



Readout of Assistant Secretary Matthew Axelrod's and Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen's Trip to Ukraine

November 3, 2023

Assistant Secretary Matthew Axelrod of the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security and Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen of the Justice Department's National Security Division jointly traveled to Kyiv, Ukraine from October 30 through November 1 to reaffirm and strengthen further the U.S. Government's close partnership with Ukrainian counterparts to stop the flow of sensitive technologies to aid the Russian war machine.

The trip was part of the work of the Disruptive Technology Strike Force, an interagency law enforcement effort co-led by A/S Axelrod and AAG Olsen designed to target illicit actors, protect supply chains, and prevent critical technologies from being acquired by authoritarian regimes and hostile nation states. A/S Axelrod and AAG Olsen were joined by Deputy Assistant Attorney General and Counselor to the Attorney General for International Affairs Bruce Swartz, the Resident Legal Advisor in Kyiv Jared Kimball, and other officials from the Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The Strike Force delegation met with the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, including Prosecutor General Andriy Kostin; the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, including Deputy Ministers Andrii Haichenko and Iryna Mudra; the Security Service of Ukraine, including Deputy Head Oleksandr Poklad; and the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine, including Service Head Oleksandr Lytvynenko. Along with these meetings, the delegation visited the Kyiv Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Expertise of the Ministry of Justice (KFI), which is overseen by Director Oleksandr Ruvyn and Deputy Director Dr. Nataliia Nestor. The visit to KFI gave the delegation the opportunity to view weapons recovered from the front lines, including ballistic missiles, air-guided missiles, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

The meetings provided an opportunity to demonstrate the U.S. Government's commitment to preventing and deterring the ability of the Russian government and its proxies from obtaining critical technology used in UAVs, missiles, and other weapons systems to support its unprovoked and unjustified war against Ukraine. In addition, the Commerce and Justice Department officials described their efforts to bring criminal prosecutions and other enforcement actions aimed at stopping the illicit transfer of technology. The two governments further discussed opportunities for the Ukrainian government to support the work of the Strike Force, including through information sharing and the exchange of best practices of forensic analysis.