



“UKRAINIAN DAY” SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDES

The second in a series of advocacy events in Washington, DC during 2014, “Ukrainian Day” was held on, July 16th. Over 40 members of the Ukrainian American community, hailing from 8 states, visited 26 Congressional Offices to express our concerns about U.S. foreign policy vis-à-vis Ukraine. Meetings were held to garner support for: military assistance including support for Major Non-NATO Ally Status for Ukraine; sectoral sanctions against Russia; an Official State Visit and Joint Session of Congress for Ukraine’s newly elected president, Petro Poroshenko; and, support for UCCA’s International Election Observer Missions. During the meetings, “Ukrainian Day” participants urged members of Congress to support Ukraine’s drastically needed reform efforts, EuroAtlantic integration and most importantly, Ukraine’s territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence

“Ukrainian Day” began with a briefing session to help acquaint participants with the most pressing issues. Presenters at the briefing included former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine and current director of Eurasia Center at the Atlantic Council, John Herbst; Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia at the United States Agency for International Development, Jonathan Katz; and Director of the Ukrainian National Information Service, Michael Sawkiw, Jr.

Following the briefing, five groups fanned out to visit the following Congressional Offices. On the Senate side, meetings were held with: Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Patrick Toomey (D-PA), Rob Portman (R-OH), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Charles Schumer (D-NY), Ed Markey (D-MA), and Bob Casey (D-PA).



On the House side meetings were held with: Catherine Clark (D-MA), Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), Louise Slaughter (D-NY), Ted Deutch (D-FL), Leonard Lance (R-NJ), Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), William Keating (R-MA), Bill Pascrell (D-NJ), Steve Stivers (R-OH), Elizabeth Esty (D-CT), Allyson Schwartz (D-PA), Albio Sires (D-NJ), John Larson (D-CT), Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ), Brian Higgins (D-NY) and Donald Payne, Jr. (D-NJ).



The UCCA and UNIS sincerely thank all those who participated in “Ukrainian Day”!

UCCA ISSUES STATEMENT FOLLOWING RUSSIAN TERRORIST ACT AGAINST MALAYSIAN FLIGHT MH17

On July 18th, the day following the horrific Russian terrorist act against Malaysian Airline Flight MH17, the UCCA issued the following statement:

“The UCCA expresses its deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the innocent victims of Malaysian Airline Flight MH17.

The commercial Boeing 777 was flying over Eastern Ukraine yesterday when it was shot down by a surface-to-air missile fired by pro-Russian terrorists. The plane exploded in midair, killing everyone on board. This heinous act perpetrated by the Russian-sponsored terrorists in Eastern Ukraine has resulted in the deaths of 298 innocent victims, including at least one confirmed American citizen. The UCCA is outraged at this aggressive behavior and strongly condemns the Putin-backed terrorists for this egregious crime. We urge the U.S. and world leaders to act responsibly and bring the perpetrators to justice.

It is imperative that the facts of this tragedy come to light. Therefore, the UCCA urges the international community to take immediate steps to ensure that the crash site remains untouched and restricted until it can be thoroughly examined by an impartial international team of investigators.

Moreover, given the severity of the situation, and the numerous crimes of the Russian-sponsored terrorists in Eastern Ukraine, the UCCA calls upon the United States to provide Ukraine with Major Non-NATO Ally Designation Status and the necessary military assistance needed to end this crisis and bring peace back to the region. Furthermore, the UCCA urges the United States to impose harsher sectoral sanctions on Russia, and for President Obama, as leader of the democratic free world, to utilize all of his efforts to persuade the leadership of Europe to match U.S. resolve.”

“FRIEND OF UNIS” AWARD BESTOWED AT A RECEPTION IN CONGRESS

Following a busy day visiting congressional offices, “Ukrainian Day” participants were invited to an evening reception in the Cannon House Office Building. This special reception enabled the UCCA to thank several members of Congress for their vocal support of Ukraine’s democracy, by bestowing upon them the “Friend of UNIS” award. On July 16th UNIS Director, Michael Sawkiw Jr., had the honor of bestowing the “Friend of UNIS” award to the following members of Congress, acknowledging them for their continued support of Ukraine’s democracy, sovereignty and territorial integrity: Senator Rob Portman (R-OH); Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD); Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) and Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT). Each of the recipients honored with the award spoke passionately about their support for Ukraine and thanked the Ukrainian American community for their resolve.



Senator Portman, a stalwart supporter of an independent Ukraine, urged the United States to provide Ukraine with military assistance. Congresswoman Maloney thanked the UCCA for the award and said that she was receiving it on behalf of her Ukrainian constituents who continuously kept her abreast of developments in Ukraine. Senator Cardin, Chair of the Helsinki Committee, in his passionate comments, underscored the need for Ukraine to remain whole and free. Senator Murphy, known as “Mr. Ukraine” in Congress, relayed the emotions he experienced while speaking in Kyiv during the height of the Maidan protest.

UCCA WELCOME FURTHER SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA

Following the announcement on July 16th that the United States imposed further sanctions on Russia, the UCCA issued a statement which reads in part:

“The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), the representative organization of over one million Americans of Ukrainian descent, applauds the decision by the United States government to impose further sanctions against Russia for their ongoing support of the terrorist activities in Eastern Ukraine.

The U.S. sanctions, introduced on July 16th against Russia for its role in the current conflict in Ukraine, targets major banks, energy companies, as well as a sizable portion of the defense industry. Sanctions were also imposed on four Russian government officials, including an aide to President Putin and a top ranking official in Russia’s FSB. This new round of sanctions expands the previous penalties on Russia by the United States.

Additionally, the UCCA welcome’s the EU’s announcement that they are considering harsher sanctions against Russia, and urges the U.S. government to provide global leadership and work closely with our European allies and encourage them to coordinate their sanctions with those of the United States.

Only through a coordinated effort can the West impose meaningful consequences on Russia for flagrantly violating international law by illegally invading and annexing Crimea and continuously destabilizing Ukraine by supporting Russian-sponsored terrorists in the Eastern regions of the country. The sanctions imposed yesterday send a strong message from the West to Russia that there are grave consequences for violating international law.”

23RD ANNIVERSARY OF UKRAINE’S INDEPENDENCE

On August 24th, Ukrainians around the world will mark the 23rd anniversary of Ukraine’s renewed independence. This monumental declaration...enabled Ukrainians to reclaim their land from the oppressive Soviet regime and secure their territorial integrity and sovereignty...

Today our brothers and sisters in Ukraine continue to risk and, far too often, sacrifice their lives for freedom, justice and the attainment of a truly independent, European Ukraine. On this 23rd anniversary of Ukraine’s renewed independence, let us redouble our efforts to assist our brethren who truly need us now more than ever. Ukrainians are fighting for their lives. Ukraine is fighting for its survival. This exceedingly grave and dangerous situation facing Ukraine today compels the Ukrainian American community to answer our moral obligation to the people of Ukraine and strengthen our resolve to assist them. We are honor-bound to help in every way that we can.

May the Lord give the Ukrainian nation the strength and fortitude to resist the continuous assault by the Russian-supported terrorists in Eastern Ukraine, and may He grant eternal rest to the heroes who have given their lives in the struggle for an independent and sovereign Ukraine!

To read the full statement please visit www.ucca.org