

Hungary to Receive €13 Billion If Orbán Supports New Military Aid Package for Ukraine

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The world beyond Europe does not share its position on the conflict in Ukraine and does not understand the double standards approach compared to conflicts in other parts of the world, Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó highlighted in an interview with the Magyar Nemzet newspaper. His comments were made on the same day as the meeting of EU foreign affairs ministers in Kiev, which failed to unblock a €500-million package of military assistance for Ukraine because Hungary kept a firm veto on the aid, something it has maintained since May.

"I can say that the world outside of Europe is already waiting for the end of the war because they don't understand many things. They don't understand, for example, how it can be that when a war occurs outside Europe, the European Union looks down with fantastic moral superiority, appealing to the parties for peace, advocates negotiations and an immediate end to violence. But when war breaks out in Europe, the EU stokes the conflict and supplies weapons, and whoever talks about peace is immediately stigmatised," [said](#) Hungary's top diplomat.

Szjijártó said that the world does not understand "why Europe made the conflict global" and why people in Asia, Latin America and Africa must pay the price of "rising inflation, high energy prices or unstable food supplies."

He added that outside Europe, Hungary's position is viewed with "great respect," which he experienced more than once during the UN General Assembly.

Since the start of the conflict, Hungary has consistently opposed sanctions against Russian energy and arms shipments to Ukraine. In effect, Budapest has been a constant thorn in EU designs on Ukraine. For this reason, to increase the aid budget for Kiev, the European Commission intends to unfreeze around €13 billion of funding for Hungary. Budapest has

repeatedly stated that Ukraine would not receive a cent from the EU.

As the Financial Times newspaper noted, with this action, it is possible to obtain the support of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to increase the bloc's budget and significant financial assistance for Ukraine. It is recalled that Orbán's chief of staff, Gergely Gulyás, previously said that Ukraine would not receive a penny from the EU budget – since unanimous support was needed – until Hungary received European funds.

“The European Commission intends to unfreeze about €13 billion in funding for Hungary by the end of November, three informed officials said,” FT reported. “Two of them said the allocation of funds was partly motivated by a desire to win Orbán's support for the budget increase.”

Thus, according to the article, authorities said that the judicial reform carried out by Hungary in May will allow the commission to unlock these €13 billion, which is more than half of the frozen funds.

Earlier, the head of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, said that the European Commission had reviewed the EU's multi-annual budget for the period 2024 to 2027 and proposed that countries increase it by €66 billion to help Ukraine implement migration and refugee programs and strengthen the bloc's competitiveness.

Orbán continues to blast the EU's stubborn policy on Ukraine and said on September 29 that the West had failed to “calmly assess” the situation there and that Hungary would be proven right.

“You can only enter into war if you have a clear goal and know what tools you will use. Otherwise, politics cannot account for the lives lost,” he said, adding that the frontlines are frozen, yet tens of thousands are dying without any indication of when the conflict will end.

Regarding Ukraine's potential European Union membership, the Hungarian prime minister said he would be cautious with such plans, noting that it required the approval of all 27 member states, and he had not seen “an irresistible desire” by Hungary's parliament to approve it within the next two years.

Responding to a question on the EU funding withheld from Hungary, Orbán said,

“Some of that money may be in Ukraine already” and that since the EU lacks the money it has promised to Kiev while promising renewed support, “it stands to reason to think that the money they have promised but not delivered [to a member state] is already gone.”

This statement likely triggered the European Commission to unfreeze about €13 billion in funding for Hungary by the end of November, hoping that Orbán will give up his stubborn position on not wanting to ruin his economy and country for the sake of Ukraine, which has been overly mobilising members of the Hungarian minority into the Ukrainian military. It remains to be seen if the €13 billion will entice Hungary to approve the €500-million package of military assistance for Ukraine but it likely will be.

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Featured image: Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán gives an interview to Kossuth Rádió on Dec. 2, 2022 (Source: MTI/Prime Minister's Press Office/Zoltán Fischer)

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