

UKRAINE PEACE APPEAL: TOWARDS A MORE INFORMED SOLIDARITY

FROM UKRAINIAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
TO PACIFIST AND PEACEBUILDING MOVEMENTS WORLDWIDE



May 2023

1. We, Ukrainian civil society activists, feminists, peacebuilders, mediators, dialogue facilitators, mental health practitioners, human rights defenders and academics, recognise that a growing strategic divergence worldwide has led to certain voices, on the left and right and amongst pacifists to argue for an end to the provision of military support to Ukraine. They also call for an immediate cease-fire between Ukraine and Russia as the strategy for "ending the war". These calls for negotiation with Putin without resistance are in reality calls to surrender our sovereignty and territorial integrity.
2. We ask for nothing less than the full respect for internationally agreed humanitarian and human rights law and the UN Charter and the practical means to defend ourselves, our popular sovereignty and our territorial integrity, to resist the Kremlin's expansionist and imperialistic attempts to re-colonize its neighbours. Yes, we need diplomacy, and yes, we need humanitarian aid, but make no mistake, **Ukraine needs to continue to be supported with modern weaponry** and other military assistance and strict economic and political sanctions on the Kremlin.
3. **Stopping weapon deliveries to Ukraine now would not lead to "peace by peaceful means"** but offer a pause for Putin's authoritarian regime to renew its aggression against Ukraine. It is a dangerous call for appeasement. We have documented how the Kremlin treats prisoners of war and civilians in the occupied areas. We have seen how it treats its own legitimate political opposition. **This is not peace.** We believe that a strong defence and sustained resistance with steady and informed global solidarity for the Ukrainian people is the best incentive in such a radically asymmetric conflict for a cessation of violence and a negotiated withdrawal of Russian forces.
4. **Acceptance of Russia's occupation of Ukrainian territories and resulting impunity would set a dangerous precedent** for other authoritarian regimes wishing to revise international borders. It would also lead to an increase in the proliferation of nuclear weapons globally, as it would signal to others a destructive idea that possession of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee of one's security.
5. **We ask that international organisations and movements respect the right of Ukrainians** to be at the front and centre of determining how to make their peace and how to defend themselves and their rights. We ask for respect for our calls for inclusion and that when it comes to determining our future there should be **"nothing about us without us"**. We object to conferences and marches for "peace in Ukraine" where Ukrainians are neither meaningfully involved nor fairly represented.
6. **We find the language on the right and left that Ukrainian soldiers are somehow fighting as proxy's for the West deeply offensive.** This argument denies us our humanity and diminishes Ukraine's history of hard-won independence and the legitimacy of the peoples' choice of their democratically elected government. This is deceptive and harmful political rhetoric. Russia's invasion and illegal annexation of parts of Ukraine in 2014 was a result of Russian aggression and expansionism and was not a response to any credible threat.
7. **We appreciate continued international mediation and mediation support for humanitarian negotiations** calling for Russian withdrawal and on the exchange of prisoners of war, return of deported Ukrainian children, eliminating the nuclear threat and for the free transport of grain. These are hugely important, should be sustained and developed further.
8. We ask for your continued international understanding and informed solidarity. This needs to be done with a **new imagination and a new approach to working internationally for peace** with mutual respect, understanding our complexities, sustaining, and not breaking social connections and networks of the global constituency for justice, peace and democracy.
9. We believe in the face of this resistance, and with your support, over time, we will overturn Russia's unsustainable occupation, and they will lose this brutal and illegal war of attrition. We hold them to account for what they have done. We know that solidarity comes at a price, and this price is shared across many shoulders. **We choose to live in a world where human lives matter, where democracy matters, where international law matters,** and we have not given up on fighting for the world we want to see for our children and their children.
10. **We thank the international community for standing beside us and for sharing this painful price for peace.**



OTHER IMPORTANT UKRAINIAN ARTICULATIONS FOR PEACE:

- [Zelensky's 10-point Peace Plan, November 2022](#)
- [7 Points on The War And Dialogue From Ukrainian Mediators And Dialogue Facilitators, May 2022](#)
- ["The Right to Resist." A Feminist Manifesto, 2022](#)
- [The Sustainable Peace Manifesto, February 2023](#)

This Appeal has been initiated by **the Ukrainian Community of Mediators and Dialogue Facilitators, and Ukrainian Feminist Network for Freedom and Democracy**; and supported by many activists and organizations of Ukrainian civil society.

For the full list of signatories see <https://www.ukrainepeaceappeal2023.info>

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