

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4606

COMMITTEES:
FINANCE

BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

BUDGET

INTELLIGENCE

RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

March 3, 2022

His Excellency Szabolcs Takács
Ambassador of Hungary to the United States
Embassy of Hungary
3910 Shoemaker Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ambassador Takács:

I write to you today at a moment of great tragedy for Ukraine, as Russian President Vladimir Putin continues his violent, unprovoked invasion of the country, in violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

President Putin's invasion is of course a tragedy as well for the broader international community. My thoughts are with the people of Hungary as your country confronts this conflict right across its borders.

Regarding the refugee crisis that President Putin has created through his violent invasion – which so far, according to the United Nations Refugee Agency, has seen more than one million men, women, and children flee their homes to safety in neighboring countries, including your own – I will continue supporting efforts here in Congress to ensure that Ukraine and its neighbors are resourced appropriately to address this challenge.

In the meantime, I want to call attention to a growing body of disturbing reports along Ukraine's western borders, which allege discriminatory treatment and processing of certain non-Ukrainian individuals – in particular, individuals from African nations. Many of these individuals are students studying in Ukraine. These students and other individuals must be able to seek safety, and any discriminatory treatment or actions that deny them that ability are unacceptable. I echo the sentiments of the African Union¹, the US Department of State², and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees³, and highlight this right of all people who are fleeing conflict.

I certainly acknowledge the incredibly challenging circumstances that security personnel and other authorities are under as they work to quickly and effectively facilitate historic refugee

¹ *Statement of the African Union on the reported ill treatment of Africans trying to leave Ukraine*, dated 28 February, 2022

² Tweet from the Bureau of African Affairs (@AsstSecStateAF), dated 28 February, 2022
<https://twitter.com/AsstSecStateAF/status/1498406259569143808>

³ *OCHA/UNHCR – Press Conference: Humanitarian Appeal for Ukraine*, dated 1 March, 2022

flows in response to dire and urgent circumstances. I also recognize and welcome the stated commitments that your government, and many in Hungary, have made to take in people fleeing to safety. I urge all governments and authorities to ensure that all individuals – regardless of race, religion, or nationality – are afforded equal access to their right to seek safety.

Please know that I am also writing to Ukraine, and officials of other neighboring countries, to ensure that all authorities are ensuring equal access. I will continue to monitor conditions related to forcibly displaced persons at the borders – including the African diaspora – and I will continue to support resources for Ukraine and neighboring countries to aid in these efforts.

I thank you for your government's attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark R. Warner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator