

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

January 10, 2022

President Joe Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As members of the Senate NATO Observer Group, we write to convey robust bipartisan support for the security and freedom of our eastern European allies in advance of this week's diplomatic talks at the NATO-Russia Council meeting. This current crisis, artificially created by Vladimir Putin's unprecedented build-up of Russian military forces on Ukraine's border, reflects Putin's refusal to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Russia's neighbors. The undersigned Senators support your efforts to utilize all diplomatic channels to make it clear to Putin that the United States and its allies will not accept its current aggression against Ukraine, nor will it allow for an invasion of Ukraine without severe consequences.

In Russia's list of required public "security guarantees" to Western governments, Putin explicitly demanded NATO rule out membership to Ukraine, commit to preventing further enlargement of the alliance, and prohibit NATO from deploying military equipment in countries that joined the alliance after 1997, among other unreasonable demands that are unacceptable to this group of Senators. Rather than security guarantees, these demands are an attempt to recreate a Russian sphere of influence in Europe, where the Kremlin is free to coerce and bully countries like Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania, who have since become firm American allies and partners.

We support close engagement with our allies to ensure a coordinated and unambiguous response to Putin's brinkmanship and ask that the administration and its allies continue to unequivocally rebuke Putin's military threats and provocations against our allies. It is imperative the United States demonstrate our resolve and refuse to appease Putin's unacceptable list of demands.

In light of this week's meetings with the Russian government through the Strategic Stability Dialogue, the Russia-NATO Council and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Permanent Council meeting, we wish to underscore strong bipartisan support for the following:

- Russia does not have veto power on NATO enlargement and expansion of the Alliance; this will be decided solely by NATO members themselves;
- The United States and its allies and partners are committed to the principle of "no decisions or discussions about Ukraine without Ukraine," which should also be applied to Georgia;

- The door to NATO membership remains open to European countries which are ready and willing to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership and whose membership contributes to the security in the Euro-Atlantic Area;
- NATO should consider an increased military presence on the Alliance's eastern flank, including the Baltic states, Poland, and the Black Sea region to serve as a deterrent to Russian aggression;
- Additional security assistance for Ukraine and eastern European countries under threat of Russian aggression is necessary to raise the cost of Russian military operations, and our allies should consider similar measures; and
- The United States and our allies should impose sanctions on Putin, and members of his inner circle, as long as they continue to threaten the security of Eastern European states.

We support working with our allies, especially through NATO and the European Union, to push back on Putin's aggressive tactics and demonstrate the United States' commitment to maintaining a rules-based order in Europe. A world where authoritarians believe they can force their way through coercion and intimidation threatens the safety of Americans abroad and the prosperity of Americans at home.

We wish your administration well for this critical week of diplomacy. This group of Senators is prepared to support increased assistance to Ukraine, push back against Putin's revisionist agenda, and bolster support for our eastern European allies.

Sincerely,



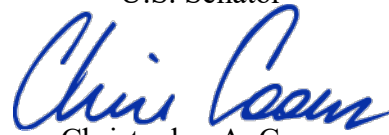
Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator



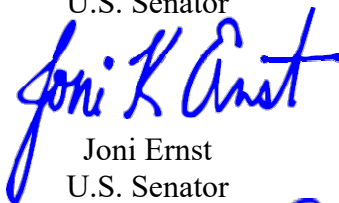
Jeanne Shaheen  
U.S. Senator



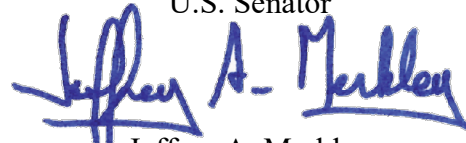
Thom Tillis  
U.S. Senator



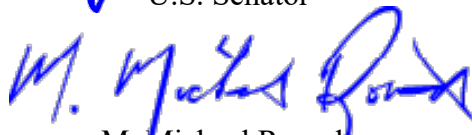
Christopher A. Coons  
U.S. Senator



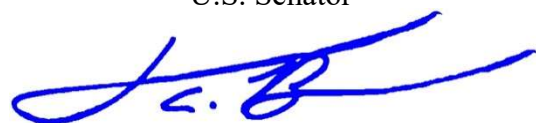
Joni Ernst  
U.S. Senator



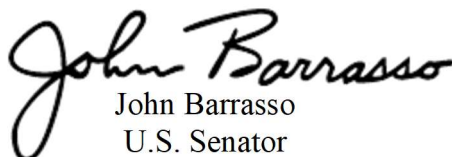
Jeffrey A. Merkley  
U.S. Senator



M. Michael Rounds  
U.S. Senator



Cory A. Booker  
U.S. Senator



John Barrasso  
U.S. Senator