

Paul Grod
National President
Ukrainian Canadian Congress

Mr. Grod,

Our Conservative Government is pleased to be working closely with the Ukrainian Canadian community and Government of Ukraine on important issues like standing against the aggression of the Putin regime in Ukraine and supporting economic growth and trade between our countries.

Sincerely,

Jenni Byrne,
National Campaign Manager
Conservative Party of Canada

Canadian Heritage and Historical Recognition

Canada's pluralism is one of our country's greatest strengths, and our Conservative Government has a proven track record of strengthening our unity in diversity. In 2010 our Conservative government launched the Inter-action program, which has supported more than 100 grassroots community events and projects that foster the successful integration of individuals and communities and the building of a socially cohesive society. It focuses on initiatives that advance intercultural/interfaith understanding, civic memory and pride, and respect for core democratic values. Recently, we increased the amount of funding available under the Events program to a maximum of \$25,000 per eligible event. Moreover, in 2008 we established the Community Historical Recognition Fund to support projects that teach Canadians about the experiences of members of Canada's immigrant communities who suffered due to discriminatory immigration restrictions. We have also been a contributor and active partner in the development of the Global Centre for Pluralism.

Our Conservative Government is proud of our record supporting community infrastructure, including cultural community centres. We established the New Building Canada Plan, which is the longest and largest federal investment in infrastructure in Canadian history. Through this plan, Canadian communities benefit from the Gas Tax Fund, which provides \$2 billion per year for a wide range of projects, including cultural facilities.

We were proud to support effective projects in partnership with Canada's Ukrainian community, including the Ukrainian Jewish Encounter, and most recently the Holodomor National Awareness Tour, which will travel across the country educating Canadians about the Holodomor famine genocide (1932-33). Our Conservative Government has also given unwavering support to the Memorial to Victims of Communism to be built in our nation's capital. The Memorial will honour the more than 100 million lives lost under communist regimes and pay tribute to the Canadian ideals of liberty, democracy and human rights.

Our Conservative Government took a leadership role in recognizing the victims of the First World War Internment Operations and committing to educating Canadians about this tragic chapter in our history by contributing \$10 million for the establishment of the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund in 2008. Since then, Conservative Ministers and Members of Parliament have unveiled memorials across the country, including two major centres in Spirit Lake, QC and Banff, AB.

Accordingly, the Conservative Party would support a motion to establish October 28 as the annual day of commemoration of Canada's First National Internment Operations (1914-1920), should it be brought forward for consideration in Parliament.

Canada - Ukraine Relations

Our Conservative Government has been steadfast in supporting Ukraine and it is one of our top foreign policy priorities. During his historic address to Canada's Parliament last year, President Poroshenko said: "It is in our time of need that we see our friends, and there is no other way to put it: Canada is a friend indeed."

The Prime Minister was the first G7 leader to visit Ukraine following Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, and he has returned to Ukraine several times since. He also worked with other world leaders to suspend the G8 structure and condemn Putin's actions on the international stage.

On July 31, 2015, we were proud to announce the extension of Operation REASSURANCE, which is Canada's contribution in support of NATO efforts to promote stability and security in Central and Eastern Europe. This mission is also part of our broader response to the Putin regime's aggression in Ukraine. Our position has been clear: we recognize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and will never recognize the illegal Russian occupation of Crimea or any other region of that country. We strongly condemn the illegal incarceration in Russia of Ukrainian citizens, and have called on Russia to immediately end their detention and ensure they are returned to Ukraine. We have made significant contributions to NATO's Ukrainian assurance mission and directly to the Ukrainian government itself.

We have provided military training and equipment to Ukraine, which includes tens of thousands of sets of clothing, tactical communications systems, explosive ordnance disposal equipment, tactical medical kits, as well as night and thermal goggles. We have deployed Canadian Armed Forces members to Western Ukraine military training, and provided four CF-18 fighter jets for Baltic Air Policing.

A re-elected Conservative Government will also negotiate a Defence Cooperation Agreement with Ukraine that will allow us to better cooperate on security issues, military training, and defence research and materiel, among many other areas. Upon negotiating a Defence Cooperation Agreement with Ukraine, a re-elected Conservative Government will add Ukraine to Canada's Automatic Firearms Country Control List.

Our Conservative Government is leading the way with the toughest sanctions regime in the world against Putin. We have sanctioned over 280 individuals and entities, which is more than the United States and European Union. Although our sanctions to date have been very successful, Canada's ability to track financial flows of Russian capital and to apply its sanctions with full impact can be further improved. A re-elected Conservative Government will establish a Financial Task Force comprised of foreign policy experts and financial analysts to better track

Russian capital flows in global markets. The focus would be Russian state-owned enterprises, as well as individuals and entities targeted by our sanctions and who are responsible for the crisis. The goal of the task force would be to track Russian capital to ensure that sanctions are being properly implemented and to identify other potential targets for sanctions.

Our Government has also provided significant financial support to Ukraine, and we have committed more than \$700 million in humanitarian aid, development assistance, economic stabilization, and security, democracy and human rights support since the crisis began. We were also proud to have concluded the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement, which is expected to expand bilateral merchandise trade between our two countries by almost 20 percent.

As part of his military invasion of Ukraine, Putin has waged an information war against Ukraine, using television, the Internet, and social media tools to spread misinformation and manipulate public opinion about the situation. A re-elected Conservative government will help Ukraine push back against Putin's propaganda machine. We will establish a Digital Freedom Fund with an investment of \$10 million over four years to support international groups and independent media to counter Russian propaganda in Ukraine and Eastern Europe.

Immigration to Canada

Our Conservative Government has proudly presided over the highest sustained level of immigration in Canadian history. In fact, unlike successive past Liberal governments, ours is the first in history that, faced with a global recession, did not cut immigration to Canada. The reason we didn't cut immigration is because we understand, given the demographic and economic pressures in front of us, that a long-term, large-scale immigration program is in this country's interest.

We have expanded our immigration programs and created new streams for skilled trade workers, students and entrepreneurs -- the people we need to ensure our long-term prosperity. We have also maintained high levels of humanitarian and family immigration, creating new avenues for loved ones abroad to be reunited with family in Canada. In fact, family reunification has increased by 25 percent over the life of our Government after being slashed by 45 percent by the Chretien Liberals.

Our proven record clearly demonstrates a commitment to expanding the avenues available for newcomers to come to Canada as permanent residents. Since 2006, we have proudly welcomed close to 22,000 new permanent residents from Ukraine, and we have seen a 450 percent increase in the number of students from Ukraine studying in Canada. We will continue to assess the resources devoted to the Canadian Embassy in Kiev to ensure that they are appropriate for the timely processing of applications.