

DOD, UDCG Continue to Look for Better Ways to Expedite Support to Ukraine

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By C. Todd Lopez, DOD News



Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III today spoke with Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov to discuss ongoing war efforts in Ukraine and details of the next meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group in September.

"During their call, Minister Umerov provided an update on the impact of Russia's continued attacks in Ukraine," Pentagon Press Secretary Air Force Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder said during a briefing today. "Secretary Austin and the minister also discussed the next Ukraine Defense Contact Group meeting, which will be held next month in support of Ukraine's urgent security assistance requirements."

The UDCG, spearheaded by Austin, met for the first time in Germany in April

2022 and meets monthly. The group is a way for the more than 50 participating nations to coordinate their assistance to Ukraine and focus on Ukraine's future defense needs.

Besides coordinating efforts to get much-needed military supplies to Ukraine, the UDCG also explores better ways to expedite the delivery of those materials.

"We are always looking at ways that we can expedite delivery of capabilities to the Ukrainians," Ryder said. "The Ukraine Defense Contact Group provides an excellent forum in which to have discussions to look at processes [and] procedures as [they relate] to ensuring that the Ukrainians have what they need on the battlefield to defend themselves."

Ryder said the U.S. has emphasized speedy delivery of systems to Ukraine from the start. In November 2022, for instance, the U.S. stood up the Security Assistance Group-Ukraine in Wiesbaden, Germany, to better coordinate training and equipping Ukrainian forces, and to help increase their situational awareness.



With more than 50 nations participating in the UDCG, Ryder said, supporting Ukraine is a complex effort — one the DOD will continue to uphold.

"That is work that is constantly ongoing," he said. "As evidenced by the fact

that you continue to see Russian forces conducting offensive action in the east of Ukraine, we also recognize the vital importance of moving as quickly as possible, so we'll stay after it."

