



OPEN LETTER OF THE UKRAINIAN BAR ASSOCIATION TO THE US GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENTS OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Dear colleagues, esteemed representatives of the Governments and Legal Communities of the USA and Europe,

On behalf of the All-Ukrainian Non-governmental Non-profit Organisation “Ukrainian Bar Association” (UBA), we would like to assure you in our highest respect, and to address you on the following.

On 24 February 2022 at 5.00 am Kyiv time, **the Russian Federation started a war against Ukraine.** The United Nations Charter, Helsinki Accords, European Convention on Human Rights and in general any and all established norms and principles of international law are being openly and disparagingly violated. The army of the Russian Federation supported by the Republic of Belarus is bombing residential areas, maternity hospitals, kindergartens, ambulances and civilian vehicles in Ukraine. **The foregoing actions of the Russian Federation and of the Republic of Belarus constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.**

For 8 days now, the Ukrainian army continues its resistance. The people of Ukraine rise up to defend our country alongside our military. We are all together regardless of our political opinions, origins, religion or languages that we speak. **We are united in our desire to resist the military invasion and to restore the international order.**

Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, where we hosted ABA, NYSBA, IBA and other international conferences and events is turning into a battlefield. The city is being intentionally bombed and destroyed resulting in thousands of dead or wounded. The central square of 1.5 million City of Kharkiv was targeted with missiles. The maternity care hospital with women and children inside was shelled in Zhytomyr (population of 266,000). Even the Babiy Yar Holocaust memorial commemorating over 33,000 Jews killed by the Nazis was bombed. Some of the images of the horrific damage inflicted are enclosed.

Moreover, the Russian Federation has put the World on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. Russian military illegally seized the Chernobyl power plant and its military activities in the area have already resulted in increased radiation levels. Together with Chernobyl, Ukraine has 15 nuclear reactors in total. **Russia’s indiscriminate bombing, shelling and missiles strikes on civilians and infrastructure targets greatly increased the risk of a strike on a nuclear reactor, even if unintentional.** The consequences will be catastrophic. The Chernobyl explosion put 400 times more radioactive material into the Earth's atmosphere than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. 15 reactors equal 6000 bombs. This is a major threat not only to Ukraine, but to the US and its NATO allies in Europe. This is a major threat to the World.

High-level officials of the Russian Federation have confirmed that the so-called “military operation” will not stop until full “demilitarisation and denazification” of Ukraine, which means full destruction of all those who oppose Russian supremacy over Ukraine and is ready to defend Ukraine’s independence and sovereignty.



Now, more than ever, we need World's help to stop the atrocities and the threat of nuclear attack with quick and decisive actions. This is not only about defending Ukraine; this is about defending the U.S. and its allies and supporting the rule of law. War crimes and crimes against humanity that continue in Ukraine without interruption, must be stopped.

We are very grateful for the major support provided by the US Government, EU institutions and by individual governments of European and other countries. However, at this stage, as the war crimes not only do not stop but continue to mount and Russia's actions present imminent threat to the US, EU and the World's interests in general, additional measures are necessary to restore the rule of law, including the following:

1. to provide immediate assistance to the Ukrainian government with enforcing the **NO-FLY ZONE** over Ukraine to prevent the aggressor from using the skies to bombard civilians and infrastructure, including 15 nuclear reactors. Such measure is not only legally justified by the Ukrainian government over its sovereign territory, but also it is legally and justly appropriate. We ask the US and EU to simply facilitate the enforcement of such a regime by the Ukrainian government. This will also prevent a humanitarian catastrophe and deaths of likely hundreds of thousands of civilians, including innocent women and children in Ukraine and in other countries;
2. to **COMPLETELY DISCONNECT THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS FROM THE SWIFT SYSTEM AND BLOCK THEIR ACCESS TO FOREIGN CURRENCY, IN PARTICULAR THE US DOLLARS and EURO**, in order to prevent the aggressors from financing their military campaigns and paying US dollars and Euro to buy support from their mercenaries and war crime perpetrators. **Disconnecting only some Russian banks from the SWIFT system is insufficient as it leaves ample opportunities for the Russian Government to adjust and fine-tune financing through other banks;**
3. to impose **personal sanctions against ALL POLITICAL AND MILITARY PERSONNEL OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, CONNECTED OLIGARCHS, BANK OWNERS AND MANAGERS AND THEIR FAMILIES and ENTOURAGE**, and freeze all their assets. They are directly or indirectly participating in the criminal aggression of the Russian Federation and/or aiding and abetting it by providing their funding, platforms and resources. **This measure must also be applied to Russians who have dual citizenship (in particular US, EU or British passports) and whose financial support is instrumental for the Government of the Russian Federation.** It is unfortunate that now, on the 7th day of the war, the closes and the richest allies of the President Putin still freely enjoy they private yachts and planes in European countries;
4. to ensure **FULL ECONOMIC ISOLATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, ITS OFFICIALS, OLIGARCHS AND BUSINESS.** This measure should include **sanctioning and freezing all enterprises, businesses and assets of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus everywhere in the World.** Any business with Russian entities means further financing the war as, according to the latest decisions of the Russian government, Russian companies are obliged to sell 80% of the currency received to the state;



5. to provide additional **LETHAL WEAPONS TO UKRAINE** to enable Ukraine to effectively prevent the catastrophe;
6. to **INTRODUCE FULL EMBARGO ON RUSSIAN GAS AND OIL** until full resolution of the conflict. We believe that embargo benefits outweigh economic consequences to Europe and will put a halt to aggressor's using oil and gas as a leverage for putting pressure on European countries.
7. to **CANCEL VISAS FOR ALL CITIZENS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION until the complete withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine, from the Black and Azov Seas and from Ukraine's borders with Russia and Belarus**. Citizens of the Russian Federation should not be allowed to enjoy the benefits of the Western World while their country is bombing innocent women and children.
8. to institute putting in place **LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTION MEASURES** against all those committing war crimes, including the Russia leadership. When perpetrators know that they will be brought to justice eventually, it will deter them from engaging in murder, rape and pillaging with impunity.

We, the legal community of Ukraine, address you with an urge to support the above measures so that to put an end to military actions in and around Ukraine. We believe that together we will be able to prevail and restore the law and order and to protect democracy. We believe that now, while Ukraine is still holding, not only our future is at stake but also the future of the whole World.

We hope our voice will be heard, and our strive for freedom and independence will be protected.

**War crimes and crimes against humanity
that are being committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine**



Kharkiv after bomb shelling, 24.02.2022



Kyiv after bomb shelling, 25.02.2022



Kyiv, Lobanovskogo avenue, after bomb shelling, 26.02.2022



Kharkiv after bomb shelling, 28.02.2022



Kharkiv after bomb shelling, 01.03.2022



Newborn twins in the shelter, 01.03.2022



Borodyanka, residential buildings after bomb shelling, 01.03.2022



Kharkiv Regional State Administration after bomb shelling, 01.03.2022



Uspensky Cathedral / Cathedral of the Assumption, Kharkiv, after bomb shelling, 02.03.2022



Bucha, 02.03.2022



Kyiv, TV center, 02.03.2022



School in Kharkiv, 02.03.2022

This must be stopped immediately! All of you can help!