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## Ukraine first lady Olena Zelenska begs US not to 'let us die' over funding row

### *Перша леді України Олена Зеленська благає США не «дати нам померти» через суперечку про фінансування*

*Перша леді України звернулася до міжнародної спільноти з проханням продовжити фінансову підтримку України у війні з росією. Олена Зеленська дала інтерв'ю BBC після того, як сенатори-республіканці заблокували ухвалення багатомільярдного законопроєкту про допомогу США. Вона закликала Захід не припиняти фінансову підтримку України, попередивши, що без подальшої фінансової підтримки з боку Заходу Україну "залишать помирати". Назвавши політичний скандал в Америці справою життя для українців, О. Зеленська заявила, що дуже боляче бачити ознаки того, що палке бажання допомогти може згаснути.*

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-russia-funding-olena-zelenska-b2461234.html>

US Congress has failed to pass a £88bn package of wartime funding for Ukraine and Israel. Ukraine's first lady has appealed to the international community to keep up financial support for its war with Russia, after Republican senators blocked the passage of a multibillion-dollar US aid bill.

Calling the political row in America "a matter of life" for Ukrainians, Olena Zelenska said: "We really need the help. In simple words, we cannot get tired of this situation, because if we do, we die."

"And if the world gets tired, they will simply let us die."

Volodymyr Zelensky's wife was speaking in an interview with the BBC on Friday after the US Congress failed to pass a \$110bn (£88bn) package of wartime funding for Ukraine and Israel as well as other national security priorities. The full interview is due to air on Sunday.

"It hurts us greatly to see the signs that the passionate willingness to help may fade," she said. "It is a matter of life for us. Therefore, it hurts to see that."

The White House has repeatedly sounded the alarm about what might happen to Ukraine if further funding is not approved soon, suggesting it will stall Kyiv's progress on the battlefield and risk giving Russia the upper hand.

Earlier this week, president Joe Biden pleaded with Republicans for a fresh infusion of military aid for Ukraine.

"If Putin takes Ukraine, he won't stop there," Mr Biden said.

He predicted that Mr Putin would go on to attack a Nato member state, and then "we'll have American troops fighting Russian troops".

It came after Mr Zelensky unexpectedly cancelled an address to the US Senate where he would have appealed for fresh aid.

Ukraine's wartime president has been pleading with his allies in the West for financial and military help against Russian forces as Moscow's invasion passed beyond the 650-day mark.

Majority leader Chuck Schumer said Mr Zelensky's virtual appearance was cancelled after "something came up at the last minute".

Although the war has been largely static along most of its 600-mile front line in recent weeks, both sides have continued to launch airstrikes. Ukraine is working to keep up the pressure over the winter, in order to prevent Russia from solidifying its battle lines.

Separately, UK foreign secretary Lord Cameron also appealed for Ukraine's aid package to be passed during a two-day trip to the US, saying that blocking funds would be a "Christmas present" for Mr Putin and China's president, Xi Jinping.

Lord Cameron, who was prime minister during Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, also warned "American lives" could be at risk if the Russian president targeted a Nato ally next.

"I see it as the great test for our generation, the great challenge for our generation. Are we going to defend this democracy?" he asked.

"We should pass this money to the Ukrainians, we should back them and make sure that it's Putin that loses, because if that money doesn't get voted through, there are only two people who will be smiling.

"One of them is Vladimir Putin in Russia. The other one is Xi Jinping in Beijing. I don't know about you, but I don't want to give either of those people a Christmas present."