



[United States and Ukraine Agree to a Bilateral Security Deal in an Attempt to Combat Russia](#)

United States President Joe Biden and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a bilateral security agreement amidst the G7 Summit in Italy this past week. With this, the U.S. joins 15 other nations including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy who have also signed bilateral agreements with Ukraine. Zelenskyy claims the deal is the “strongest agreement” in Ukraine’s history since it achieved independence in 1991. The deal is an “executive agreement” allowing future U.S. presidents to disband the deal, unless Biden can gain approval from a divided Congress. The longevity of the deal is questioned as the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, Former President Donald Trump, has been skeptical of Biden’s decision to continue aid to Ukraine. The potential return of the GOP leader makes the upcoming election potentially consequential for Zelenskyy.

The deal includes an additional loan of \$50 billion in aid to Ukraine from G7 nations, funded by frozen Russian state assets. The money will be supplied in increments, as U.S. officials worry about Ukraine’s ability to properly intake such a large amount of funds. The deal commits the U.S. to 10 years of continued training of Ukraine’s military and increased assistance in overall military production. Five patriot missile defense systems will be provided, but any U.S. weapons that would allow Ukraine to launch strikes further into Russia beyond the weapon models being used by Russia to attack the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, have been “ruled out” by President Biden. The U.S. will assist in developing squadrons of advanced aircraft fighters, such as F-16s. Biden has made it clear that countries expecting similar air defense from the U.S. will need to wait as the support will continue to be concentrated on Ukraine. Any future attacks on Ukraine will be followed by in-depth consultations by the U.S. within 24 hours of the attack.

Non-military reforms are being supported by the U.S. to further strengthen Ukraine. The U.S. will advise the country in improving its energy security through a decentralized energy system interspersed with Europe. Democratic principles will be strengthened through a series of anti-corruption initiatives and judicial reforms. Policy initiatives in security, tax, customs institutions, and law enforcement are aimed to reinforce the rule of law. According to the U.S. Department of Treasury, additional sanctions will be implemented against Russia including measures against over 300 individuals and financial institutions supporting Russian efforts in the war. Biden will also attempt to further restrict Russia’s ability to obtain U.S. software and information technology services. These sanctions have caused disruptions in the Russian financial markets, as the Central Bank of Russia and the Moscow Exchange (MOEX) stopped trading in U.S. Dollars and Euros. This underscores the strength of the United States in economic relations between Russia and the West. It is evident that Russia needs American investment substantially more than the United States needs Russian investment. The sanctions can be consequential for China as well, since the two nations have become economically dependent on each other.

In the week following the G7 summit, Russian President Putin visited the North Korea city of Pyongyang where a mutual defense pact was signed between the two countries. The agreement consists of increased transfers of military technology and a pledge of mutual defense. It is suspected that the deal was triggered by both Russia and North Korea facing confrontation from the West and isolation through global sanctions, especially following the signing of the recent U.S.-Ukraine security agreement. American officials believe that the deal could potentially enhance North Korea’s nuclear capabilities, heightening tensions in the Asia-Pacific region. The agreement is a

possible step in developing an anti-U.S. coalition aiming to combat American support of Ukraine. The deal may question the effectiveness of future U.S. sanctions on North Korea, as a typical incentive for North Korea to cooperate with the U.S. was the hope of diminishing sanctions. Now, with Russia potentially providing a long-term plan to propel North Korea's economy, Kim Jong Un may be less inclined to improve relations with the United States.

Zelenskyy has made Ukraine's desire to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) quite clear. There are a few barriers and dilemmas impeding Zelenskyy's goal. NATO has criteria that nations must fulfill in order to be considered. Possessing a functioning democratic political system is a key requirement, and Ukraine does not have a stable and sound democracy as its institutions battle corruption and elections have been postponed since the war with Russia started. The country has been classified as a "hybrid regime" by the Economist Democracy Index. An additional worry of NATO is the honoring of its Article V commitments. Article V of the treaty commits members to fight if another member is attacked. The U.S. and other NATO members have made it a point to not deploy troops to the war in Ukraine, but if Ukraine is a NATO member, the deployment of U.S. troops to an active combat zone may be required.

The likelihood of the U.S. Senate approving Ukraine's membership with a two-thirds majority vote is minimal. This is especially true if Former President Trump is elected in November, and he would likely deter Republican Senators from voting in favor of Ukraine's membership. The effectiveness of initiating Ukraine to NATO in combatting Russia and taming the war is difficult to predict, but it is anticipated that the U.S. and Ukraine will work to improve the latter's political system to try and meet the standards of NATO and the European Union. Zelenskyy hopes the agreement with the U.S. will create a pathway to NATO membership. Biden recently stated that he is not currently ready to back the "NATOization of Ukraine," but agrees the bilateral agreement could possibly act "as supporting a bridge to Ukraine's eventual membership into NATO." President Biden hopes this deal will tame Putin and solidify the American president's standing on the global stage before the upcoming U.S. presidential election in November.