



## Lemkin Institute Statement Against Anti-Black Racism and White Supremacy in Europe

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The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention protests in the most severe terms possible the disgusting display of anti-Black racism and white supremacy in Europe during the current conflict in Ukraine.

Recent reports of Nigerian students from Ukraine being turned away at the Polish border at gunpoint demonstrates in the clearest fashion the hollowness of much of the language surrounding this crisis, according to which NATO membership promises “freedom.” In fact, this stark racism surfaces the regrettable overlap between concepts of freedom and white ethnonationalism across Europe, an historical tendency that is deeply implicated in the modern history of genocide.

Indeed, some Ukrainians themselves are preventing black people from fleeing the war. *Several social media posts have shown videos in which Ukrainians turn away black people and block them from boarding trains while white Ukrainians are allowed through.*

The Western press has reinforced a white supremacist message about this current conflict by highlighting the hair color, eye color, and supposedly “civilized” nature of the victims, implying that this conflict is somehow more shocking and worse than conflicts that have been raging all over the world, most with deep support from NATO and the Russian Federation, whose victims are, we are made to understand, less civilized.

The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention wishes to remind the Western press that the “civilized” world about which they speak has been the engine for genocide for over 500 years.

While we call for the immediate cessation of hostilities and Russia’s withdrawal from sovereign Ukrainian soil, *we do so in the spirit of equal sovereignty, according to which all countries of the world have the right to develop internally without the devastating consequences of external invasion and meddling.* This includes countries devastated by NATO since the 1990s, whose refugee populations are now routinely turned away from the very same states being applauded and aided for accepting so many white Ukrainians.

Imperialist hubris on both the part of Russia and NATO powers has led to this horrific crisis. We join the world in hoping that their overseas adventurism does not land the world in the same catastrophe that it did in 1914 and again in 1939. And we call attention to the horrors it has already inflicted – and continues to inflict – on peoples all over the world, particularly in the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

The Lemkin Institute demands that the European Union immediately and unconditionally aid Africans and other people of color stranded in Ukraine by providing safe passage and equal treatment with white refugees.