



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on April 16, 2024

Zelensky Leverages Iran-Israel Crisis to Ask for More Funds

On April 13, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky declared that Iran's strike on Israel was a "[wake-up call](#)" for Washington to continue backing its American allies, including Kyiv.

"It is critical that the United States Congress make the necessary decisions to strengthen America's allies at this critical time," Zelensky said regarding Tehran's onslaught of missiles and drones on Israel over the past weekend, while alluding to the recent downturn of Western military aid to Ukraine.

Reuters reported that the Ukrainian leader urged the U.S. [Congress](#) to authorize a major [aid package](#) that has been stalled for months by Republican opposition.



AP Images
Volodymyr Zelensky

On [X](#), Zelensky linked Iran's attacks on Israel to Russia's actions in Ukraine, posting:

In [statements](#) mentioned by Russia Today, Zelensky conceded that Ukraine's situation on the front line in the conflict with Russia was worsening owing to "limited" military assistance from the West.

"The situation on the front during a hot war is always difficult. But these days — and especially in the Donetsk areas — it's getting harder," Zelensky said.

Volodymyr Omelyan, Ukraine's former infrastructure minister, was even more blunt in his remarks. In an interview with [Politico](#), Omelyan said, "I hope that Iran's attack on Israel will send a powerful message to Republicans, namely to Mr Trump — you cannot wait any more and think that those are small separate regional conflicts happening somewhere in Europe, Middle East, Asia,"

"China, Russia, Iran and North Korea persistently attack the West," the former Ukrainian minister added.

"You cannot negotiate with people who want to rob and kill you — and the time to educate them is over. Therefore, I hope that next week Congress will finally approve US aid to Israel and Ukraine," Omelyan concluded.

Previously, Trump promoted the notion that the only way to end the Russia-Ukraine conflict is if Kyiv ceded territory to Russia, an idea Zelensky has slammed as "[primitive](#)."

Amid stalled U.S. aid to Ukraine, the latter has become more forceful in its requirements in recent months, as can be seen by Ukrainian foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba's [demands](#) to "give us the damn Patriots."

"If we had enough air defense systems, namely Patriots, we would be able to protect not only the lives



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of our people, but also our economy from destruction,” Kuleba added, in remarks quoted by Politico. Besides, in [recent statements](#) to Rada TV, Kuleba appeared to threaten the West that Ukraine would ramp up oil prices by attacking Russian oil refineries if Western aid did not come in the desired amounts and at the desired times.

“You need to think in your own interests,” Kuleba said. “If your partners are saying: ‘We are giving you seven Patriot batteries, but we have a request for you, please don’t do this and that’ — then there is something to talk about.”

Other pro-Ukraine backers have followed suit, warning that if the Middle East security situation deteriorates, global support for Kyiv’s combat efforts against Moscow would drop.

Maksym Skrypchenko, president of the Ukrainian Transatlantic Dialogue Center think tank, told Politico in an [interview](#) that a broader conflict “could severely impact Ukraine’s interests. If resources are diverted to Israel, less remains for Ukraine ... any conflict that consumes resources needed by Ukraine negatively affects us.”

Furthermore, Skrypchenko elaborated that Iran’s attack on Israel could “bolster” U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson’s efforts to persuade more Republicans to pass a stalled national security supplemental bill, which would give military assistance to Israel, Ukraine, and Taiwan.

“The standalone aid package for Israel was previously unsuccessful, so coupling it with aid for Ukraine might be the only viable approach,” Skrypchenko posited. “The justification is compelling: Israel faced attacks with the same weaponry that Iran supplies to Russia.”

Indeed, various news outlets reported on April 15 that Johnson has pledged to push forward the long-stalled Ukraine aid bill sought by U.S. President Joe Biden.

Strikingly, Johnson [stated](#) that the House will vote on April 19 on the separate bills.

“There are precipitating events around the globe that we’re all watching very carefully,” Johnson told reporters after a GOP conference meeting on April 15. “And we know that the world is watching us to see how we react.”

Rebuffing worries over a vote to depose him by some Republicans if he moves on aid to Ukraine, Johnson [told](#) CNN, “I don’t spend my time worrying about motions to vacate. We’re having to govern here and we’re going to do our job.”

Notably, Zelensky has likened Ukraine’s situation to that of Israel. In 2022, he claimed he viewed Israel as a model for Ukraine’s future, [declaring](#) that Ukraine should become a “big Israel” in terms of internal security. Naysayers, however, have lambasted Zelensky’s views, singling out both [Israel’s](#) and [Ukraine’s](#) track records of [treating minorities](#).

For more than years, the Kyiv regime has conducted assaults on Russian-speaking eastern regions, often killing civilians. In 2014, for instance, Kyiv-linked paramilitary groups from Kharkov and Dnepropetrovsk attacked a rally of trade unionists in Odessa, setting fire to the Odessa Trade Union House, killing around 50 people.

In remarks to local media published on Zelensky’s [official website](#) at that time, Zelensky envisioned Ukraine’s post-conflict future as one having armed forces in “all institutions, supermarkets, cinemas, there will be people with weapons.”



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