



January 31, 2022

Briefing Note to Members of Parliament Deterring a further Russian Invasion of Ukraine

Recommendations

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) calls on Canada's Members of Parliament to:

- Support the provision of defensive weapons to Ukraine by Canada;
- Support the strengthening of Canadian sanctions against Russia for its aggression against Ukraine.

The Issue

In February 2014, Russia invaded Ukraine. Since 2014, Russia has occupied Crimea, parts of the east Ukrainian oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk, and prosecuted a war in eastern Ukraine, where over 13,000 people have been killed, 30,000 people wounded and 1.5 million internally displaced.

In November 2021, Russia once more intensified troop and materiel movements near Ukraine's borders. A series of diplomatic discussions in the last weeks between the United States, NATO, Ukraine and Russia, yielded no concrete results nor commitments from Russia to de-escalate its aggression against Ukraine.

The UCC, and the Ukrainian Canadian community, believes strongly that now is the time to act to deter a further Russian invasion, rather than wait until Russia further invades Ukraine to react. The most effective way to deter a further Russian invasion of Ukraine is to take proactive, rather than reactive, steps.

The UCC welcomes the extension and expansion of Operation UNIFIER, Canada's military training mission in Ukraine, announced by the Government of Canada on January 26. In the long term, the extension and expansion of this critical mission will strengthen Ukraine's defenses. However, the threat of a further Russian invasion grows every day and the Ukrainian Armed Forces need assistance now.

The provision of defensive weapons to Ukraine is strongly supported by the Canadian people, would create significant deterrence against a further Russian invasion of sovereign Ukrainian territory, and would assist the Ukrainian people in defending their freedom and their homeland.

In addition to immediately providing defensive weapons to Ukraine, Canada, together with allies, need to significantly strengthen two types of sanctions against Russia – economic and personal.

Stronger sanctions will deprive the Russian state of revenue with which to continue to wage war, and it will reinforce the message to the Russian government that the West is resolute in countering Russian aggression. War must be demonstrated to the Kremlin to be more expensive than peace.

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress urges Members of Canada's Parliament to support the provision of defensive weapons to Ukraine and the strengthening of sanctions against Russia.

Background – Defensive weapons

The United States, the United Kingdom, Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, the Czech Republic and, most recently, Denmark, are supplying defensive weapons to Ukraine's Armed Forces in response to Russia's recent escalation of aggression and threats against Ukraine.

Ukraine is under severe threat of increased Russian aggression **now** and needs weapons **now**. Ukrainians are not asking anyone to fight for them. But they need our help to defend their country against a colonial power seeking their destruction. The Government of Ukraine has requested that the Government of Canada provide defensive weapons to Ukraine.

The Canadian people overwhelmingly support the provision of weapons to Ukraine. According to a survey conducted by Abacus Data on January 20-21, 3 in 4 Canadians support or are open to supporting Canada providing defensive weapons to Ukraine. The number of Canadians (42%) who explicitly support the provision of weapons to Ukraine

by Canada outnumbers the number of Canadians who oppose (23%) the provision of weapons by almost 2 to 1.¹

SUPPORT FOR CANADIAN GOV. AID TO UKRAINE



In light of the current conflict, do you generally support or oppose Canada helping Ukraine protect its borders? I Do you support the Government of Canada providing weapons to Ukraine to defend itself from invasion?

ABACUS DATA

One of the goals of Russia's regime is to pressure Ukraine's partners and supporters into stopping the provision of defensive equipment, weapons and training. Russia is doing this in order to ensure that further invasion will meet less resistance from Ukraine's military and lower the costs of further invasion.

In addition to providing defensive weapons to Ukraine immediately, the UCC urges the Government of Canada to work with allies to strengthen Ukraine's naval and air defence systems, and to enhance intelligence sharing with Ukraine.

Satellite imagery and intelligence from Canada and allies provided to Ukraine would enhance Ukraine's ability to defend itself, understand better from which geographic sectors a potential further invasion is likely to come, and would raise the costs to Russia of a further invasion.

Enhancing Ukraine's naval and air capabilities, and intelligence capabilities before, rather than after, a further Russian invasion, would go far in deterring that invasion and could save tens of thousands of Ukrainian lives.

¹ Full results of the Survey are available here: *Canadians overwhelmingly support assisting Ukraine, providing weapons*

<https://www.ucc.ca/2022/01/23/canadians-overwhelmingly-support-assisting-ukraine-providing-weapons/>

Background – Sanctions

To deter a further Russian invasion of Ukraine, Canada and allies need to significantly strengthen two types of sanctions against Russia:

- Economic sanctions (most importantly in the financial, and oil and gas sectors), including the removal of Russia from the SWIFT international Payments System
- Personal sanctions

The implementation of stronger economic sanctions against Russia will have two effects: it will deprive the Russian state of revenue with which to continue to wage war, and it will reinforce the message to the Russian government that the West is resolute in countering Russian aggression. War must be demonstrated to the Kremlin to be more expensive than peace.

In the view of the UCC, the decision by US President Joe Biden's Administration to waive sanctions against the Nord Stream 2 pipeline that were mandated by the US Congress was a strategic mistake that served to embolden Russia to further escalate aggression against Ukraine.

Should Nord Stream 2 become operational, it will have the practical effect of rendering the Ukrainian gas transit system (on which Russia currently relies to ship natural gas to European Union states) redundant and would remove a significant practical deterrent from a further Russian invasion of Ukraine. With Nord Stream 2 operational, Russia could carry out aviation strikes and aerial bombardment of Ukrainian territory without need to damaging the pipelines on which it currently relies.

Nord Stream 2 is strongly opposed by many EU states – most strenuously by Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. The pipeline is also strongly opposed by the European Parliament. The UCC believes that Canada should explicitly add its voice to our allies who oppose the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

Personal sanctions must also be broadened against Russian officials responsible for waging aggressive war against Ukraine and the egregious human rights violations of Ukrainian citizens.

No significant Canadian sanctions against Russia have been implemented since March 2019, when 114 individuals and 15 entities were sanctioned for aggressive actions against Ukraine. In the intervening 32 months since March 2019, both the United States and the European Union have expanded sanctions against Russian officials and entities much more broadly than has Canada.

Russia is illegally detaining over 100 political prisoners who are Ukrainian citizens, many from occupied Crimea. While Canada has the authority to sanction the perpetrators of these human rights violations under the Magnitsky Act, the Government of Canada has chosen thus far not to exercise this authority.

A similarly grave human rights situation exists in Russian-occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, where Ukrainian captives of Russian and proxy forces are targets of systemic human rights violations and torture.

As with Crimea, the Government of Canada has not used the Magnitsky Act to sanction any Russian and occupation officials responsible for these violations.

At the end of February 2021, the UCC provided the Government of Canada with a briefing note regarding three prominent cases of the abuse of internationally recognized human rights of Ukrainian citizens in Russian-occupied Crimea. To date the UCC has received no response from the Government of Canada.²

On March 29, 2021, addressing Canadian sanctions on Russian individuals and entities, Canada's former Minister of Foreign Affairs Marc Garneau stated, "The people of Ukraine deserve a better future, one that they can build themselves, free of interference by Russia. [...] We stand ready to take further measures with our allies and partners as required."³

Nearly a year later, Canada has taken no further measures.

² <https://www.ucc.ca/2021/03/03/ucc-brief-human-rights-violations-in-russian-occupied-crimea-and-canadas-sanctions-policy/>

³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2021/03/canada-imposes-new-sanctions-on-individuals-and-entities-involved-in-illegal-annexation-of-crimea.html>

About the UCC

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) is the voice of Canada's Ukrainian community. The Congress brings together under one umbrella all the national, provincial and local Ukrainian Canadian organizations. Together with its member organizations, the UCC has been leading, coordinating and representing the interests of one of Canada's largest ethnic communities (over 1.3 million) since 1940 and has been instrumental in shaping Canada's social, economic and political landscape.

