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**Supporting Countries Under Siege that Share our
Values is US Responsibility as a Great Power**

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In an August 10 letter from White House Office of Management and Budget Director Shalanda Young to House Speaker Kevin McCarthy requesting supplemental funding for Ukraine, the budget director (on behalf of the president) reaffirmed the administration's commitment to helping Ukraine defend its sovereignty. While funding for this round is likely, future budget allocations are by no means assured. The reasons include 18 months of protracted war, a combination of bipartisan "conflict fatigue," and waning public support for Ukraine. A recent CNN [poll](#) showed 55% of Americans are opposed to Congress authorizing additional funding for Ukraine, with half asserting that the US has already done enough. While twice as many Democrats as Republicans support military aid to Ukraine, overall support continues to decline. Having allocated nearly \$77 billion in humanitarian aid and financial and security assistance, 19 other countries and EU institutions have made significant contributions, as well.

Despite such multilateral support, two things are now clear. Although Ukraine is not losing, it is not winning either. Additionally, allied nations have failed to provide Ukraine with the quantity and scope of weapons and materials it needs to halt Russian aggression. To its credit, the US has provided hundreds of armored vehicles, howitzers, Stinger anti-aircraft missile systems, and Javelin-anti-tank weapons. The recent [commitments](#) by the Netherlands and Denmark to donate up to 61 F-16 fighter jets, along with Germany's commitment of 18 Leopard 2 tanks, are welcome contributions. However, the jets will not be ready to fly combat missions before 2024. And to combat Russia's barbaric bombings of schools, churches, hospitals, power stations, and residential buildings, Ukraine needs more long-range fire power and air defense and artillery systems. President Zelensky's request for ATACMS and surface-to-air Patriot missile systems would greatly strengthen Ukraine's defensive capabilities. However, the Biden administration is reluctant to furnish these weapon systems (just as it has been in procrastinating approval of F-16s) for fear of Russian nuclear retaliation should Ukraine strike deep inside Russia.

Neither pandering to Mr. Putin nor a reluctance to confront him will yield favorable results. Had the US flexed its muscles and stepped up to the plate immediately following the February 22, 2022, invasion, providing Ukraine with everything it had requested to repel Russia, driving them out of occupied territories, public support for Ukraine would be enhanced, the image and stature of the US greater, and the world would be a safer place. With great power status comes great power responsibility. Supporting countries under siege that share the universal values of freedom, human rights, and respect for one's neighbors is part and parcel of that responsibility.

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