

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 18, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As members of the Senate NATO Observer Group, we wish to convey robust bipartisan support ahead of your trip to Brussels next week for this extraordinary NATO Summit. Vladimir Putin's war on Ukraine reflects his refusal to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Russia's neighbors. As a result, countless lives have been lost and the security framework of Europe that has kept peace for nearly 80 years is under attack. This unprovoked war threatens the ironclad sovereignty of each country in the region. We support your efforts to maintain transatlantic strength and unity at this critical moment for the alliance and have outlined a number of key issues we wish to convey ahead of your visit to Brussels.

First, bipartisan support in Congress for NATO is stronger than ever. Since the reestablishment of this group in 2018, the Senate NATO Observer Group has conveyed to our allies and adversaries alike that Congress remains committed to the principles and values which underpin NATO and our collective security. With Russia's invasion of Ukraine, congressional support for NATO has grown, as the alliance rises to confront this challenge to our collective security and demonstrates its indispensability in protecting U.S. national security interests. We request that you convey this support to our allies and express particular appreciation to countries who have made recent declarations to expedite or increase their two percent defense spending commitment, as agreed to by all member countries at the Wales Summit. These decisions are welcomed.

Second, we encourage NATO and NATO members to urgently consider all options to support Ukraine. We recognize that NATO must balance the threat of Russia's invasion of Ukraine with the need to deescalate the conflict, and we urge all NATO allies to exhaust all options available to provide the necessary military assistance to support Ukraine in resisting the Russian invasion. On March 16th, President Zelenskyy addressed this Congress and asked for military equipment to defend Ukraine's own skies. We implore all NATO members to seriously consider this request.

Third, we urge you to request that NATO bolster its presence on the eastern flank to provide reassurance to all NATO members of the alliance's continued commitment to defending "every inch" of NATO territory. Your commitment to send U.S. troops to Poland, Romania, and the Baltic countries was welcomed, and we appreciate other NATO allies committing troops to the eastern flank. However, we believe more can and should be done to bolster deterrence measures on the southeastern flank, where Russia's actions imperil key allies and partners. We call for NATO to agree to establishing an Enhanced Forward Presence in Romania, a longstanding and committed NATO ally. Further, we request that the administration and NATO consider a more

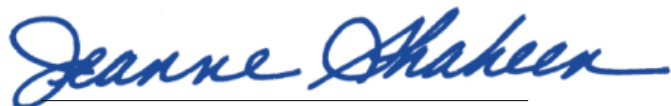
strategic and comprehensive approach toward the Black Sea region, which Russia is freely using to attack Ukraine and kill countless innocent civilians.

Fourth, we encourage you to maintain focus on the Balkans, where Russia has long played a destabilizing role to deter NATO aspirant countries from joining the alliance. The Balkans is a vulnerable area of Europe, and although Ukraine must occupy our immediate attention, we cannot lose sight of this region where NATO has long played a critical role in maintaining peace. In particular, we urge NATO to increase its engagement in the region and consider contingency measures in the event that Russia vetoes the renewal of the European Union Forces mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the United Nations Security Council later this year.

Last, we urge you to consider making an additional stop to an Eastern European NATO country to convey strong U.S. support to the region. A visit to a Baltic country or Romania would be particularly welcomed by these countries who are bravely standing up in support of our collective values and mutual security interests.

Ukraine is fighting for more than its freedom. They are courageously fighting for our collective values. We hope you can further mobilize NATO member countries to provide greater security assistance for Ukraine at this critical time and further bolster the NATO alliance. We would welcome a readout of your visit upon your return.

Sincerely,



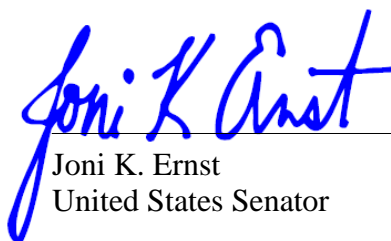
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
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