

Ukrainian Youth Centre, Lidcombe

**Opening Remarks by Jaroslav Duma OAM  
Chair, Sydney Pro-maidan Committee**

Reverend Fathers, Sisters of St Basil,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies & Gentlemen,

Last week, during a memorial service to Yuriy Verbytskyj, Mychajlo Zhysdnevskyj, Serhij Nihoyan, & Roman Senyk, - (remember their names), they are amongst those murdered by the corrupt & criminal Yanukovych regime,

I reiterated the words of the English Philosopher – Edmund Burke, who said the words:  
“Evil triumphs, when good people do nothing”...

Зло торжествує та панує, коли добрі люди нічого не роблять...

Today, at this meeting, it is our opportunity to proclaim that we will do all in our power, to help the Ukrainian people OVERCOME, the evil that has become so pronounced in the last 70+ days...! Ми тут зійшлися, щоб допомогти українському народові перемогти корумповану бандитську владу, котра безощадно зущаються на своїм народом.....

We are here today, at this public rally to voice our concerns, and to promote our demands...  
Our concerns are many...

Primarily they are that the people of Ukraine are being beaten and tortured! There are countless incidents of outright torture and brutality – there is visual footage – some of which you will see late... - they are being killed... - shot at, by supposed rubber bullets – fired by snipers...

Our demands are simple...

We are Australian citizens...

We as a community in Australia have been well regarded for our ability to be a well organised, law abiding community, who for over 65 years in this country, which accepted our forebears because in those days it was they who were being killed and tortured by an inhumane soviet regime... Our parents worked, we have worked and studied – and we are all grateful for what we have received...

We live in a country that prides itself on its defence of democratic freedoms and human rights...

Today, those freedoms and those human rights have been disintegrated by Yanukovych & his crooked cronies...

Today ladies and gentlemen – it is our turn to ask our governments – no, that is not quite right – we demand from our governments and from our opposition – both State and Federal, - and we do that through our very good friends and colleagues present here with us today to take a very firm stand against the Ukrainian government... We demand that the Federal Government, with the support of the opposition immediately consider the introduction of sanction against the members of the Ukrainian government led by President Yanukovych...

And if it is still on the table, we ask that the government withdraws any invitation to Yanukovych to visit our beautiful country...

Ahhh, but there is more!

We know, and it is being reported as we speak, that whilst both sides of this terrible tragedy are seeking ways of resolving the problems – that the moment it seems that temperatures cool down, provocations occur...

And we are well aware, that under the cover of the Sochi Winter Olympic, that evil despot in the north, the one that was the leader of the KGB, the one that quelled any Russian dissent with his own special forces, is lurking in the background, - waiting for the opportune time to send in his “protective force” to help his brethren..

We only need to remember Afghanistan... The Russian invasion happened at the time of the Olympics...

We equally need the Australian Government, in fact the whole parliament to send a message to Mr Putin...

Hands off Ukraine! Stay out! – or your invitation to the G20 shall be withdrawn!

Has Australia the guts to do this!

Is Australia really up to flexing its muscles on the world stage for the benefit and protection of democracy and human rights?

And I would like to conclude my remarks today, with a line from Taras Shevchenko, the national bard and poet of Ukraine, whose 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth we are celebrating this year...

Не вмирає душа наша, не вмирає воля!

Our soul will not die, our freedom will not die!

A prophetic statement, given it was made more than 160 years ago and, given today’s situation in Ukraine!

Slava Ukraini!

### **VIP Guests included:**

Craig Laundry MP	Federal Member for Reid; Initiator newly formed Australian-Ukrainian Parliamentary Friendship Group.
David Clarke MLC Barbara Perry PM	State Parliamentary Secretary for Justice (State) Member for Auburn; Shadow Minister for, Ageing, Disability Services, Mental Health, and Heritage;
Richard Acheson	Community Engagement Manager, Community Relations Commission
Stefan Romaniw OAM (by Skype from Kyiv)	Chair, Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations; General Secretary, World Congress of Ukrainians
Peter Duma, Peter Shmigel, Olya Moskviak Peter Lutak	World President, Ukrainian Youth Association Public Affairs Director, AFUO (NSW) State President, Ukrainian Women’s Association ACT Chair, Pro-Maidan Committee

Clergy from the Ukrainian Catholic & Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox parishes in Sydney  
Community leaders of many Ukrainian community organisations in Sydney.