

‘Shameful, repugnant’: Greens under fire over opposition to Ukraine military aid



[Matthew Knott](#), October 6, 2026

Ukraine’s top representative in Australia has urged the Greens to rethink their opposition to providing military aid to defend against Russia’s invasion, as Labor and the Coalition accuse the left-wing party of taking a naive stance that would help Vladimir Putin.

The peak body for the Ukrainian-Australian community is urgently seeking a meeting with new Greens leader David Shoebridge to express its concern after [Shoebridge told this masthead](#) the party did not support Australia sending weapons and other military equipment to the Ukrainian army.

Shoebridge said Australia should not provide direct military assistance unless the United Nations Security Council backed such transfers — a move Russia would inevitably veto by using its position as a permanent member of the council.

Pointing to Putin’s opposition to the socially progressive policies championed by the Greens, Ukraine’s ambassador to Australia, Vasyl Myroshnychenko, said: “I cannot believe, then, that the Greens actively seek an outcome where President Putin’s policies are imposed on Ukrainian society, we lose the social freedoms and equalities Australians enjoy, and our entire nation is swallowed up by Russia.”

Myroshnychenko said that while the Greens were entitled to their views, he was concerned the party’s stance “does not appear to distinguish between offensive wars of choice, aggression and territorial expansion versus wars of desperate defence and national survival”.

“Even the most pacifist of observers would recognise that the United Nations has enshrined the right of all nations to defend themselves against invasion, and that is what Ukraine is doing,” he said.

Ukraine had surrendered its nuclear weapons and never engaged in military adventurism, in line with Greens principles, he said.

“And despite this, Russia launched a ruthless, unjustified and unprovoked invasion of territorial expansion and annexation against us,” he said.

“Ukraine cannot survive or defend itself without meaningful collective security support from other democracies ... We hope the Greens will choose to support us in our justified self-defence.”

Shoebridge’s explicit statement opposing military aid to Ukraine came as a surprise to many party supporters and a blow to the Ukrainian diaspora, despite the party’s longstanding position to “prioritise peaceful and non-military actions in determining Australia’s response to an international conflict”.



Defence Industry Minister Pat Conroy said he was proud that Australia had provided more than \$1.6 billion in military assistance since Russia’s full-scale invasion in February 2022, including the transfer of tanks, infantry fighting vehicles and ammunition.

“To suggest that we should abandon the people of Ukraine in their valiant fight against Russian aggression is shameful,” Conroy said.

“We stand with the people of Ukraine against Russia’s illegal and immoral invasion. To turn our back and look the other way, as Senator Shoebridge would have us do, is what Vladimir Putin wants. The Albanese government will not abandon Ukraine.”

Coalition defence spokesman James Paterson said it appeared the Greens were “happy to outsource our foreign and defence policy to Vladimir Putin and Russia” by tying support for military aid to the UN Security Council.

“Giving dictators a veto over whether we support our friends and allies is morally repugnant and strategically reckless,” he said.

“It’s a recipe for allowing authoritarian states to act with impunity and a more dangerous world. We should never abandon Ukraine to appease thugs like Putin.”

Shoebridge stood by the policy, saying there were other ways to support Ukraine, including humanitarian aid, financial assistance and harsher sanctions against Russia.

“Working with other countries to cut off the funding to Russia’s military is the clearest way we can show direct solidarity with Ukraine,” he said, calling for the government to crack down on loopholes allowing Russian-origin oil to enter Australia.

Kateryna Argyrou, chair of the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations, said Ukraine desperately needed both tougher Russian sanctions and help on the battlefield.

“Senator Shoebridge’s refusal to support military assistance for Ukraine effectively asks Ukraine to defend itself with words, while Russia wages a war of aggression with missiles and drones,” she said.

Refusing military support “in the name of peace and non-violence is deeply painful to the Ukrainian families who live with this reality every day” and showed that Shoebridge was “out of touch with the Australian public”, she said.

“Peace is not achieved by refusing to help the victim — it is achieved by stopping the aggressor,” she said.

Adam Simpson, a senior lecturer in international studies at Adelaide University, accused the Greens of abandoning a democracy under attack. Writing [for the Lowy Institute](#), Simpson said: “The Greens oppose Russia’s invasion and support sanctions, but on the defining geopolitical question of this decade – arming a democracy under attack by an authoritarian aggressor – they have squibbed it.”

He continued: “All reasonable people want peace, but sometimes it has to be fought for ... slotting flowers into gun barrels does not work.”