



КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

CONGRÈS DES UKRAINIEN-CANADIENS

May 17, 2018

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, PC, MP  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

**Re: Ukrainian political prisoners illegally jailed by Russia**

Ukrainian political prisoner Oleh Sentsov was arrested on May 11, 2014 in Crimea on suspicion of "plotting terrorist acts" and has since been imprisoned in a Russian jail. On May 14, 2018, Mr. Sentsov declared a hunger strike. In a letter to his lawyer, Sentsov wrote, "The only condition for ending it is the release of all Ukrainian political prisoners held by Russia."

In taking this courageous stand in defence of liberty, Oleh Sentsov joins Volodymyr Balukh, a Ukrainian political prisoner illegally jailed in Russian-occupied Crimea, who has been on a hunger strike for 59 days in protest of Russia's violations of internationally recognized human rights. The Russian regime has illegally imprisoned over 50 Ukrainian citizens, including Sentsov, Balukh, Oleskandr Kolchenko, Stanislav Klikh and many others.

We are disappointed that since adopting the *Justice for Victims of Foreign Corrupt Officials Act (Magnitsky Act)* in October 2017, the Government of Canada has taken no action against Russian officials responsible for the illegal imprisonment and violation of human rights of Ukrainian political prisoners.

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) calls on the Government of Canada to demand that Russia immediately release these Ukrainian political prisoners and that Canada utilize the *Magnitsky Act* to implement sanctions against Russian officials responsible for gross violations of human rights.

As one of Ukraine's staunchest international allies, Canada has a unique opportunity to leverage its G7 Presidency to support peace and security for Ukraine and to ensure that Ukrainian political prisoners imprisoned by Russia are released and returned home to their families. Accordingly, the UCC calls on the Government of Canada to ensure that ending Russia's aggression against Ukraine be a priority focus of the upcoming G7 Leaders' Summit.

Yours sincerely,  
UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

Paul Grod, National President

cc: The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, PC, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs