



STATEMENT

Ukraine must remain a priority for the Trudeau government

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ottawa, ON – The Hon. Michael Chong, Conservative Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay, Conservative Shadow Minister for National Defence, and Pierre Paul-Hus, Conservative Shadow Minister for Public Services and Procurement, today released the following statement as we approach the fifth month of Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine:

“The world irreversibly changed when Vladimir Putin launched his unprovoked and illegal attack on Ukraine on February 24. This attack, coming on the heels of a joint pact between the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China, is the first major European war between countries since the Second World War and a serious violation of the international order and our collective humanity.

“While Conservatives support actions taken to date by the Government of Canada, these efforts fail to reflect a response proportionate to the situation.

“Russia supplies 40 per cent of the natural gas in Europe and has already cut supplies to European democracies unwilling to meet Putin’s demands. Canada is the fifth largest natural gas producer in the world, but has not stepped up to the plate commensurately. The government’s commitment to supply a paltry 100,000 barrels per day equivalent of natural gas for European democracies by year’s end is completely insufficient. The Trudeau government could agree to supply much more, instead of calling on Saudi Arabia to produce more energy, as it recently did at the G7 Climate, Energy and Environment Ministers Meeting. The Trudeau government has failed to recognize that Canadian energy is vital to not only our economy, but also to Canada’s and Europe’s collective security.

“The Trudeau government has also failed to deliver on its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) commitments. It did not increase Canada’s defence spending to 2 per cent of GDP in the budget, a commitment Canada pledged to meet in NATO’s 2014 Wales Summit Declaration. This is despite the government voting for a motion on April 6, which called for an increase in defence spending to at least 2 per cent of GDP.

“The Trudeau government remains unserious about Canada’s defence. It’s latest boost to defence spending will only bring Canada from 1.39 per cent to 1.5 per cent of its GDP, far below the level needed to defend Canada and deter authoritarian aggression.

“Canada’s Arctic is vulnerable. Canada, like Ukraine, shares a border region with Russia. The Trudeau government must urgently increase our capabilities to defend Canada’s Arctic sovereignty and security. Yesterday’s announcement of \$4.9 billion of re-allocated spending over six years for NORAD modernization is simply not enough. Canada must join ballistic missile defence and much more needs to be done, and quickly, to adequately upgrade our Arctic security systems.

“The Trudeau government also needs to urgently deploy the \$500 million allocated for Ukraine’s military aid in its budget to purchase military equipment that Ukraine desperately needs. This should include artillery rounds and light armoured vehicles.

“The Trudeau government also needs to deliver on its commitment to isolate Russia diplomatically, instead of attending parties at the Russian embassy. That should include the expulsion of Russian diplomats engaged in subversive activities, as Canada’s closest allies have done by expelling some 400 Russian diplomats in recent months.

“Conservatives will continue to stand with Ukraine, the people of Ukraine, and the more than one million Canadians with ties to Ukraine. We will continue to propose strong, constructive measures to counter Russia’s aggression and will continue to call on the Trudeau government to strengthen Canada’s defence capabilities and to renew our commitment to NATO.”

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