



MEDIA RELEASE

"PUTIN – GET OUT OF UKRAINE! ABBOTT – GET INVOLVED!" SAY AUSTRALIANS

Australians of Ukrainian and other backgrounds condemn military intervention by Vladimir Putin in independent Ukraine and call on their Prime Minister to join the international community in opposing Putin's illegal and unprovoked aggression, the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO) said today.

"The world is witnessing the unlawful and unjustifiable acts of a neo-imperialist tyrant. If Putin gets away with what he wishes in Ukraine, such as breaking international treaties, he will do what he wishes elsewhere, which puts at risk Australia and its allies," Pete Shmigel, AFUO Public Affairs Director, said.

"Unchecked intervention in Ukraine is an unprecedented threat to global security and stability and to the political and economic interests of Australia and its major allies and trading partners, such as the US, the EU, Japan and the People's Republic of China.

"There is no internal ethnic conflict in Ukraine to justify such action. Ukrainian citizens of all ethnicities and faiths, and from all regions, have mutually and largely peacefully supported their country's ouster of its own dictator. Putin isn't protecting anybody – he is expanding the Russian Federation at a neighbour's expense.

"Australia's allies such as the United States, Canada and the EU are publicly supporting Ukraine's territorial sovereignty, condemning military aggression by Putin, and working toward an international solution.

"The AFUO is disappointed and cannot understand why Australia is seemingly not doing any of those things, and putting at risk its policy credibility in the UN Security Council and the G20. We ask the Prime Minister to bring his leadership and personal authority to the situation," Mr Shmigel said.

According to the AFUO, Australia should:

- join the leaders of his allies in stating support for Ukraine's territorial sovereignty;
- call for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Ukraine;
- as a UN Security Council member, participate in international mediation that recognises the democratic aspirations of the people of Ukraine;
- as chair of the G20, consider the Russian Federation's suspension, and;
- support a bipartisan Parliamentary resolution this week in support of Ukraine's democratic aspirations.

Protest rallies against Putin's illegal intervention in Ukraine are planned for the diplomatic offices in Australia of the Russian Federation.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: PETE SHMIGEL 0419 541 531
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