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July 15, 2024

The Honorable Jake Sullivan
National Security Advisor
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 200500

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

As Members of the Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party (“CCP”), we write to you today to respectfully request an assessment regarding information Russia has gained about the capabilities of U.S. weapons provided to Ukraine and the degree to which this information has been shared with the People’s Republic of China (“PRC”) as part of their bilateral “no limits” partnership.

The United States has a critical national security interest in decisively defeating Russian aggression in Ukraine. The provision of American security assistance to our Ukrainian partners plays an essential role in support of this objective. Yet we must be clear-eyed that Russian battlefield innovation is likely to proliferate to the PRC and other adversaries—and adapt ourselves accordingly.

As the United States and our NATO allies continue to stand with Ukraine against Russia’s war of aggression, recent reports have detailed alarming levels of Russian adaptation that have undermined the effectiveness of several U.S. weapons systems.¹ While some of the systems in question are older and less modern, in other cases, even newer weapons have reportedly failed thanks to Russian electronic warfare and associated countermeasures. As Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment William LaPlante put it, “The Russians have gotten really, really good” at disrupting precision munitions.² These reports raise important questions about the U.S. military and industrial base’s ability to “counter-innovate” to overcome or adapt to these Russian tactics and their potential proliferation to other adversaries in other theaters.

As the United States and our NATO allies described this week, the PRC has become a “decisive enabler” of the Russian war in Ukraine. As one administration official has disclosed, the PRC is “90 percent of the reason”³ Russia has been able to sustain its war effort and economy, particularly in the face of western sanctions. The PRC has provided Russia with significant amounts of microelectronics, dual-use equipment, imagery, and other tools to support its war machine, in addition to helping improve satellite and other space-based capabilities.

¹ <https://www.wsj.com/world/us-weapons-russia-ukraine-0eed240c>

² <https://www.wsj.com/world/us-weapons-russia-ukraine-0eed240c>

³ <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/inflection-points/the-biden-administration-is-sounding-the-alarm-about-chinese-support-for-russia/>

As you stated on July 9, we should not expect that foreign adversaries, such as the PRC, “are supporting Russia for free.”⁴ Rather, we should anticipate and indeed operate under the assumption that Russia is passing information about vulnerabilities or counters to American and allied weapons systems to the PRC in support of its “no limits” partnership.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you share with the Select Committee, at the appropriate classification level, the following:

1. An assessment of Russia’s ability to mitigate or counter U.S. weapons systems in Ukraine;
2. The extent to which Russia has shared lessons-learned from battlefield innovation in Ukraine with the PRC, especially as it pertains to U.S. weapons systems;
3. Any efforts by the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) to adopt lessons learned from the battlefield in Ukraine or mirror Russian military innovations;
4. The administration’s plans to ensure the future effectiveness of American weapons systems against both Russia and the PRC in light of these threats; and
5. Steps to hold the PRC accountable for its support for Russian aggression in Ukraine.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your prompt response and to continuing our work together to protect our nation's security while countering our authoritarian adversaries.

Sincerely,



John Moolenaar
Chairman



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Ranking Member

CC:
The Secretary of Defense, The Honorable Lloyd Austin

⁴ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2024/07/09/remarks-by-apnsa-jake-sullivan-at-the-nato-summit-defense-industry-forum/>