's junior partner. A defeated Russia means a weaker China.” Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said, quote, “The security of the Indo-Pacific region cannot be separated from European security.” End of quote.

And with that in mind, I want – again, I want to thank the witnesses. I want to thank the OSCE/Helsinki Commission staff for their preparation. And just we wish well the courage and bravery of the people of Ukraine. And with that, we are adjourned. (Sounds gavel.)

[Whereupon, at 3:21 p.m., the hearing ended.]