



## Statement on Russian's Aggressive War in Ukraine

Released 24 February 2022

The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention strongly condemns the criminal acts carried out by the Russian Federation in the sovereign country of Ukraine. The unilateral aggression and invasion ordered by its President Vladimir Putin this morning, Thursday, February 24, 2022, constitute a serious breach of the most essential principles of international law, which have been in effect since the end of the Second World War.

This military aggression shows Russia's total disregard for human life and the indifference of its autocratic leader towards international standards that advocate for a peaceful coexistence of all nations, territorial integrity, equal sovereignty, conflict resolution through dialogue, and the unrestricted respect for human rights.

Russia's expansionist and imperialistic ideology finds its antecedents not only in Ukraine, but also in Georgia and Moldavia, where it has also attempted to recover control over territory that once was part of the Soviet Union and to expand its domination in the region. Russia's new unilateral and unprovoked aggression is evidence of that fact.

Moreover, Russia's threats to Ukraine's sovereignty today dangerously echo the goals and fears that informed Moscow's policies towards the Ukraine region in 1932 and 1933, which resulted in the deaths of millions of Ukrainians through man-made famine as well as the targeted murder of its political and intellectual elites. Putin's accusations of genocide against the Ukrainians in the Donbas region evoke similar projections from far too many soon-to-be genocidaires of the past, who have accused their targeted groups of committing the very crime that they have gone on to commit.

Western powers as well as the international community represented by the enormous and economically expensive bureaucratic body of United Nations have, once again, failed to prevent another war and its atrocious humanitarian consequences, thus allowing the world to become an even more propitious place for authoritarianism.

The Lemkin Institute is profoundly concerned about the humanitarian consequences of this military conflict and the possibility of other international crimes such as war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. The use of hasty and opportunistic historical analogies and accusations of genocide by politicians and the media around the world are contributing to the radicalization of this very volatile situation.

Therefore, the Lemkin Institute calls upon:

- Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation, to put an immediate stop to the aggression and to order the withdrawal of troops from Ukrainian territory;
- Russia's Security Council to ensure the safety, security, and respect for human rights of all civilians falling under its military control;
- The United Nations to step up its efforts for diplomatic and constructive dialogue to put an immediate end to this urgent conflict;
- China to step up and encourage its ally to immediately disengage from this illegal invasion;
- Belarus to abstain from facilitating the entrance of Russian military into the Ukrainian territory;
- The international media to avoid scurrilous comparisons with the past and to ensure that coverage of atrocity crimes – threatened and actual – be well sourced and put in proper context; and
- The Western powers to properly commit themselves to global decolonization and economic justice as part of the obligations spelled out by the United Nations and its whole body of treaties aimed at building a peaceful coexistence and respect for human rights worldwide.