



КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

CONGRÈS DES UKRAINIEN-CANADIENS

BRIEFING NOTE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA:

THE CASE FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE

September 3, 2014

Executive Summary

September 2, 2014 - Thousands of Russian troops are in Ukraine with tanks, missiles, heavy artillery, and are directly engaged in what is clearly an invasion. Putin has been emboldened by a slow and weak response from the western countries as they have not implemented the most difficult sanctions against Russia and provided the arms necessary for the Ukrainians to defend themselves. At the NATO Summit September 4, 2014, Canada and its allies must decide to provide Ukraine with the type of defensive weapons that will impose a cost upon Putin for further aggression.

As stated by Senator Bob Menendez Chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on August 30 in Kyiv "there are those in Europe and elsewhere who says, we don't want to provoke Putin. Well, Putin doesn't need provocation. In this case weakness is a greater provocation for Putin to act than strike. And Putin only understands two things and that's strength either because of the economic consequences that we can levy upon Russia and hopefully the European Union will move with us into more significant sectoral sanctions. And also the costs to Russians as they send their sons and daughters back in body bags to Russia and Russian mothers say, what is happening here?"

Canada, the US, European Union and NATO, have to give the Ukrainians the fighting chance to defend themselves.

If there is not a heavy price for Russia to pay for its invasion of Ukraine, then what do we say to China in the South China Sea? What do we say to Iran as it seeks to pursue nuclear weapons? What do we say to North Korea and the Korean peninsula?

Background

On 27 August, 2014 the Russian Federation sent regular combat troops and sophisticated military equipment across its border with Ukraine into southeastern Donetsk oblast, in blatant violation of the UN Charter, security commitments and international law. This is the second time that Ukraine has been invaded within the last 6 months, the first being Russia's seizure of Crimea. The evidence is clear that thousands of Russian troops are in Ukraine with tanks, missiles, heavy artillery, and are directly engaged in what is clearly an invasion. The Kremlin's escalating war in Ukraine's East requires a strong and comprehensive response from the West.

Mr. Putin's aggression in Ukraine is not an isolated phenomenon. It is part of a broader pattern that threatens stability in Europe and beyond. This danger should have been evident in 2008, when the Russian army was used to take Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia. Putin has proclaimed on numerous occasions his duty and right to "protect ethnic Russians and Russian speakers" wherever they may be. This dangerous policy threatens Ukraine, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, among others. The Russian President also spoken dismissively of Ukraine's independence, and its right to decide its own future without Moscow's interference and approval.

Further, since the fall of the Soviet Union, the Kremlin has promoted instability in neighboring countries as a means of influencing their domestic and foreign policies. This was true in Georgia (Ajaria in addition to Abkhazia and South Ossetia), Moldova (Transnistria), Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh) and Ukraine (Crimea). This policy predated NATO expansion to the East, which undercuts the arguments of those

who explain such Kremlin actions are a response to the inclusion of former Warsaw Pact nations in NATO. As an alliance of democratic states, it needs to be stressed that new NATO member states joined of their own free will, and that part of their motivation was a fear of precisely the kind of behavior Russia is exhibiting now.

Canada's Policy to Date

The Government of Canada has responded strongly to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Canada has been an unequivocal supporter of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty in the international community and has consistently condemned Russia's policy of aggression against Ukraine. Canada has imposed sanctions against both Russian individuals and entities, given financial and technical assistance to Ukraine, and provided non-lethal military equipment and aid to Ukraine's armed forces and border patrol. However, the current situation demands even firmer and more robust measures to prevent Russia from realizing its' political, economic, and military objectives vis-a-vis Ukraine, which would have grave consequences for European security and international stability.

Policy Response

Moscow's aggression in Ukraine can only be stopped with a strong and unwavering response from NATO and the G7 countries that make it prohibitive for Russia to continue. This response should include:

1. Decisive sectoral economic sanctions - particularly against the financial, defense and energy sectors. These measures must be broadened to increase the cost of Russia's aggression. In the area of financial sanctions, serious consideration must be given to taking Russia off the SWIFT bank transfer payments system, as this is one action that can have an immediate and profound impact on Russia's economic elites and their ability to conduct business dealings with the rest of the world.
2. Political isolation of Putin: Russia must be made answerable to the United Nations and accountable to bodies governing international relations. It deserves to be deprived of its membership and veto on the Security Council, and since it is party to the conflict in Ukraine it should be denied the right to unilaterally engage in any "humanitarian" or supposed peacekeeping operations. The G-20 should follow the lead of the G-7 and show Mr. Putin the door. FIFA should expel Russia and revoke its privilege to host the 2018 World Cup. The NATO-Russia Founding Act, which sees Russia as a partner and commits NATO not to build infrastructure or to permanently deploy major forces in the Eastern members of the Alliance, should be suspended. NATO and its allies must ban the sale of all services and military equipment to Russia, including the Mistral warships. Putin's propaganda machine must be stopped removing Russia Today from the list of eligible satellite services approved by the CRTC.
3. Military support: In exchange for guarantees concerning its territorial integrity and security, Ukraine gave up its nuclear arsenal and drastically reduced the size of its army since attaining independence. More recently, the Ukrainian Army was deliberately neglected and demoralized by the government of Victor Yanukovich, which was run by corrupt officials and led by political cronies and Russian operatives who systematically looted the country on an unprecedented scale as they worked on behalf of the Kremlin to put an end to Ukrainian independence. Ukraine has recently rebuilt a committed, competent military force, and in a remarkably short period of time has created the nucleus of new army that has the will and morale to fight but lacks the necessary military hardware to do so effectively. The combined armed forces of

Ukraine, which include many volunteer detachments and National Guard units, receive a significant amount of their funding and supplies from the direct donations of Ukraine's patriotic citizenry. Ukrainian troops especially need anti-tank and anti-BTR systems to stop the heavy weaponry that Russia has put at the disposal of the rebel enclaves in the southeast, along with regular Russian combat forces. In view of everything that transpired since Russia's invasion of Crimea, it is crucial that Canada and its partners now provide "direct defensive military assistance" to Ukraine so that it can protect itself from continuing Russian aggression.

Over the past two months Ukraine's revitalized force waged a successful campaign to take back territory in the East, notwithstanding the weaponry, supplies and fighters brought in from Russia to bolster the relatively small number of so-called separatist formations that had terrorized the population into submission after President Yanukovich fled the country with his fellow ministers and extended family. These local insurgent bands were largely composed of criminal elements, mercenaries, and adventurers, who seized government buildings, engaged in hostage-takings, and stole and extorted money from businesses and civilians with the goal of establishing themselves as regional powerbrokers. Now, however, regular Russian forces have entered the fray, enabling the so-called rebels to mount a counter-offensive. Ukraine's military therefore urgently needs equipment and support, including:

- Air defense, anti-radiation (eg HARM) and anti-armour systems;
- Unmanned aerial vehicles;
- Tactical communications and navigation hardware with advanced capabilities of cryptographic security;
- Surveillance resources and night vision devices;
- Material assets (military uniforms, helmets, flak jackets and tactical gear);
- Food (ready-to-eat military rations) and fuel;
- Electronic warfare means;
- Engineering reconnaissance and mine clearance support;
- Emergency medical assistance supplies, including a staffed MASH unit;
- SpecOps and counter-insurgency training-Satellite-based theater surveillance and intelligence
- Military trainers

While Ukraine has little chance of defeating Russian forces in a protracted conventional war, properly equipped Ukrainians can resist longer and inflict enough casualties to make the Russian people take notice of what is happening. A recent Russian poll shows that only 5% of the population support sending Russian troops into Ukraine, and there are already statements of concern being expressed by parents and spouses of Russian soldiers fighting and dying in Ukraine. The Kremlin is hiding this fact from its public, but the truth cannot be buried for long. More effective resistance will not only slow the advance of Russian forces, but might also lead to real opposition in Russia to Putin's policies, and thus deter aggression, as the political costs would become too high for Putin to continue.

Opponents of providing Ukraine with lethal military equipment typically make two arguments, the first of which is that providing such equipment will only lead to escalation by Russia. This is discounted by the fact is that Moscow has repeatedly increased its intervention without any Western military supplies reaching Ukraine.

The second argument made by opponents of military aid to Kyiv is that given the penetration by Russian intelligence of Ukrainian military and intelligence organizations, the technology or intelligence used by

Ukraine's military could be compromised. To avoid this risk, any intelligence given would need to be carefully vetted to protect intelligence means and sources. As for the technology, the defensive equipment Ukraine requires need not be state-of-the-art but should be of a standard capable of repelling the Russian weapon systems currently being deployed in Ukraine.

Conclusion

It needs to be remembered that the death toll in Eastern Ukraine now numbers in the thousands and includes not only military personnel but many innocent civilians. Among the latter are the almost 300 victims of MH17, who lost their lives at the hands of Russian-backed terrorists who need to be brought to criminal justice. The world is still awaiting to learn the findings of the investigation into their deaths, which was hampered and sabotaged by those responsible for shooting down the passenger plane with a sophisticated rocket system that is an important part of the Russian arsenal inside Ukraine.

It further needs to be remembered that Russia, Great Britain and the United States are all signatories to the Budapest Memorandum of 1994, in which each party agreed to respect and defend Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Ukraine needs Canada and her allies to provide the military aid that Ukrainians need to defend themselves and to impose deep sectoral sanction and politically isolate Russia until it stops its war on Ukraine and gives back Crimea. Vladimir Putin has turned Russia into a rogue state and a state sponsor of terror. Ukrainians cannot stop him without real international support.

Most important of all, Canada and its allies must immediately make the policy decision to assist Ukraine to build up its armed forces. Allowing Moscow to have its way with Ukraine will only encourage it to seek similar gains elsewhere. Strong Western support can help Kyiv to resist and overcome Moscow's aggression, and will certainly dissuade President Putin from further aggression beyond Ukraine.