UCCA Joins With G7 Ambassadors in Reminding Ukraine: Banning All Political Predecessors Not the Norm in Democracies

On July 12, 2019, ambassadors representing the seven largest advanced economies in the world — the G7 — issued a joint statement in response to a recent video address by the President of Ukraine. In his address, President Zelensky announced amendments to Ukraine’s “lustration” laws, which would ban most high-ranking government officials from holding important official positions for up to 10 years, including all Members of the Cabinet and all 450 members of Parliament who had held positions from February 23, 2014 to May 19, 2019. In their joint statement, the G7 ambassadors reminded their Ukrainian ally that while “electoral change and political rotation are the norm in democracies… indiscriminate bans on all participants in executive and legislative governance are not,” adding that "the situation in Ukraine today is, in our conviction, not comparable to that after the Revolution of Dignity."

The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), the largest representation of Americans of Ukrainian descent, stands with the ambassadors of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States in reminding President Zelensky that the lustration laws which took effect following the Revolution of Dignity were necessitated by the historic nature of President Yanukovych's high crimes and dereliction of duty. As the European Court of Human Rights declared, “a democratic State is entitled to require civil servants to be loyal to the constitutional principles on which it is founded.” President Yanukovych and his henchmen jeopardized the national security and defense of
In sharp contrast to this lawless era, the government officials now targeted by President Zelenskyy presided over a historic rebirth of Ukraine's national defense structure, and turned around what was a contracting economy following Russia's invasion, into GDP growth of 3.3 percent in 2018. Instead of leaving the country vulnerable to further invasion by Russia, Ukraine's leaders succeeded in garnering world support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and non-recognition of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. These leaders also convinced the United States to provide Ukraine with lethal defensive weapons, rebuilt the Ukrainian Armed Forces and established a formidable, homegrown armaments industry.

The lustration of Yanukovych-era government officials, including the newly appointed head of Ukraine's Presidential Administration, was a well-reasoned, legislated response to the demands of the Euromaidan demonstrators. Instead of tearing the country apart with political retribution, UCCA strongly urges President Zelenskyy and his government to remain focused on fighting the enemy currently occupying Ukraine's territory and to build upon the successes of the past 5 years. Ukrainians deserve no less.

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WHAT IS UCCA?
The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) is a non-profit, non-partisan community-based organization that has represented the interests of Ukrainians in the United States since 1940.

ЩО ТАКЕ УККА?
Український Конґресовий Комітет Америки (УККА) є неприбутковою, безпартійною громадською організацією, яка представляє інтереси українців у Сполучених Штатах Америки з 1940 року.

203 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10003
+1 (212) 228-6840

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Media Contact: Andrij Dobriansky