

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 15, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to you in support of your upcoming meeting with President Putin in Geneva. Every American president since Franklin Roosevelt has met personally with the leader of the Soviet Union or Russia. We support your choice to continue this tradition and your efforts to create a stable and predictable U.S.-Russia relationship in support of strategic stability in Europe and the world. Your move to extend the New START Treaty with Russia shows your personal commitment to strong American leadership in creating a safer world.

In these talks we hope that you will prioritize ways that the United States and Russia can work together to reduce tensions in areas of dispute and cooperate on areas of global importance such as arms control to prevent a new nuclear arms race, addressing climate change, combating violent extremism, reducing cyber threats to national economies and infrastructure, and reducing global economic inequality.


The U.S. and Russia combined hold more than 90% of the world's nuclear warheads. You have previously stated that "the spread of nuclear weapons is the greatest threat facing the country and, I would argue, facing humanity," and that a nuclear arms race "harkens back to the Cold War and will do nothing to increase the day-to-day security of the United States." If we wish to avert such a nuclear buildup, or even the nightmare of nuclear conflict, diplomacy between the U.S. and Russia is crucial. We urge you to follow up on this diplomatic engagement with Russia by reviewing and reversing the current proposed expansion of nuclear weapons funding, so that our budgetary priorities conform with the vision that you have wisely articulated to "bring us closer to a world without nuclear weapons, so that the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are never repeated."

As you and many others have clearly stated, the United States and our European allies have many urgent and profound concerns with Russian behavior and we are confident that you will work to address such issues at the summit. At the same time, we also hope that the summit results in U.S. and Russian support for a path that can both protect the sovereignty of U.S. partners and allies and achieve a peaceful resolution of conflict in areas such as eastern Ukraine that have at times come dangerously close to triggering a wider war. We believe that armed conflict between Russia and the United States would be a catastrophe for both countries, for Europe, our allies, and for the world.

We support your aspirations when you stated ahead of this meeting that "the United States does not seek conflict. We want a stable and predictable relationship where we can work with

Russia.” We hope that this summit will be an important step on the road to this goal. Thank you for your efforts to achieve a modus vivendi with Russia and reduce tensions in Europe while protecting vital U.S. values and interests.

Sincerely,


PRAMILA JAYAPAL
Member of Congress

/s/
DONALD S. BEYER JR.
Member of Congress

/s/
ANDRÉ CARSON
Member of Congress

/s/
JESÚS G. "CHUY" GARCÍA
Member of Congress

/s/
RAÚL M. GRIJALVA
Member of Congress

/s/
SHEILA JACKSON LEE
Member of Congress

/s/
HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.
Member of Congress

/s/
MONDAIRE JONES
Member of Congress

/s/
RO KHANNA
Member of Congress

/s/
BARBARA LEE
Member of Congress

/s/
JAMES P. MCGOVERN
Member of Congress

/s/
ILHAN OMAR
Member of Congress

/s/
JAN SCHAKOWSKY
Member of Congress

/s/
ADAM SMITH
Member of Congress

/s/
JUAN VARGAS
Member of Congress