The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) is deeply offended and strongly condemns Pope Francis’ recent comments that Ukraine should have ‘the courage of the white flag’ and begin negotiations to end the war Russia started and has been callously waging for the past two years against Ukraine.

“Rather than urging Russia to immediately stop the war and withdraw its troops from Ukrainian territory, the leader of the global Catholic Church appears to be rewarding the brutal aggressor state and justifying Russia’s unprovoked, full-scale invasion, war crimes and genocide,” stated UCCA.
President, Andriy Futey. “Surrender is not the answer, we need to take lessons from history, “continued Futey.

If russia removed its troops from Ukraine, the war would end, and peace would prevail. Ukrainians are clearly seeking a long-lasting peace. For over two years, Ukrainians have been standing on the frontlines for universal democratic principles, and the toll on them has been staggering – tens of thousands have been killed, over 6.5 million have fled to the safety of other countries, 8 million are internally displaced within the borders of Ukraine, and hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian children have been kidnaped and trafficked into russia – this is the cost of defending democracy against russia’s tyranny.

UCCA joins the calls of Ukraine and the global Ukrainian community for Pope Francis to retract his comments, urge russia to withdraw its troops from all of Ukraine’s sovereign land, and recognize the honorable plight of the Ukrainian people to defend their territory and seek a just peace that does not involve surrendering to a tyrant.
The incendiary comments made by Pope Francis were released to the worldwide media just as the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), Patriarch Sviatoslav Shevchuk, had arrived in the United States for his first visit since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began in February 2022.

Over the course of 7 days, Patriarch Sviatoslav and members of the UGCC’s Permanent Synod visited with civil, religious and government leaders in what has overwhelmingly been described as a successful working visit. In addition to meeting with the Ukrainian Catholic faithful at the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family in Washington, D.C., the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Philadelphia, and St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church in New York City, the group met with the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Washington, Wilton Cardinal Gregory, the Archbishop Emeritus of Washington, Donald Cardinal Wuerl, the Apostolic Nuncio of the Holy See to the United States, Christophe Cardinal Pierre, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, Timothy Cardinal Dolan, the Roman Catholic Archbishop for U.S. Military Services and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Timothy Broglio, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Philadelphia, Nelson Pérez, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, Gabriele Caccia, Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, and...
Metropolitan Antony and Archbishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. In Washington, D.C., meetings were held with the Ambassador of Ukraine to the USA, Oksana Markarova, U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell, Congressman Steve Scalise, the office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives and those of a half dozen more U.S. Representatives, the U.S. Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Catholic Relief Services and Catholic Charities USA, as well as five former United States Ambassadors. And while in Philadelphia, the Patriarch participated in the ordination of three Roman Catholic Bishops.

Throughout all of these visits, the Patriarch and the Permanent Synod repeatedly expressed that Ukraine remains unbroken, that it stands and will stand, and that Ukrainians will continue to defend freedom and dignity. The release of Pope Francis’ comments in the midst of this visit were therefore especially hurtful.

Already since the mysteriously-timed release of the video from Switzerland, Foreign Ministers Dmytro Kuleba of Ukraine and Radosław Sikorski of Poland, the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations, the Ukrainian World Congress, the Christian Society of Ukrainians in Italy, the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations and the Permanent Synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, among others, have released statements ranging from expressions of profound disappointment in the words of Pope Francis, to reminders that Ukraine’s flag is a yellow and blue one.

“This is the flag by which we live, die, and prevail. We shall never raise any other flags.”

- Foreign Minister of Ukraine, Dmytro Kuleba
UCCA counts on Ukrainians of all creeds and religions to remain united in our righteous defense when the words of others seek to demoralize and divide us. In the words of Patriarch Sviatoslav, “the people who… know how to stay together, pray together, are unbreakable.”

**Keep Calling Congress**

The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) and its Washington, DC public affairs bureau – the [Ukrainian National Information Service](https://www.unic.org) (UNIS) – urge you to contact Speaker Johnson’s office IMMEDIATELY and urge the Speaker to bring a supplemental national security assistance bill to a vote.

The importance of additional security assistance to Ukraine is self-evident and the lack of assistance from the United States has severely diminished Ukraine’s ability to defend its citizens, as well as to protect the world from Russian aggression.
HOW TO CONTACT SPEAKER JOHNSON:

• Call Speaker Johnson's Capitol office: 202 225-4000

• Leave a message with the operator about the importance of the Ukraine supplemental bill:

As a concerned citizen, I urge you to bring a national security supplemental bill to the floor for a vote.

This crucial supplemental assistance not only benefits Ukraine by defending against the ruthless onslaught of russian attacks, but also is in the national security interests of the United States and the entire Free World.

Assisting Ukraine and curbing russian aggression now will prevent prolonged American involvement in a future worldwide conflict. Your resolve and action to bring a supplemental bill for a vote is critically important!
Once again, hundreds of thousands of Muslims of Ukraine have begun their month of fasting during an unprecedented time. Especially for the indigenous Crimean Tatars of Ukraine, celebrating the annual observance of Ramadan continues to be a struggle with rockets flying overhead. Nevertheless, Ukrainians persist and remain unbroken.

UCCA joins with President Zelensky in wishing all who celebrate: Hoş keldiñ, mübarek Ramazan!
Did you miss a recent UCCA email?

UCCA archives all of our email updates at UCCA.org

CALL TO ARMS - #SupportUkraine Phonauton!

IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED! CONTACT SPEAKER JOHNSON - Supplemental Funding for Ukraine

REMEMBER! "Ukrainian Week" Advocacy on a Local Level

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 (УКАА) є неприбутковою, безпартійною громадською організацією, яка представляє інтереси українців у Сполучених Штатах Америки з 1940 року.
Candid.

UCCA has earned a 2023 Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest award from the charity rating organization Candid. Formerly known as Guidestar, Candid is the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations. Out of all non-profits registered in the United States, only roughly 6% receive the Platinum level of transparency.

Your checks are also welcome!

Mail to:

UCCA
203 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10003

UCCA is a registered 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit organization and all donations to UCCA are tax deductible.

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