

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 6, 2023

The Honorable John F. Sopko
Special Inspector General
Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
Arlington, Virginia

Dear Mr. Sopko,

We write today to request your assistance with identifying lessons that your office has learned from Afghanistan reconstruction that may be applicable to U.S. assistance efforts in Ukraine, as well as any recovery effort that could begin there in the future.

Since 2008, the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) has conducted rigorous oversight of the U.S. reconstruction effort in Afghanistan, which has cost American taxpayers more than \$146 billion since 2002. In addition to its hundreds of audits and investigations, SIGAR has issued several informative lessons learned reports on topics such as security assistance, economic development, monitoring and evaluation of aid programs, and anti-corruption efforts, among many others. All of them explain key lessons from Afghanistan that might also be applicable to U.S. assistance efforts in other countries.

Accordingly, we desire to learn more about how those lessons from Afghanistan could be applicable to the current situation in Ukraine, as the U.S. Congress has already appropriated more than \$113 billion for Ukraine assistance since last March.¹ Indeed, Afghanistan and Ukraine are very different countries. However, history teaches us that the way in which the United States provides assistance to war-torn countries is often the same—and so are many of the challenges and pitfalls.

We are also mindful that Ukraine may request help from the U.S. and other countries to recover from this ruinous war. While it is currently unclear what role, if any, the U.S. might have in such an effort, it will likely require a significant financial investment over time. In a recent joint statement, the Government of Ukraine, the European Commission, the World Bank Group, and the United Nations estimated that Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction will cost \$411 billion over 10 years.²

¹ "U.S. Direct Financial Support for Ukraine." Congressional Research Service. January 25, 2023. Page 1. (<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF12305>). Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Ukraine Response. January 2023. Page 9. (https://www.dodig.mil/Portals/48/FY2023_JSOP_UKRAINE_RESPONSE.pdf).

² Joint Press Release: "Updated Ukraine Recovery and Reconstruction Needs Assessment." Government of Ukraine, European Commission, World Bank Group, United Nations. March 23, 2023. (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2023/03/23/updated-ukraine-recovery-and-reconstruction-needs-assessment>).

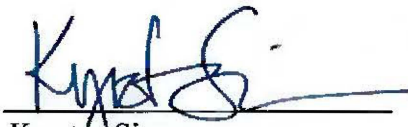
It is our firm belief that robust oversight of current and future U.S. assistance efforts in Ukraine is imperative for their success. A critical part of that oversight is ensuring the U.S. acts on key lessons from previous conflicts, including Afghanistan. Doing so will help us avoid repeating costly mistakes and protect the massive investment in Ukraine by American taxpayers from waste, fraud, abuse, and failure.

Thank you for your assistance. We look forward to receiving your response as soon as possible and to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,



John N. Kennedy
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Mike Braun
United States Senator