



**Embargoed 20 February 2022**

## **AUSTRALIAN-UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY #STANDS WITH UKRAINE AT NATIONWIDE RALLIES ON SUNDAY 20 FEBRUARY**

The Australian-Ukrainian community and friends will hold memorial services and rallies around Australia today to show their support for the people of Ukraine, currently threatened with invasion by Russia, which has amassed over 150,000 troops on Ukraine's border.

Alongside many other **#StandWithUkraine** actions and rallies happening around the world on 20 February, the events will keep the world's focus on Russia's aggression and possible incursion in Ukraine. The events will also commemorate the men and women who gave their lives during the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity in 2014 (the *Heavenly Hundred* - killed by snipers of the former pro-Russian regime) and the 14,000 soldiers and civilians who have died in the eight-year war that Russia is waging in Ukraine's east.

The rallies will feature Ukrainian costume, singing, wreath laying ceremonies, reading out of letters of thanks from Ukraine, and attendance from senior MPs, consular staff and other ethnic communities. Events will be happening on Sunday 20 February in:

**MELBOURNE:** 12:30pm – Rally Federation Square to Parliament House

**SYDNEY:** 1:30pm – Church service and rally, St Andrews Ukrainian Catholic Church, 57 Church St, Lidcombe

**CANBERRA:** 12:00pm – St Nicholas Church, Orthodox Centre, Turner

**ADELAIDE:** 2.00pm – Parliament House

**BRISBANE:** 9:30am – Protection of Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church, 36 Broadway St, Woolloongabba

**PERTH:** 9:30am – Memorial service, Parish of Saint John the Baptist, Ukrainian Catholic Church

'We are gathering today because we want to support democratic values, international principles of law and order, national rights, human rights and the right of Ukrainians to create a better tomorrow as part of the European community' said Co-Chair of the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO), Mr Stefan Romaniw.

'We are deeply worried about the destabilisation, chaos and fear caused by Russia. We fear for our family and loved ones in Ukraine. We mourn the lives already lost, and the possibility that a generation of Ukrainians might need to lay down their lives to resist an invasion. We want our Ukrainian brothers and sisters to know our hearts and minds are with them,' said Mr Romaniw.

'We also need to remember that Putin started the war against Ukraine. He invaded the Crimean Peninsula and eastern Ukraine in 2014. He's conducted cyber-attacks against Ukrainian government institutions. He's built up the troops on the border. He's created the crisis. He needs to back off and pull out of all parts of Ukraine - so that peace and security can be assured,' said Mr Romaniw.

'As a result of Russian aggression in Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula and eastern Ukraine, 14,000 thousand people have died. 1.5 million people are internally displaced. 3.4 million require humanitarian aid. 510,000 children are growing up in violence. Over 750 education facilities have been damaged by shelling. One in four persons in eastern Ukraine suffer water shortages,' said Mr Romaniw.

'We call upon Australia and the international community to remain vigilant and firm in its negotiations with Russia. We want a peace that strengthens, rather than jeopardises, Ukraine's independence. We have also asked the Australian government for non-lethal military and humanitarian aid, and to support international sanctions against Russia,' said Mr Romaniw.

[AFUO Statement on Support for Ukraine during current escalation of Russian aggression](#)

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