



UCCA REGISTERS INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVER MISSION

Ukrainians will go to the polls on May 25, 2014, to elect a president, a full year prior to the regularly scheduled presidential elections of 2015. The election follows months of protests in the Ukrainian capital and elsewhere in the country prompted by former President of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich's refusal to sign an agreement with the European Union, the deaths of 88 unarmed protesters in Kyiv, the repeal of the current Ukrainian Constitution, and the flight of Viktor Yanukovich to Russia. It also follows the military takeover/occupation of Crimea by Russia, and the so-called March 16th referendum in Crimea to join Russia that Ukraine and the West recognize as illegal; not to mention the massive build-up of Russian troops along Ukraine's eastern border and escalating provocations by Russian sponsored groups within Ukraine threatening Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In the face of these challenges, Ukraine's citizens believe in democracy and are more determined than ever to rid their country of corrupt politicians and practices. They see elections as one of the means of doing so and therefore, the upcoming May 25th presidential elections are deemed by many as the most important elections in Ukraine since it gained independence in 1991.

In anticipation of the upcoming presidential and municipal elections in Ukraine, the UCCA is once again hosting a delegation of International Election Observers. As of April 30th, the UCCA has registered over 100 individuals with Ukraine's Central Election Commission. Should you like to serve as an International Election Observer, the UCCA is accepting applications until the close of the business day on May 10th. Applications and additional information about the UCCA Election Observer Mission can be found on our website at www.ucca.org (on the homepage click the following logo):



The UCCA has opened a temporary office in Kyiv to coordinate the work of the Election Mission. The office is located at vul. Hrushevshkoho 4 in the center of Kyiv and is staffed by Viktoria Hubska and Iryna Mykulenko.

The UCCA Election Mission is co-headed by UCCA President Tamara Olexy and UCCA Executive Vice President Andrij Futey. Additionally, Reno Domenico will be serving as the UCCA's Chief Long-term Observer in Ukraine.

The UCCA will also be monitoring the elections at Ukrainian diplomatic missions in the United States.

UCCA AWARDED GRANT FROM NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

On April 10, the UCCA was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to conduct their "Electing the New Ukrainian President" civic education program. The project was developed to promote informed voting and foster public discussion on key issues ahead of the May 2014 presidential elections.

The UCCA's 2-month program will facilitate political engagement via Town Hall meetings on the radio and Internet. In a departure from the traditional Town Hall meeting that brings together voters and candidates, this format allows the Fourth Estate and social media to serve as stewards of the electorate, engaging political parties and blocs on their behalf. During the nonpartisan town hall meetings, candidates and representatives of political parties and coalitions will answer questions put to them by the press and the public.

The Town Hall meetings will be convened in seven cities in eastern and southern Ukraine, including: Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhya, Mariupol and Odesa. Tapping into the extensive network of oblast radio stations that participated in a similar program in the 2007 parliamentary election, the UCCA program has the potential to reach over 20 million voters.

The goal of "Electing the New Ukrainian President" is to build confidence in the interactive relationship between citizens and their elected officials. The program does not support any political party or bloc; rather it encourages Ukraine's voters to acquaint themselves with the platforms and positions of various parties and blocs, and empowers the electorate to make a rational and considered decision when they go to the polls on May 25th.

More information about the UCCA's civic education program will be provided in next month's bulletin.

UCCA HOLDS CONFERENCE CALL WITH BRANCH PRESIDENTS

The UCCA held its first Conference Call with UCCA Branch Presidents on April 2nd to discuss the current critical situation in Ukraine, and to coordinate our community's actions and efforts going forward.

Some initiatives discussed included:

- Continue meeting with members of Congress to thank them for their support of Ukraine and to address 2 vital issues for Ukraine—military assistance and assurance that Ukraine is involved in all decisions regarding its future! The UCCA National Office will be distributing statements in this regard that will be emailed out next week. Both the House and Senate are out of session April 14-25; Senate is also out of session on May 26-30 and the House is out of session on May 12-16— thus these times are when members of Congress will be in their districts and is a perfect time to set up community meetings.
- Responding to inaccuracies about Ukraine in the mass media; UCCA will host a skype conference call on how to effectively use social media. Details will be forthcoming shortly.
- Donating to Ukraine. UCCA recommends donating through our member organization the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee (www.uuarc.org) which is conducting 2 fundraising campaigns— Humanitarian needs of the Ukrainian Army and National Guard; as well as, Humanitarian Aid Euromaidan.
- The UCCA National Office and UNIS regularly send out Statements and Action Items—these should be distributed widely within your respective communities.

The UCCA would like to thank those branches that participated in our inaugural conference call. We hope that all of our branches will join our next conference call which is tentatively slated for Tuesday, June 3rd at 7pm.

UKRAINE'S DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS WASHINGTON

Danylo Lubkivsky, Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister, arrived in Washington, DC on April 23rd on the heels of the Vice President's trip to Ukraine. The DFM was to meet with U.S. Administration officials and discuss the crisis in Ukraine. While in Washington, the DFM made it a priority to meet with representatives of the Ukrainian community. Much of the discussion focused on the dramatic events occurring in eastern Ukraine and the Ukrainian government's efforts to mitigate and squelch the terrorist activities. Mr. Lubkivsky provided a frank analysis of the crisis within Ukraine's government structures, following its complete degradation by the Yanukovych regime. Continuous domestic dialogs between the central government in Kyiv and communities in eastern Ukraine remain a key priority for the government.



The DFM thanked the United States for its financial commitments and moral support throughout the eventful five month period of Maidan, the ouster of Yanukovych and the Russian invasion of Crimea. He expressed his government's sincerest gratitude to the worldwide Ukrainian diaspora

for their assistance, in particular the Ukrainian American community for its ongoing advocacy of support for Ukraine within U.S. government circles and to continue our efforts for the benefit of a democratic, united Ukraine.

MAY: ANNUAL UWC FUNDRAISING MONTH

Traditionally May is the Fundraising month for the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC).

As the UCCA is a founding and active member of the UWC, we urge our Branches and members to donate to the UWC Fundraising Campaign to support the work of the UWC.

Your tax-deductible donation to the UWC can be sent to the UCCA National Office located at:

UCCA
203 Second Avenue,
New York, NY 10003.