

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 26, 2023

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Secretary Austin,

As the United States transfers more advanced weapons systems to Ukraine,¹ and as the Ukraine offensive stalls,² influential U.S. publications have begun to call for the deployment of U.S. military advisers to Ukraine under a potential train, advise, and assist mission.³

A military adviser mission to Ukraine would run a significant escalatory risk with Russia. It would mean placing additional “boots on the ground” in the midst of a direct and bloody conflict with Russia. Harm to our personnel under such a mission would be a tragedy, and could easily trigger Article IV consultations or even an Article V collective security declaration by our NATO Allies under the Washington Treaty. A military adviser mission would be one more step towards a dangerous, unnecessary war between the United States and Russia.

We write to ask whether the U.S. government plans now, or in the future, to deploy an adviser mission to Ukraine, either U.S. direct hire personnel or contractors, whether under foreign affairs, military, or intelligence authorities. We request a response by October 3, 2023.

It is our genuine hope that you are able to specify that the U.S. government has no intention of expanding our role in combat operations in Ukraine. The appropriate focus of the U.S. government at this moment should be to bring active hostilities between Ukraine and Russia to as swift a conclusion as possible, both to prevent a regional conflict on Europe’s doorstep from spiraling out of control, and to enable the expeditious reconstruction and rehabilitation of Ukraine.

Sincerely,

¹ Jonathan Lemire, Alexander Ward, Paul McLeary & Lara Seligman, “Biden agrees to send long-range missiles to Ukraine,” *Politico*, September 22, 2023, available at: <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/09/22/biden-agrees-to-send-long-range-missiles-to-ukraine-00117667>.

² “Ukraine faces a long war. A change of course is needed,” *The Economist*, September 21, 2023, available at: <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2023/09/21/ukraine-faces-a-long-war-a-change-of-course-is-needed>.

³ Alexandra Chinchilla & Sam Rosenberg, “Why America Should Send Military Advisers to Ukraine: on-the-ground help will bolster Kyiv without risking escalation,” *Foreign Affairs*, September 22, 2023, available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/why-america-should-send-military-advisers-ukraine>.



JD Vance
United States Senator



Chip Roy
Member of Congress



Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress