



Ukrainian Official Says Western Backers Should Support Kyiv “for Decades”

On October 23, Ukrainian Strategic Industries Minister Oleksandr Mykolayovych Kamyshin told Politico that Western nations must be ready to back Kyiv against Moscow “for decades,” and thus should focus on weapons production.

“The free world should be producing enough to protect itself,” Kamyshin declared, before a planned announcement this week of a German-Ukrainian joint arms-production agreement. “If you get together all the worldwide capacities for weapons production, for ammunition production, that will not be enough for this war,” he elaborated.



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“What happens in Israel now shows and proves that the defense industry globally has been a destination for investments for decades,” the Ukrainian minister contended.

Kamyshin was nominated for his role in March 2023, as Kyiv attempted to procure a continued supply of weapons to back its combat efforts against Moscow. The United States and its allies supplied the country with tanks, armored vehicles, and other military hardware while Kyiv was planning its much-hyped summer counteroffensive.

However, Ukraine’s efforts in its counteroffensive have not yielded any considerable territorial gains. Some media outlets have cautioned that Kyiv’s dismal performance on the battlefield could jeopardize its chances of obtaining future aid.

Kyiv has expressed hopes that Western defense companies could start production lines on Ukrainian soil to guarantee Ukrainian “self-sufficiency,” and has received promises from Germany and the U.K. to do so. During an interview in July, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky alleged that no amount of aid would be “enough” for his country, “as long as the war continues.”

Nonetheless, Moscow has warned that foreign-funded arms factories in Ukraine would be deemed as legitimate targets for Russian missile strikes. Besides, Moscow has slammed its conflict with Kyiv as a U.S.-led proxy war against Russia, in which Ukrainians have been regarded as “cannon fodder” by the West. Recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin estimated that “hundreds of tanks” and “almost 1,500 armored vehicles” were among Ukrainian materiel losses since early June.

Although the U.S. government has promised to keep arming Ukraine, there has been increasing resistance against such a policy among various members of the Republican Party. Critics of aid to Ukraine have highlighted the exorbitant costs of such support, together with the dearth of proper supervision, amid widespread corruption in the Zelensky government.

On October 25, a total of 220 House Republicans elected fellow Republican Mike Johnson, a strong



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supporter of former U.S. President Donald Trump, as speaker of the House of Representatives, while no Democrats supported Johnson's candidacy.

The role of House speaker had been vacant since October 3, when a group of Republicans led by Congressman Matt Gaetz of Florida deposed former Speaker Kevin McCarthy, citing his clandestine agreement with the White House to pass a bill dispatching more money to Ukraine.

Republicans, who have a slim majority in the House, subsequently grappled with nominating McCarthy's replacement, leading to weeks of congressional gridlock, and stalling any legislative business in the chamber. With Jim Jordan of Ohio and Tom Emmer of Minnesota failing to garner enough votes within their conference, speculation was rife that even some Republicans might help Democrats elect a minority speaker.

Notably, Johnson has drawn flak from Ukraine supporters among both Republicans and Democrats for being a staunch opponent of sending more U.S. money to Kyiv.

"We should not be sending another \$40 billion abroad when our own border is in chaos, American mothers are struggling to find baby formula, gas prices are at record highs, and American families are struggling to make ends meet, without sufficient oversight over where the money will go," Johnson [said](#) in May 2022, becoming one of the 57 House members to oppose the supplemental aid bill.

The House will now have to tackle Biden's request for \$104 billion in "emergency" funding for Israel, Ukraine, Taiwan, and American immigration policy. Johnson has hitherto expressed his views against such "omnibus" bills.

Things do not seem to augur well for Ukraine on the other side of the Atlantic either.

Ukrainian Deputy Economy Minister Oleksii Sobolev admitted in a television interview that the EU may supply only half of the \$19 billion that the Kyiv regime was expecting to cover its budget deficit next year.

Sobolev was alluding to Ukrainian efforts to procure \$53 billion in EU support over the next four years, while warning that the country would encounter considerable shortfall in funding from a crucial Western backer.

Kyiv had set aside \$41 billion of that \$53 billion to tackle its financial shortfall, the senior politician highlighted. Ukraine's draft 2024 budget includes \$19 billion in EU funding.

Sobolev was remarking on the so-called "Ukraine plan," namely, a proposal about the country's economic reforms and projects that it has to enforce before the EU can offer assistance under the "Ukraine Facility" program. Furthermore, the European Commission plans to keep track of how Kyiv would abide by the blueprint before releasing further funding.

The aforementioned possible dent to the Ukrainian budget may have ramifications for other types of foreign assistance, RBC Ukraine outlet reported on October 25. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) will also be monitoring Kyiv's finances vis-à-vis its own support.

The next IMF loan, amounting to \$900 million, is slated to be authorized by IMF management in December, Ukrainian officials revealed. The IMF used to be Ukraine's key foreign lender, functioning as a benchmark for other organizations. However, owing to unprecedented amounts of aid that Western nations have allocated to Kyiv to help it fight Moscow, the IMF has to accommodate financial contributions by the United States and the EU.



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“Without those sources of funds, the IMF will not have certainty that the nation would cover its needs,” a Ukrainian source acquainted with negotiation processes stated. “This may undermine the approval of the next tranche. And unless the issue is resolved before December, the [IMF] executive board will not come to a positive decision.”

Earlier this month, Putin pointed out that Ukraine’s economy and government was able to survive only because of Western aid, which he surmised at between \$4 billion and \$5 billion per month.

“As soon as they are stopped — that’s it, in a week everything will fall,” Putin declared.



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