

Four former Prime Ministers appeal for Canadian leadership on frozen Russian assets

Over 70 former world leaders and multi-partisan Canadian organizations call for Canadian leadership on transferring Russian state assets.

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA, April 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Over 70 signatories call on Canada to take the lead in transferring Russia's frozen state assets to a compensation fund for supporting Ukraine - in an open letter published Wednesday in the [National Post](#). In a multi-partisan appeal, signatories call on all political parties to commit to Canadian leadership on transferring Russia's frozen assets before a key European sanctions vote in July. Signatories warn that if that vote fails, hundreds of billions could be returned to Russia - including \$22 billion CAD in [funds under Canada's jurisdiction](#).



The Democratic Strategy Initiative helped spearhead a high-level open letter calling on Canada to lead on seizing Russia's frozen assets

The letter, co-organized by the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights and the Democratic Strategy Initiative, is endorsed by top global statespeople and Canadian civil society leaders.

Former Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Liberal Ministers Allan Rock, Lloyd Axworthy and Irwin Cotler endorsed the appeal, alongside former Prime Ministers and Cabinet Ministers from around the world.

Noted experts who have joined this call include Nobel Peace Laureate Oleksandra Matviichuk, former World Bank President Robert Zoellick, former International Monetary Fund Chief Economist Olivier Blanchard, Magnitsky Justice Campaign Head Sir Bill Browder, and former US Treasury Secretary and President of Harvard University Larry Summers.

Over 80% of Canadians [support seizing Russian assets](#) to aid Ukraine (Nanos, Oct 2023).



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Aaron Gasch Burnett

Signatories call on Canada, as the next G7 host, to act with principle, resolve, and urgency, warning that if European sanctions lapse, over \$200 billion USD in frozen Russian state assets – including \$22 billion CAD in Canadian funds– could be returned to Russia as soon as August 1st.

"So far, Canada and the G7 have committed to using the interest on these assets, or using these frozen assets as

collateral for loans to support Ukraine—but seizing and transferring the principal is the crucial step for funding Ukrainian defence and reconstruction in the needed amounts—and to prevent Putin's bailout," says DSI Senior Fellow Aaron Gasch Burnett. "These high-level signatories have signed because they know how urgent this is now. We may only have a few months to prevent the West from being responsible for Putin's \$200 billion bailout."

"This letter is a compelling call for justice. Transferring these assets will set an important precedent - telling Putin and dictators like him that they must pay for their crimes - while compensating their victims and helping rebuild their lives," says Brandon Silver, an international human rights lawyer, RWCHR Director of Policy and Projects, and 2024 Magnitsky Award Laureate.

Signatories Senator Donna Dasko, Bill Browder, Katherine Vellinga, Yuliya Ziskina and DSI Senior Fellow Aaron Gasch Burnett are all available for further interviews on this open letter.

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