

18 July 2014

OPEN LETTER

**Honourable Trade Ministers
participating in the G20 Trade Ministers meeting
in Sydney, Australia, 19 July 2014**

Attention: G20 Taskforce
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
PO Box 6500
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia
G20info@pmc.gov.au

Honourable Ministers:

Re: Urgent action regarding Russia-backed terrorism in Eastern Ukraine

As you convene in Sydney, Australia, on 19 July 2014 to discuss the trade actions G20 members are taking as part of their comprehensive growth strategies, the Ukrainian World Congress urges you, in your deliberations, to:

- a) condemn the ongoing military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine as a violation of international law and fundamental human rights; and
- b) call for targeted sector-specific sanctions (third level sanctions) against Russia in response to its illegal annexation of Crimea and unabated destabilization of Eastern Ukraine.

Condemning evidence continues to mount in support of the fact that the pro-Russian terrorists fronting the conflict in Eastern Ukraine are materially and financially backed by the Russian Federation.

According to a [Fact Sheet](#) issued by the U.S. Department of State on 14 July 2014:

While Russia says it seeks peace, its actions do not match its rhetoric. We have no evidence that Russia's support for the separatists has ceased. In fact, we assess that Russia continues to provide them with heavy weapons, other military equipment and financing, and continues to allow militants to enter Ukraine freely. Russia denies this, just as it denied its forces were involved in Crimea -- until after the fact. Russia has refused to call for the separatists to lay down their arms, and continues to mass its troops along the Ukrainian border. Many self-proclaimed "leaders" of the separatists hail from Russia and have ties to the Russian government. This all paints a telling picture of Russia's continued policy of destabilization in eastern Ukraine.

Notwithstanding this, various government and private entities continue to fuel the Russian economy with lucrative deals and high-profile relationships.

For instance, several European countries are moving the South Stream gas pipeline project forward with Russia despite the fact that in its *Resolution of 17 April 2014 on Russian pressure on Eastern Partnership countries and in particular destabilisation of eastern Ukraine*, the European Parliament took “the view that the South Stream pipeline should not be built.”

France continues to proceed with its sale of two Mistral-class assault ships to Russia’s navy that will only embolden Russia’s imperialistic ambitions and escalate conflicts at a time when the international community is calling on Russia to de-escalate its aggression against Ukraine.

These are only two examples of large-scale ventures that, due to their magnitude, prop up a stagnating and corrupt Russian economy which, in turn, sustains the destabilization of Eastern Ukraine in a time of peace.

Despite the good faith of Ukraine’s President Petro Poroshenko and the Ukrainian government authorities to negotiate a peaceful solution to Russia’s aggression in Eastern Ukraine, including a unilateral ceasefire, Russia has not changed its course, and the number of casualties resulting from its senseless and inhumane actions continues to rise.

As General Philip Breedlove, NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander for Europe, stated on 1 July 2014:

The ceasefire in Ukraine was not ended because of accusations; it was ended because Russian-backed separatists responded with violence while President Poroshenko tried to open a window for peace.

On 17 July 2014, the world witnessed the consequences of tolerating actions that contravene international law with the tragic downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17 on Ukrainian territory. Such tragedies risk being repeated if the international community continues to favour financial interests over fundamental rights and freedoms as enshrined in the UN Charter.

Therefore, the Ukrainian World Congress urges you to call for targeted sector-specific sanctions (third level sanctions) against Russia in response to its illegal annexation of Crimea and sponsored terrorism in Eastern Ukraine.

Russia needs to actually notice that its brazen disregard of international law has a significant negative impact on its economy to change course.

Sincerely,

UKRAINIAN WORLD CONGRESS



Eugene Czolij
President

The Ukrainian World congress (UWC) is the international coordinating body for Ukrainian communities in the diaspora representing the interests of over 20 million Ukrainians. The UWC has member organizations in 33 countries and ties with Ukrainians in 14 additional countries. Founded in 1967, the UWC was recognized in 2003 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council as a non-governmental organization (NGO) with special consultative status.