

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 22, 2022

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Lloyd Austin
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Austin,

We write to you because of our grave concerns over the growing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and along its western border with Poland. We want to first acknowledge your leadership and coordinated efforts to provide an unprecedented amount of humanitarian and military assistance to Ukraine. In light of the scope and scale of the humanitarian disaster, we recommend additional steps that could help support the struggling healthcare systems in Ukraine and Poland.

As you are aware, the healthcare system in Ukraine is on the verge of failure. Due to Russia's indiscriminate targeting, roughly 119 hospitals and other medical facilities in Ukraine have been destroyed including a maternity ward. As of April 21, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees determined that there have been 5,264 Ukrainian civilian casualties. In addition, before this crisis, the Polish healthcare system lacked a sufficient number of doctors and specialists for its population size and it is now buckling from the surge of refugees requiring medical care.

You have a unique opportunity to showcase American leadership by providing critical medical support to Ukrainians that will inspire other NATO states to follow suit.

First, we recommend you immediately send armored ambulances, such as the M997A2 HMMWV field litter ambulance, to Ukrainian first responders and defense forces. These wheeled ambulances can securely transport up to four people and allow for life-saving care.

Second, we ask you to deploy several military field hospital centers to the Polish – Ukrainian border region and authorize U.S. medical personnel to care for the sick and wounded fighters and refugees and third country nationals crossing into Poland. These field hospital centers should also work in cooperation with Polish authorities as well as humanitarian organizations providing assistance along the border (including U.N. entities and local and international non-governmental organizations) and take into account international humanitarian principles in any activities.

These deployable Role 3 medical capabilities would alleviate some of the stress on the Ukrainian healthcare system and allow for burden sharing with the stressed Polish hospitals. In fact, the U.S. Army currently has a deployable Role 3 hospital center, the 30th Medical Brigade, assigned

to U.S. European Command's area of responsibility that can provide comprehensive medical and surgical care with short-term patient holding capability of up to 240-beds.

There is also precedent for such a medical capability deployment in response to a humanitarian crisis. After natural disasters, such as the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the U.S. deployed the USNS-Comfort, a Role 3 medical hospital to Haiti for 40 days to provide life-saving care.

We encourage you to work with the Polish government and seek approval to deploy Army hospital centers from both in theater and stateside locations to Polish-Ukrainian border crossing towns such as Przemyśl to treat the sick and wounded from Ukraine.

Third, we request that you scale-up Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and treat the sick and wounded Ukrainians who cannot be sufficiently cared for at the forward deployed Army hospital centers. This would follow your decision to allow Afghan refugees transiting through Ramstein Air-Force Base in Germany to receive medical care at this Role 4 facility.

At the beginning of April, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan warned of a protracted conflict in Ukraine; therefore, we need to bolster the Ukrainian and surrounding NATO countries' healthcare and medical capabilities.

Thank you for your continued leadership during the greatest crisis in Europe since World War II. We will work to ensure Congress serves its role and provides your agencies with all the resources necessary to address both the military and humanitarian aspects of this war.

Sincerely,



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Liz Cheney
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



Tom Malinowski
Member of Congress



Brad Wenstrup
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Peter Meijer
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Rick Larsen
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Bill Keating
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Marcy Kaptur
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Ann McLane Kuster
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