

Beat: Politics

## US SECRETARY ANTONY BLINKEN & UKRAINIAN COUNTERPART DMYTRO KULEBA BEFORE MEETING

### REAFFIRMING US SUPPORT TO UKRAINE

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**USPA NEWS** - Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken met on 13 April, with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba in Brussels. Secretary Blinken affirmed the United States' unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of Russia's ongoing aggression. The Secretary expressed concern about Russia's deliberate actions to escalate tensions with Ukraine, including through its aggressive rhetoric and disinformation, increasing ceasefire violations, and movement of troops in occupied Crimea and near Ukraine's borders. Secretary Blinken and Foreign Minister Kuleba discussed the importance of advancing rule of law and economic reforms to strengthen Ukraine's institutions, support anti-corruption efforts, and further its Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations. We publish the full transcript of their conversation, Source: U.S. Chief of Mission Residence, US State of Department

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« Well, good afternoon, everyone. I am very, very glad for this chance to meet with Foreign Minister Kuleba. We've "" this is our first opportunity to meet in person. We've spoken on the phone on several occasions. In fact, President Biden has spoken with President Zelenskyy as well. And I just wanted to reiterate what I've said to the foreign minister, and even more importantly, President Biden said to President Zelenskyy, which is the United States stands firmly behind the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Ukraine. And I'm here to reaffirm that with the foreign minister today. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken stated as an introductory of his conversation with his Ukrainian counterpart Foreign Minister Kuleba We publish the full transcript of their conversation, Source: U.S. Chief of Mission Residence, US State of Department

#### CONVERSATION OF SECRETARY OF STATE ANTONY J. BLINKEN & UKRAINIAN FORIEGN MINISTER KULEBA (FULL TRANSCRIPT)-----

SECRETARY BLINKEN: « Well, good afternoon, everyone. I am very, very glad for this chance to meet with Foreign Minister Kuleba. We've "" this is our first opportunity to meet in person. We've spoken on the phone on several occasions. In fact, President Biden has spoken with President Zelenskyy as well. And I just wanted to reiterate what I've said to the foreign minister, and even more importantly, President Biden said to President Zelenskyy, which is the United States stands firmly behind the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Ukraine. And I'm here to reaffirm that with the foreign minister today. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken stated as an introductory of his conversation with his Ukrainian counterpart Foreign Minister Kuleba Source: U.S. Chief of Mission Residence, US State of Department -----

And that's particularly important at a time when we're seeing unfortunately Russia take very provocative action when it comes to Ukraine. We're now seeing the largest concentration of Russian forces on Ukraine's border since 2014, and that is of deep concern not only to Ukraine, but to the United States, and indeed to many of our allies and partners. The foreign minister just came from a session with NATO and I'll be consulting with our close NATO allies and partners in the days ahead about the situation.-----

We'll also have an opportunity to discuss Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations, the very important work that Ukraine is doing to strengthen its democratic institutions, to advance the rule of law, to make key economic reforms, all of which are critical to NATO's "" to the Ukraine's future, and to its integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

In short, we have a lot to talk about. (Inaudible) I'm grateful to have you here today to see you, and look forward to our conversation.-----

FOREIGN MINISTER KULEBA: Yeah, thank you, sir. It's a big pleasure to have this opportunity to meet you in person after we have met on the phone twice. We had two very fruitful conversations. This meeting is extremely timely given what is happening along the

Ukrainian border with Russia and the occupied territories of Crimea, of Ukraine. And I would like to mention that Russian buildup is taking place not only along the border of Ukraine, but along the border of the democratic world. For thousand of kilometers, to the north and to the east of our border with Russia, there is no democracy. So this is the struggle that is taking place between democracies and authoritarianism. And in this struggle, the support of the United States is absolutely crucial and deeply appreciated.-----

It is, I think, a good symbol that we are meeting here in Brussels on the margins of the NATO events and the meetings because it once again reinforces a very simple message that Euro-Atlantic countries, they stand by Ukraine in its difficult situation. And Ukraine stands by the principles and values of the Euro-Atlantic community. And I'm sure that what has been already said publicly and through diplomatic channels to Russia in response to its aggressive actions will be supported by actions that will make it very clear for Russia that the price of its (inaudible) aggression against Ukraine will be too heavy for it to bear. And we will be discussing today how we can jointly ensure stability and prevent Russian and further aggression against Ukraine. Thank you. » Source: U.S. Chief of Mission Residence, US State of Department

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