

COMBATING DISINFORMATION ABOUT UKRAINE

UKRAINE *America's Ally*

**Anti-Corruption
Legislation Passed
Since 2013 Has
Improved Intl.
Ranking by over**

20%

*Source: Corruption
Perceptions Index*

**Europe's Largest
Combat-Tested
Standing Army**

has actively contributed to
all NATO-led operations and
missions for over 25 years.

6 successive national
elections in the past
7 years, all observed
to be "free and fair"

Voluntarily
disarmed
the world's
3rd
largest nuclear arsenal

2014

Ukraine Freedom Support Act declared that the United States will "assist the government of Ukraine in restoring its sovereignty and territorial integrity in order to deter the government of the Russian Federation from further destabilizing and invading Ukraine."

U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership first signed in 2008 re-affirmed in a new document that reflect a shared belief that democracy is the chief guarantor of security, prosperity and freedom, and cooperation is **of benefit to both nations**

2021

Putin's Russia *Our Common Enemy*

as a result of **Russia's invasion of Ukraine:**

13,500+ killed **33,000+** wounded **2,000,000+** displaced

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in
was **the first forced annexation
in Europe since the World War II**

2014

Between **2014-2017**

the Russian government "directed extensive activity against U.S. election infrastructure at the state and local level," including probing U.S. electoral infrastructure in 21 states



SCAN ME

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correct the
public record**



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMBATING DISINFORMATION ABOUT UKRAINE

New York (UCCA) – Ukrainian Americans have witnessed an ever increasing amount of outright false accusations about Ukraine leveled by pundits in the media, and worse still, by elected officials. Unfortunately, such public statements by uninformed voices parroting the words of Russian propagandists can and will have a lasting effect on the flourishing relationship between the United States and its strategic ally, Ukraine.

For eight decades, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), has advocated the Ukrainian American community's desire to aid the people of Ukraine, by educating and disseminating truthful information about Ukraine and its people. Representing nearly 30 regional and national associations of Ukrainian Americans, and the interests of nearly 2 million Americans of Ukrainian descent, UCCA urges fellow supporters of Ukraine to set the record straight whenever possible.

#1: UKRAINIANS ARE BEST SUITED TO DISCUSS MATTERS PERTAINING TO UKRAINE

Ukraine was colonized by an oppressive expansionist state for hundreds of years, and the language used throughout Western discourse has remnants of that colonial mindset. In light of Ukraine's 30 years of renewed independence, Ukrainians have the right to reclaim our story, and impress upon our colleagues in the United States to respect our nation's difficult history and not diminish our people by shutting our voices out of the discussion.

Combined with its worldwide diaspora, Ukrainians number nearly 65 million today. Yet our voices remain mostly excluded from discussions about Ukraine. Whether it is in the media, in academia, or even political discourse by elected officials, non-Ukrainian voices regularly purport to speak on behalf of the largest nation in Europe. In the twenty-first century, **there are plenty of qualified Ukrainian voices who can speak much better about Ukraine.**

#2: PUBLIC OFFICIALS CHOOSING TO SPEAK ABOUT UKRAINE SHOULD VISIT UKRAINE

Since Russia's war of aggression began, pundits, television personalities and even elected officials who have never set foot in Ukraine have nevertheless expounded on the politics of Ukraine. In one notable example, the former President of the United States suggested that by interacting with individuals from Ukraine, he was able to “get to know the country” of Ukraine very well. Instead of relying on second-hand information, U.S. Presidents should follow the precedent of George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush and visit Ukraine in person.

#3: RUSSIA IS CURRENTLY WAGING WAR AGAINST UKRAINE

Russia's actions against Ukraine's sovereignty – the invasion of Eastern Ukraine and the continued illegal occupation of Crimea – have been rightly condemned by the United States, our NATO allies, the rest of the G7 nations, and by over 100 member nations of the United Nations General Assembly. In the context of U.S. interests, numerous multilateral agreements signed by both the United States and Ukraine were violated when Russia first began attacking Ukraine in 2014, an invasion recognized as the first forced annexation in Europe since the Second World War.

This military invasion, and the subsequent armed occupation of Ukrainian sovereign territory, constitute a daily violation of all conceivable international law and standards, including: the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Final Act (often referred to as the Helsinki Final Act); the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE); the United Nations Charter (specifically United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3314 on the use of "aggression" between member states); and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

These actions remain an ongoing threat to the peace and prosperity borne out of post-World War II international security accords. **Ukrainians themselves have suffered over 13,000 casualties, with over 30,000 wounded, and close to 2 million internally displaced** during this time. More deaths are added to this list on a near-daily basis.

On July 17, 2014, 298 innocent passengers and crew, including 20 families and 80 children, flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur aboard Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, were murdered by a Buk anti-aircraft missile launched from Russian occupied territory in Ukraine.

#4: RUSSIA ATTACKED THE UNITED STATES

Since our inception, UCCA has pledged to “assist, support and cooperate with the United States government in creating an equitable world order,” by supporting and cooperating with government authorities “for the common good.” Although the Kremlin’s tactics are not unknown to us, Ukrainian Americans were shocked as others by the determination reached by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence on Election Security that the Russian Government orchestrated a comprehensive attack on U.S. sovereignty in 2016, by compromising “emails from US persons and institutions” in advance of U.S. elections. A further joint Intelligence Community Assessment attests that this was executed under the direct orders of President Vladimir Putin. Most insidiously, the Russian government “directed extensive activity, beginning in at least 2014 and carrying into at least 2017, against U.S. election infrastructure at the state and local level,” including probing U.S. electoral infrastructure in 21 states in 2016.

#5: UKRAINE FIGHTS AGAINST CORRUPTION, RUSSIA PROMOTES CORRUPTION

In describing Ukraine as a “well known corrupt country,” public figures and pundits have amplified Russian talking points about Ukraine in the media. In reality, **Ukraine is an open and democratic society whose citizens have waged a decades-long fight against corruption.** Whereas the Russian Federation promotes corruption, election fraud and the weakening of international standards of good government, Ukraine has conducted 5 rounds of national elections in the past 5 years, which international observers, including UCCA, judged to be in line with international standards; according to the OSCE, elections in Ukraine are exemplified by “competitive contests that offered voters real choice, and general respect for fundamental freedoms.” According to the Corruption Perceptions Index, Ukraine has never had as high a corruption score as the Russian Federation, and has improved its ranking from year to year by passing anti-corruption legislation since its Revolution of Dignity in 2013-14.

Putin’s Russia, by contrast, outranks all European nations by far on this index of corruption. According to the Council of Europe, bribery in Russia increased in 2018, and in 2019, the Russian parliament proposed relaxing anti-corruption regulations against public officials, deciding instead that officials and public figures could be exempt if “objective circumstances” made it impossible for them to comply with corruption laws. According to the United States Treasury and other government agencies, Russia’s Internet Research Agency used fictitious personas on social media and disseminated false information in an effort to undermine faith in U.S. democratic institutions.

#6: UKRAINE IS AN ALLY OF THE UNITED STATES, NOT AN ENEMY

In attempting to once again influence American attitudes towards Russia and Ukraine, Russian propaganda outlets such as RT and Sputnik have attempted to undermine U.S. support for Ukraine by proposing instead that Ukraine seeks to harm the United States. **UCCA categorically rejects such descriptions of the U.S.-Ukraine relationship.**

Ukraine today stands as the only non-NATO partner nation to have contributed actively to all NATO-led operations and missions for over 25 years. **Today, Europe's largest country – Ukraine – fields Europe's largest combat-tested military, with spending levels exceeding NATO's minimum defense spending standards.**

When the Soviet Union ceased to exist, Ukraine controlled the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world, with more nuclear weapons than China, France, and the United Kingdom combined. With the encouragement of the United States, the people of Ukraine voluntarily rid the world of its stockpile of nuclear warheads, in the process ensuring that those weapons would not end up in the hands of a rogue nation state or a radicalized terror cell. **Considered by some to be the greatest gift to world peace by any nation in history**, this act of disarmament was done with the understanding that the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine would be assured by those nations who signed the Budapest Memorandum.

The United States and Ukraine have signed numerous bilateral investment and economic treaties, leading to the formation of the U.S.-Ukraine Council on Trade and Investment, the Bilateral Energy Security Working Group as well as the U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership.

Signed in 2008, the U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership affirmed, among other points, the following shared values between the United States and Ukraine:

- Support for each other's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders
- **A shared belief that democracy is the chief guarantor of security, prosperity and freedom.**
- **Defense and security cooperation partnerships between the United States and Ukraine is of benefit to both nations.**
- The importance of the security assurances described in the Trilateral Statement by the Presidents of the U.S., Russian Federation and Ukraine of January 14, 1994, and the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection with Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of December 5, 1994.

In 2014, the United States reaffirmed its commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders with the passage of the Ukraine Freedom Support Act. This law **declares as official state policy that the United States will "assist the government of Ukraine in restoring its sovereignty and territorial integrity in order to deter the government of the Russian Federation from further destabilizing and invading Ukraine and other independent countries."**

On July 25, 2018, the United States Department of State formally rejected as a matter of state policy "Russia's attempted annexation of Crimea," and pledged that the United States intends to maintain this policy of refusal to recognize Russia's illegal assertions "until Ukraine's territorial integrity is restored." This **Crimea Declaration affirmed the non-recognition of "the Kremlin's claims of sovereignty over territory seized by force in contravention of international law,"** just as the United States did in 1940 with the Welles Declaration regarding the Soviet occupation of the Baltic nations.

A new U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership, signed by U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba in Washington, D.C. on November 10, 2021, re-affirmed the lasting bond between these two democracies by resolving to:

- Emphasize unwavering commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including Crimea and extending to its territorial waters in the face of ongoing Russian aggression, which threatens regional peace and stability and undermines the global rules-based order.

The United States and Ukraine are bound by the universal values that unite the free people of the world: respect for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.