



КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

CONGRÈS DES UKRAINIEN-CANADIENS

May 4, 2011

Mr Viktor Yanukovych  
President of Ukraine  
st. 11 Bankova  
Kyiv, Ukraine  
01220

Dear Mr. President:

**Re: Protest Over Law to Include Soviet Red Army Flag in Victory Day Celebrations**

On May 8-9, the world observes the "Day of Remembrance and Reconciliation" with sadness commemorating all those killed in World War II. The memory of this tragic war unites humanity in a common effort to prevent the recurrence of such conflicts.

The main culprits of the bloody pages of history in the years 1939-1945 were two totalitarian regimes - Nazi and Soviet, which account for millions of innocent victims. The world community has condemned both regimes and any attempts to rehabilitate their criminal pasts.

In 2006, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution that paired the Nazi crimes to those of communism and urged the member states of the Council of Europe to review the history of communism and unequivocally condemn its crimes. Such a definitive position of the international community must be the basis upon which we act going forward.

Restoring and honouring the symbols of this totalitarian past adversely affects the education of younger generations and is unacceptable in civilized and democratic countries. As such we were appalled when Ukraine's Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) passed a bill titled "Memorializing the Victory in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945" which designates the Soviet Red Army flag an official World War II victory celebration banner that would be included as part of official Victory Day commemorations on May 9.

Exalting this red flag during the events commemorating the end of the second World War will be negatively perceived by the international community. Signing this law that will require the flag to be hung from government buildings alongside Ukraine's national yellow-and-blue banner, will cause division in the country, create civil unrest and desecrate the memory of those who perished due to Soviet repression.

These actions will cause significant harm to Ukraine's international reputation and cast doubt on the commitment of Ukraine's current leadership to disassociate itself from a totalitarian past.

We call on you, Mr. President, to do the right thing and veto this provocative legislation. Such an important act will assure the citizens of Ukraine and the world community that the return of

past totalitarian symbols is impossible and the development of Ukraine as a free democratic state is irreversible.

Sincerely,  
UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Grod". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paul M. Grod  
President

cc: Mr. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada  
Mr. Eugene Czolij, President of the Ukrainian World Congress