



AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF UKRAINIAN ORGANISATIONS  
СОЮЗ УКРАЇНСЬКИХ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙ АВСТРАЛІЇ

Representing 22 Peak Ukrainian Organisations in Australia  
Member of Ukrainian World Congress

Hon. Tony Abbott MP  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

February 19, 2014

Dear Prime Minister,

I am write to let you know that the escalation of violence in Ukraine in the last 24 hours appalls all Australians of Ukrainian descent, and that our community strongly believes that it is timely and necessary for the Australian Government to join its international allies in speaking out about it.

In recent discussions with your Government's officials, the AFUO has been assured that the Government will publicly comment on the evolving situation in Ukraine when circumstances require it. Given the deaths of up to 14 people yesterday and injuries to scores of others, including international journalists, it is difficult to foresee a more significant moment.

A public statement is needed from the Government on an urgent basis – similar to those issued in the last 24 hours by our allies in the United States, Canada and Europe.

Prime Minister, silence condones the violence that has taken place. The voices of the international community, on the other hand, have been shown to help prevent it.

It is imperative that violence and the use of deadly force be condemned, that the removal of heavily-armed security forces from downtown Kyiv be urged, and that relevant parties be urged to resume meaningful dialogue toward a peaceful resolution.

Australia should also consider sanctions – such as travel restrictions – on all who have perpetrated violence and human rights abuses, and our Ambassador for Ukraine, who is based in Poland, should be dispatched to Kyiv to monitor events together with her international colleagues.

As you would be aware, the Ukrainian Australian community has strongly and patiently worked with your Government during the past months of civic turbulence in Ukraine. We have understood the Government's policy context and arguments for not releasing continuous public statements to date. Now, however, our community and many fellow citizens insist that public action by your Government (in line with Australia's strategic interests and human rights commitment) can spare lives in Ukraine.

Thank you in advance for considering our representations. I can be reached on 0419 531 255.

Yours truly,

STEFAN ROMANIW OAM  
President AFUO