



Kyiv and Copenhagen, the 1th of March 2022

Message to the Danish youth from the Danish-Ukrainian Student organization (DUSO)

In the last days the Ukrainian people, soldiers as well as civilians, have shown unfathomable courage and democratic spirit. Have we seen such a display of human dignity in Europe since 1989 and the fall of the communist dictatorships? It is worth remembering that this fearless bravery didn't just hatch out of the blue on February 24. The war in Ukraine has run now for 8 years.

Regardless, we should be careful to not romanticize the situations in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Mariupol, Chernihiv, Kherson etc. What the Ukrainian people experience in these hours is horrific and painful. It's not a movie, it's reality. And we shall not think that this is far away and doesn't concern us. Ukraine is a European country. Ukrainian youths are just like Danish youths.

One may argue that we have been too passive and too hesitant by not associating Ukraine with the EU and NATO. Nevertheless, we believe that if we act now, the crisis we are witnessing may be a historic turning point for Europe as it opens up a unique window of opportunity, perhaps even a chance for change. Instead of succumbing to despair we should be inspired by the courage and uncompromising devoutness to freedom and democracy shown by the Ukrainian people of all ages in these hours; take it to our hearts and minds and act as humans.

There are several ways to contribute, but a fundamental one, that is open to everyone, is to spell out the facts. The truth is often complicated. In this particular matter it is simple. *The Ukrainian people wants peace and very many Russian people wants peace. This war is Putin and his oligarch companions' war. Ukraine has been held in a deadlock by Putin's regime for years and is now being punished for wanting to define its own future.* This is the tragic truth.

Furthermore, we urge the Danish youth to arrange or join the demonstrations in Denmark – even if it may seem “just symbolic” to us, it means a lot to the people of Ukraine. Knowing that you are not alone, especially when in pain and distress, is a fundamental human need and can help alleviate the pain and strengthen the spirit.

Value your freedom. Show solidarity. Show that you care. Democracy is a structure secured by institutions. Yet institutions alone do not constitute a democracy. Democracy is a way of life; something to be practiced among and together with people. Democracy is founded on the insight that as human beings we are equal and that no one can legitimately take away other people's right to form their own life.

Слава Україні!

On behalf of the Danish-Ukrainian Student Organization,

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