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Press Statement
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Deputy Spokesperson

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Today, the United States, EU, and Canada took coordinated action in response to Russia's continued aggression against Ukraine by imposing sanctions on individuals who orchestrated the unjustified November 25 attack on three Ukrainian naval vessels near the Kerch Strait. Additionally, the United States imposed sanctions on six Russian defense firms, including shipbuilding companies; two individuals involved in the November sham "elections" in Russia-controlled eastern Ukraine; and two Russian energy and construction companies operating in Crimea.

In the five years since Russia started its campaign of aggression against Ukraine, we have stood firmly with our Transatlantic partners in opposition to Russia's malign and illegal actions, including its attack near the Kerch Strait. Russia's attack represented a dangerous escalation and a violation of international law. We call upon Russia to immediately return to Ukraine the seized vessels and detained crewmembers, and keep the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov open to ships transiting to and from Ukrainian ports. We also call on Russia to respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters.

The message to Russia is clear — the international community will not stand by while Russia continues to violate international norms and laws and the Transatlantic community stands united in our efforts to counter Russian aggression.