UCCA President Travels to Poland on Fact Finding Mission

On March 12-14, UCCA’s President, Andriy Futey traveled to Poland with the President of the United Ukrainian Organizations of Ohio (UZO), Marta Liscynesky-Kelleher, on a fact-finding mission for the benefit of the greater Ukrainian American community. Visiting jointly alongside a US Senate CODEL, this delegation witnessed firsthand what is happening in Poland and on the Polish-Ukrainian border in order to help fine-tune UCCA’s Humanitarian Aid Efforts and advocacy work.

Throughout the visit, UCCA had a considerable opportunity to speak to each Senator individually and in group settings.

Upon arrival on March 12th, the UCCA team was greeted by announcements and signs at the Krakow Airport in the Polish, Ukrainian and English languages. Polish volunteers were stationed throughout the airport directing the displaced persons through customs, assisting them
where the Ukrainian World Congress has temporarily relocated its Kyiv-based staff to help assist with the ever-growing number of displaced persons. Officials estimate that up to 50,000 Ukrainians are arriving daily in Przemyśl as a hub to travel to then transit on to other cities further within Poland and beyond. UCCA's observers noted that with such a large influx of displaced persons, order is still maintained by the Polish law enforcement, border control and an abundance of volunteers.

During their stay in Przemyśl, Futey and Liscynesky had the opportunity to visit the Ukrainian community’s Narodnyj Dim - Dom Ukraiński, which acts as a center to help process Displaced Persons as well as temporarily housing the Ukrainian World Congress’s Ukraine office. Working with volunteers, the UWC helps up to 90 displaced Ukrainian citizens per day, providing overnight stays, warm meals, clothes, showers and basic supplies. The UWC and local volunteers also assist the fleeing Ukrainians with transfers to other parts of Poland.

On the following day, March 13th, the UCCA delegation traveled to the town of Korczowa (Корчова) on the border with Ukraine, to meet up with the US Senate Congressional Delegation led by Senator Rob Portman (R-OH), Co-Chair of the Senate Ukrainian Caucus. The delegation also included Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT).

Together with the Senators, UCCA spoke to various Polish authorities, including members of the Border Patrol, Customs, & Military, as well as Caritas Polska and other Polish volunteer organizations, and had a chance to witness how displaced Ukrainians were crossing the border into Poland. At the time of the visit, the process allowed for groups of up to 50 individuals to cross the border: after first stopping at document control, they would proceed to a welcome center that provided food and drink, and where travelers could rest under covered tents; large buses would then transport these individuals to Hala Kijowska (“Kyiv Hall”) Trade and Exposition Centre, a registration point in Młyny (Млини), where Ukrainians are again offered food and water before getting transportation to a final destination.

It is in this “Kyiv Hall” where the World Central Kitchen, a not-for-profit organization devoted to providing meals in the wake of natural disasters, operates. During the visit, the US Senators served food to the refugees (pictures below), while UCCA President Andriy Futey helped with translating so that Displaced Ukrainians could order food and the US Senators could find out more about where they were coming from (video below).
Engaging with many in conversation, the Senators and UCCA leaders heard heart-wrenching accounts of friends and families being wounded and homes being destroyed due to the Russian targeting of civilian infrastructure. When asked what the United States can do to help, they all pleaded to “PROTECT OUR SKIES! GIVE US AIR WEAPONS!” Speaking with tears in their eyes about the pain of leaving their homeland, the families with whom the delegation spoke all said they wanted to go back to Ukraine when it's safe to return.
Join UCCA’s #SupportUkraine Humanitarian Effort

Donate Today!
The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America would like to thank all our individual donors and corporate sponsors for their generous support!

Thanks to your continued donations - submitted via UCCA's MightyCause platform, direct bank deposits, donations and charity events - UCCA continues our Ukrainian American community's vital humanitarian aid efforts.

Please know that every penny donated to this Fundraiser will go directly to our humanitarian aid effort - NO money is being diverted at the top or dedicated for administrative overhead.

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State Sponsor of Terror Designation
UCCA’s Washington, D.C., public affairs bureau - the Ukrainian National Information Service (UNIS) - urges you to contact the U.S. State Department to advocate for the designation of Russia as a ‘state sponsor of terror’.

Below please find a sample text you may use:

**Dear Secretary Blinken:**

*For the past four weeks, Russia’s unprovoked war against Ukraine has caused immeasurable suffering and loss of thousands of civilian lives. The Kremlin’s indiscriminate bombing throughout Ukraine of medical facilities, residential dwellings, and areas designated as shelters cannot be described in any other way than as terrorist acts.*
instances, the Russian State is responsible for acts of barbarism and the deaths of thousands of innocent individuals. The Russian government’s use of violence and intimidation against innocents in Ukraine to achieve its political purposes can only be defined as international terrorism!

As an informed and concerned American citizen, I appeal to you to designate Russia as a State Sponsor of Terror and stop the war in Ukraine. Russia must be recognized as a sponsor of terror and suffer the consequences of its actions.

Sincerely,

To contact the State Department, please visit the website at: https://register.state.gov/contactus/contactusform

Read the letter from the Congressional Ukraine Caucus:
The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520  

Dear Secretary Blinken,

We are writing today regarding the current state of the Russian regime led by Vladimir Putin. Putin has conducted acts of terror on the innocent people of Ukraine for over three weeks now. Currently more than 600 civilians in Ukraine have been killed as a result of Putin’s decision to invade their country.

In the past few weeks Russian forces have attacked and fired upon a nuclear plant, bombed civilian infrastructure buildings such as residential homes and apartments, destroyed an operating maternity ward with infants inside, and targeted a pediatric cancer hospital. These are only a few of the horrific acts that the Putin regime has carried out and it is clear they will stop at nothing, not even killing innocent babies and children with cancer, to continue their rampage on Ukraine. Specifically, about 100 children have been killed in Russian attacks on Ukraine. While Congress has authorized and funded billions of dollars in military and humanitarian support for Ukraine, we as a country cannot continue to sit by and watch these events unfold while people in Ukraine are living in bomb shelters and falling asleep to the sound of gun shots, military airplanes, and explosions each and every night. Additionally, multiple Americans have now been injured and killed as a result of Russia’s actions. This is despicable and should be addressed immediately.

For the reasons stated above, we respectfully request that you as the Secretary of State designate the Putin regime as a state sponsor of terrorism. Historically, the US Department of State applies this designation to countries which the Department alleges to have “repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism.” According to the State Department, the definition of “terrorism” includes activities that involve a violent act or an act dangerous to human life, property, or infrastructure that is intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, kidnapping, or hostage-taking. This definition unequivocally explains exactly what Putin is doing to the country and people of Ukraine.

Furthermore, Ukrainian President Zelensky last week called for the Putin regime to be labeled as a “terrorist state.” As the agency tasked to leverage America’s diplomatic strength to achieve and maintain peace, we strongly urge you to hold Russia accountable for using terror and violence to achieve Putin’s dream of a renewed Soviet/Russian Empire.
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.

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

Support UCCA With A Monthly Or 1-Time Donation