



КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

CONGRÈS DES UKRAINIENS-CANADIENS

March 27, 2022

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, PC, MP

Prime Minister of Canada

80 Wellington Street

Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

Re: International Committee of the Red Cross's response to Russia's war against Ukraine

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), which represents the interests of the 1.4-million strong Ukrainian community in Canada, is hearing increasing concerns, from the Government of Ukraine, Ukrainian civil society and members of our community, about the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in response to Russia's war against Ukraine.

The UCC has previously met with Minister Sajjan to ensure the need for Canada's matching funds to be expended in Ukraine. While the Red Cross is politically neutral and does not distinguish between humanitarian needs based on political boundaries, Canadians continue to deserve a clear accounting on where the donations and matching government funds being raised to support Ukrainian are spent.

Indeed, Ukraine's Minister of Defence has spoken about the failure of many international organizations to effectively distribute humanitarian aid within Ukraine. Understandably, these international aid workers require humanitarian corridors, which the Russian Federation does not agree to or honour. As a result, the humanitarian aid they have provided remains in warehouses.

The news that Peter Maurer, president of the ICRC, travelled to Moscow to meet with Sergei Lavrov, Russia's Foreign Minister, and the news about the possible opening of an office of the ICRC in Rostov-on-Don, Russia, which may unintentionally support Russia's forced deportation of Ukrainian citizens to Russia, was met with outrage. Ukrainian citizens feel abandoned in their hour of greatest need, while they are bombed indiscriminately and remain without food or water for weeks on end.

Furthermore, we understand that the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada is in discussions with the Canadian Red Cross on being designated the organization that welcomes Ukrainian displaced persons to Canada upon their arrival. Given the questions raised about the effectiveness of the work of the ICRC in Ukraine, the Government of Canada and IRCC should be aware that for Ukrainian displaced persons coming to Canada, being met by the Canadian Red Cross is unlikely to be a positive experience.

Yours truly,

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alexandra Chyczij', written in a cursive style.

Alexandra Chyczij, National President

CC:

Hon. Harjit Sajjan, Minister of International Development

Hon Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship