



**MEDIA RELEASE:  
PUTIN GRABS MORE OF UKRAINE – IMPERIALISM RETURNS**

The armed seizure in the last 24 hours of Ukrainian Government facilities in the Donetsk province of Ukraine by Russian Federation backed forces is Vladimir Putin's next step in restoring a neo-Soviet empire, according to the Ukrainian Australian community.

**“The action in Donetsk is a land grab of another part of Ukraine so that Emperor Putin can take his throne”**, Mr Stefan Romaniw OAM, President of the community's peak body, said.

“Vladimir Putin is bent on being the 21<sup>st</sup> century's emperor. First, Putin illegally annexed Crimea for the Russian Federation. Now, he moves on Donetsk, while thousands of his troops mass on Ukraine's border and await orders for a full-scale invasion of eastern Ukraine.

“In Donetsk, not even an excuse or pretext such as ‘protecting Russian-speaking people’ is being put forward, as there has been virtually no inter-community violence in Ukraine since the new interim, pro-democracy Government commenced in Kyiv.

“Such unprovoked aggression is a direct threat to millions of normal citizens in Ukraine, who are our friends and family, but also a **major threat to international stability and economic growth, including for Australia.**

“The best response to totalitarianism is democracy. We hope that the international community, including Australia, will work to urgently dispatch **UN peacekeeping and OSCE observer missions to eastern Ukraine**, and have **official observers at Ukraine's elections on May 25,**” Mr Romaniw said.

Mr Romaniw also noted that Australia as Chair of the G20 will need to make serious decisions about the participation of President Putin in G20 deliberations in Australia later this year.

“If Mr Putin cannot be expected to respect the territorial integrity of his neighbouring countries, he certainly cannot be expected to respect economic cooperation agreements – no less be allowed to benefit from them,” Mr Romaniw said.

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