



## **The Will and Courage to Stand Up to a Modern-Day Threat to World Peace**

02/22/2022

We, the undersigned Former Leaders and civil society representatives of countries of the European Union, the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Middle East wish to express our grave concern about the rapidly growing threat of large-scale armed conflict that is threatening Ukraine's sovereignty, political independence, unity, and territorial integrity.

The ongoing, almost eight-year-long interstate conflict -- which has resulted in the illegal occupation and attempted annexation of vast parts of Ukraine's territory -- poses a serious challenge to the international security order.

The conflict's humanitarian cost has also been distressing. The military hostilities alone took the lives of 14 000, injured over 25 thousand, and displaced more than 1.4 million persons from their homes. Massive and systemic human rights violations hurt the lives of Ukrainians remaining in the occupied territories.

Regretfully, until now, the international community has not been able to resolve this conflict through the available mechanisms of international law. It is especially worrying that the international organizations entrusted with maintaining world peace have not been able to enforce the rules-based international order essential to peace, security, and prosperity.

As a result, we observe further destabilization in the region, growing security risks for the entire European continent, and new threats to world peace.

We are sounding the alarm to prevent an irreversible destructive scenario from unfolding. We must take lessons from the bitter experiences of the twentieth century and dedicate all our efforts to reversing a march towards conflict, and support a rules-based international multilateralism that reinforces human rights and national sovereignty and territorial integrity as stated in the UN charter.

Today, the world is not blind. We can discern the truth from lies. We have the wisdom to see the catastrophic consequences of the path of destruction for our future. And we must be determined to remove modern-day threats to world peace.

Ukraine, a founding member of the United Nations, and one of the greatest contributors to world peace as a country that voluntarily gave up the world's third-biggest nuclear arsenal, must receive full support from the international community.

To demonstrate their commitment to peace, security, and justice, our governments must take determined and timely action to restore peace and security in Ukraine and defend a rules based international order based on the principle of equality of sovereign nations, denouncing spheres of influence, and upholding human rights as a foundation of peace and stability.

Our governments must promote conditions under which the fundamental principles of the international order are maintained. We have the tools, and we must use them. Assertive enforcement of international law can be a formidable deterrent to any aggressive actors pursuing malicious agendas in an effort to reshape our world.

We encourage the leaders of the United States, the European Union, G20 countries to form a united front at a time of an unprecedented challenge to global peace and security.

We also call on the international community to provide material, financial, and military assistance to the government of Ukraine to help it to adequately defend itself.

All our nation's stand to lose from any dismantling or weakening of the international order. If we want the world to prosper, and to enjoy global security, we must reject any policies undermining the very foundation of modern rules based international order. We must find the will and courage to stand up against any violations of international law. By ensuring Ukraine's peace and stability and defending its territorial integrity our governments would also be protecting the peace security of the entire European continent and beyond. It would help to make the world safer for everyone.

## **Signed:**

**Bertie Ahern**, Prime Minister of Ireland 1997-2008

**Abdulaziz Altwaijri**, former Director General of ISESCO

**Michael Dukakis**, Governor of Massachusetts (1975-1979, 1983-1991)

**Jan Fisher**, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic 2009-2010

**Chiril Gaburici**, Prime Minister of Moldova 2015

**Toomas Hendrik Ilves**, President of Estonia 2006-2016

**Kerry Kennedy**, President Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights

**Mats Karlsson**, Vice-President of the World Bank 1999-2002

**Aleksandr Kwasniewski**, President of Poland 1995-2005

**Leonid Kuchma**, President of Ukraine 1994-2005

**Andrius Kubilius**, Prime Minister of Lithuania 2008-2012

**Zlatko Lagumdžija**, Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2001-2002,  
deputy Prime Minister 2012-2015

**Igor Luksic**, Prime Minister of Montenegro 2010-2012

**Rexhep Meidani**, President of Albania 1997-2002

**Amre Moussa**, Secretary General Arab League 2001-2011

**Rovshan Muradov**, Secretary General NGIC

**Shuvaloy Mujumdar**, Foreign Policy Program Director & Munk Senior  
Fellow, Macdonald Laurier Institute, Canada

**Francis O'Donnell**, Amb. (ret.,SMOM) & UN Resident Coordinator in  
Ukraine 2004-2009 **Rosen Plevneliev**, President of Bulgaria 2012-2017

**Petre Roman**, Prime Minister of Romania 1989-1991, Speaker of the  
Parliament 1996- 1999, Minister of Foreign Affairs 1999-2000

**Paul Revay**, former Director Trilateral Europe, Trustee Friends of  
Europe, Paris **Petar Stoyanov**, President of Bulgaria 1997-2002

**Rosalía Arteago Serrano**, President of Ecuador 1997

**Laimdota Straujuma**, Prime Minister of Latvia 2014-2016

**Ismail Serageldin**, Vice-President of the World Bank 1992-2000

**Eka Tkeshelashvili**, deputy Prime Minister of Georgia

**Nguyen Anh Tuan**, CEO of Boston Global Forum

**Vaira Vike-Freiberga**, President of Latvia 1999-2007

**Kateryna Yushchenko**, First Lady of Ukraine 2005-2010

**Viktor Yushchenko**, President of Ukraine 2005-2010

**Valdis Zatlers**, President of Latvia 2007-2011