

February 28, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Bondi  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

I write to urge you to reconsider the disbanding of the Department of Justice's Task Force KleptoCapture, the Kleptocracy Team, and the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative, as announced in your February 5, 2025, memorandum entitled, "Total Elimination of Cartels and Transnational Criminal Organizations." These working groups are vital to the United States' fight against international criminal organizations, which are firmly linked with foreign kleptocrats. The work of the Kleptocracy Team and Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative will be particularly important in narco-states in which government institutions are infiltrated by drug cartels.

Task Force KleptoCapture was formed in 2022 after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Task Force, which was supported by a bipartisan funding effort of \$67 million, enforced sanctions, export restrictions, and economic countermeasures that the United States imposed on Russia. As of Spring 2024, Task Force KleptoCapture had secured the forfeiture of, or consent to forfeiture of, approximately \$170 million worth of private oligarch assets, with approximately \$450 million more pending in litigation.

The Kleptocracy Team is responsible for implementing the Department's Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative through investigation and litigation to recover the proceeds of foreign official corruption. The Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative is a 15-year-old program with a proven track record. By the end of 2023, the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative had recovered more than \$1.7 billion for the benefit of people harmed by acts of corruption and abuse of office.

Given the effectiveness of Task Force KleptoCapture, the Kleptocracy Team, and the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative, I request that you reinstate these anti-kleptocracy working groups and arm them with the resources to pursue investigation and prosecution of foreign corruption linked with drug cartels and transnational criminal organizations.

I also request that the Department provide answers to the following questions and schedule a staff briefing on the matter:

1. What will happen to cases already begun by Task Force KleptoCapture?

- a. Please provide a detailed summary of the number of cases pending, their status in litigation, whether forfeiture or consent to forfeiture has been secured, and dollar amount of assets involved for each case.
2. What will happen to cases already begun by members of the Kleptocracy Team and the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative?
  - a. Please provide a detailed summary of the number of cases pending, their status in litigation, whether forfeiture or consent to forfeiture has been secured, and dollar amount of assets involved for each case.
3. Congress specifically appropriated \$67 million in 2022 to support the work of Task Force KleptoCapture. Please describe how much, if any, funding remained unspent for the Task Force as of February 5, 2025.
4. Please describe whether the disbanding of Task Force KleptoCapture, the Kleptocracy Team, and the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative will result in any reduction in the number of attorneys, investigators, or support staff in any DOJ office or component.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator