

United States Senate

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COMMITTEES:
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BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

BUDGET

INTELLIGENCE

RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

March 3, 2022

Her Excellency Oksana Markarova
Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States
Embassy of Ukraine
3350 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20007

Dear Ambassador Markarova:

I write to you today at a moment of great tragedy for your nation, as Russian President Vladimir Putin continues his violent, unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, in violation of your country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The United States stands firmly with the people of Ukraine, and you have my commitment that, as the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, I will continue pressing the United States Government to share as much intelligence support as possible with Ukraine. I will also continue advocating for punishing sanctions and economic costs against President Putin and Russia, security assistance for the Ukrainian military, and robust economic and humanitarian assistance for the Ukrainian people.

Regarding the refugee crisis that President Putin has created through his violent invasion – which so far, according to the United Nations Refugee Agency, has seen more than one million men, women, and children flee their homes to safety in neighboring countries – I will continue supporting efforts to ensure that Ukraine and its neighboring countries are resourced appropriately to address this challenge.

In the meantime, I want to call attention to a growing body of disturbing reports along Ukraine's western borders, which allege discriminatory treatment and processing of certain non-Ukrainian individuals – in particular, individuals from African nations. Many of these individuals are students studying in Ukraine. As you well know, at least 20 percent of the more than 80,000 international students studying in Ukraine come from an African nation, with sizable populations of Moroccan, Nigerian, and Egyptian students¹. These students and other individuals must be able to seek safety, and any discriminatory treatment or actions that deny them that ability are

¹ Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, *Ukrainian State Center for International Education*, report dated 21 December, 2020.

unacceptable. I echo the sentiments of the African Union², the US Department of State³, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees⁴, and highlight this right of all people who are fleeing conflict.

I certainly acknowledge the incredibly challenging circumstances that Ukrainian security personnel are under as they work to quickly and effectively facilitate historic refugee flows in response to dire and urgent circumstances. I also recognize the stated commitments that Ukraine's neighbors have made to take in people fleeing to safety. I urge all governments and authorities to ensure that all individuals – regardless of race, religion, or nationality – are afforded equal access to their right to seek safety. Please know that I am also writing to officials of neighboring countries to ensure that their authorities are not the cause of further allegations. I will continue to monitor conditions related to forcibly displaced persons at the borders – including the African diaspora – and I will continue to support resources for Ukraine to aid in these efforts.

I thank you for your government's attention to this matter, and I reiterate my earnest support for the Ukrainian people in this conflict. The strength and resolve that they have shown in the face of this violent invasion has inspired and rallied so many in the international community to stand with Ukraine.

Sincerely,



MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

² *Statement of the African Union on the reported ill treatment of Africans trying to leave Ukraine*, dated 28 February, 2022

³ Tweet from the Bureau of African Affairs (@AsstSecStateAF), dated 28 February, 2022
<https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1498406259569143808>

⁴ *OCHA/UNHCR – Press Conference: Humanitarian Appeal for Ukraine*, dated 1 March, 2022