



International Council in Support of Ukraine  
Conseil International de Soutien de l'Ukraine  
Рада Українських Державницьких Організацій Світу

December 7, 2015

**ICSU 2015 Pinnacle Award Gala**

**Introductory Remarks – Yuri Shymko, ICSU President**

**The Old Mill, Toronto**

**General Wesley Clark, Hon. Yevhen Marchuk and Larysa Ivshyna, Dr. Col. Vsevolod Stebliuk and Dr. Olena Burlaka, Most Rev. Bishop Andriy, Consul General of Ukraine Ludmyla Davydovych, Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps of Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Heads of Ukrainian community organizations in Canada and the USA, Ladies and gentlemen.**

**Шановна Українська Громадо! Вітаємо Вас на першому міжнародному благодійному вечорі в нових приміщеннях Українського Культурного Центру м. Торонто!**

**Tonight's gala event is a celebration of the invincible spirit of a nation that has refused to be annihilated because it cherished the gift of life, the pursuit of liberty and the right to be masters of their own destiny, even if it meant sacrificing life itself.**

**Tonight we welcome three individuals who epitomise, each in his own distinctive way, that collective spirit of survival, the will to live as free individuals and as free people who cherish and protect the gift of life.**

**We are honoring General Wesley Clark, a four star American General and former Supreme NATO Commander of Europe who is waging a determined international campaign to convince the world that today Ukraine is at the front line of a struggle to safeguard the life and security not only of its own people but also that of the nations of Europe and America.**

**We are also recognizing the achievements of the Hon. Yevhen Marchuk, former Ukrainian Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, who is currently Ukraine's Envoy on Security Issues at the Minsk negotiations. He is also the Founder and Co-chair of the "Ukraine in NATO" national campaign to hold a referendum on joining NATO.**

**Both General Wesley Clark and Yevhen Marchuk were Presidential candidates in their respective countries. I am convinced that if Yevhen Marchuk had been elected President of Ukraine in 1999 and General Clark President of the United States in 2004 the history of both countries would have**

developed in a completely different and much better way. Both countries would have played a completely different role on the world scene today.

We also are extending a special warm welcome tonight to Dr. Col. Vsevolod Stebliuk, Advisor to Ukraine's Minister of Defence on medical services to the military. He is the co-founder of the "Guardian Angels of Ukraine" charitable project spearheading a national policy on rehabilitation services to veterans and the military suffering from both physical and mental combat injuries.

In the summer of 2014 in the midst of the battle at Illovaysk he managed to save the lives of 87 wounded soldiers at the risk of his own life. He was named national hero of Ukraine for his courageous deeds. While in Toronto in December 2014 he became the recipient of the "Inaugural Guardian Angel Ukraine Award".

What unites these three unique individuals is their humanity, their selfless passion to safeguard human lives, to serve their country and protect those who are victims of hatred, injustice, violence, persecution and brutal aggression at the hands of merciless tyrants.

It is therefore most appropriate that the proceeds of this gala event are in support of two non-profit charitable projects, devoid of public funding, that rely exclusively on private donations from members of our communities such as you who are present here tonight. Both projects were created under the auspices of the ICSU.

They are: "Friends of the Defence Forces of Ukraine" founded in May 2014 to provide non lethal assistance to Ukraine's highly motivated volunteer battalions and "Guardian Angels Ukraine" launched in December 2014 to help in the rehabilitation of wounded soldiers.

It is also most fitting that this gala event is held by the ICSU, whose first two Presidents were survivors of the Nazi death camps of Auschwitz & Sachsenhausen and the first president of our US affiliate, the Organization for the Defence of the Four Freedoms for Ukraine, is today inscribed among the righteous at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.

The world must be reminded that those who fought so valiantly for an independent Ukrainian state faced two mighty military powers, whose partnership started the Second World War. Ukraine was the main European battlefield, losing no fewer than 10 million of its people shortly after an additional 7 million had perished under Stalin's genocidal famine, which Putin's Russia still refuses to recognize as state sponsored genocide.

It is truly a miracle that this nation was able to survive after such devastation. Neither Stalin's gulag nor Hitler's gas chambers were able to stop that historic and heroic freedom march when 90% used the weapon of free democratic elections to finally exit peacefully out of an evil empire, an empire that Vladimir Putin is now trying to reassemble by launching the first military aggression in Europe since WW II. America's former First Lady and Secretary of State Hilary Clinton was right when she compared Putin's ethnocentric imperial expansionism to that of Adolf Hitler who also wanted to change the world order through military aggression. Putin will fail just like Hitler because you can no longer turn

back the clock of history. His most recent bloody incursions into Syria marks the beginning of the end of Putin's regime.

According to Russian opposition leader Garry Kasparov, Russian forces are in Syria because Putin needs a new war propaganda back home and to destroy any legitimate pro-Western opposition to Bashar al-Assad. At the same time he needs to maintain a stream of Syrian refugees flooding into Europe to distract its attention from his continued military campaign against Ukraine with the support of far-right European parties.

In my opinion, any support for a joint anti-ISIS coalition of US and its NATO allies with Russia should be conditional on Assad's removal from power, Russia's total withdrawal of all its tanks, artillery and troops from Ukraine under OSCE supervision, the restoration of Ukraine's control of its eastern borders with Russia, the release of all prisoners incarcerated in Russia, democratic monitored elections in the separatist enclaves according to Ukraine's electoral laws and, yes, negotiations for the return of Crimea to Ukraine.

We wish Yevhen Marchuk and Ukraine's negotiators in Minsk success in attaining a sustainable peace. Unless all the terms of negotiations are met and there is no escalation of the conflict, Western sanctions against Russia must continue.

I wish to thank the past Conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper for its generous assistance to Ukraine and acknowledge the efforts made by former MPs Ted Opitz, Chair of the Canada Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group, and Bernard Trottier, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who are with us today.

We are confident that Canada's current Liberal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will continue to pursue the same policies with regards to Ukraine.

We equally recognize the coordinated efforts to assist Ukraine by the leaders of our Canadian affiliates, Oleh Romanyschyn, Orest Steciw, Lisa Shymko, Ihor Kozak, Michael Shepetyk, Oksana Prociuk-Ciz, Roman Medyk, Bob Leschyschen, Chrystia Bidiak and many others in concert with the Ukrainian World Congress and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress headed by its National President Paul Grod.

No less important were the successful lobbying efforts by our American affiliates, represented tonight by ICSU Vice-President Borys Potapenko, American CSU Chair Alex Strilchuk, Stephan Kaczurak, Walter Zaryckyj, Mykola Hryckowian and Halyna Turyk, to assure the passage and adoption in 2014 of the "Ukraine Freedom Support Act" by the US Senate and the "Ukraine Security Assistance Act" by the House of Representatives.

What price do the people of Ukraine still have to pay to achieve and maintain a secure peace that will benefit all the members of the EU and be in the strategic interests of NATO and the US?

I am currently translating into English the memoirs of a survivor of Auschwitz, one of thousands of Ukrainian nationalists who were interned and perished in Hitler's death camps for the same reason

that Ukrainian POWs and Crimean Tatars are languishing today in the prisons of Putin's Russia. It was published in 1946, entitled: "I Want to Live"!

The same cry is heard today, after a span of over 70 years, from hundreds of orphaned children and widowed spouses, from the 26,000 wounded soldiers and civilians, from the over 2 million refugees who have been forced out of their homes, from every peace loving citizen of Ukraine and resident of the devastated Donbas.

The 297 victims of the Malaysian Airline Flight MH 17 shot down in July 2014 by a Russian missile launcher in Eastern Ukraine wanted to live as did the 224 Russian tourists in the October 31, 2015 Metrojet crash over Egypt. They are all victims of either state sponsors of terror or terrorist groups blinded by ideologies of hate, violence and conquest.

There is a common thread that unites these past and present promoters of violent aggression, whether it is a German corporal with visions of a new world order under the Third Reich, a psychopathic former KGB colonel dreaming of restoring the former USSR or a fanatical Islamist cleric aiming to recreate a new Caliphate.

They are all destined to fail if men and women of good will can muster that human resilience to protect the sanctity of life, to strengthen the will to live and to mobilize all the forces at our disposal, whatever the cost, in order to contain and eradicate ideologies promoting violence and brute force as a means of attaining desired goals.

**Дорога громадо !**

Сучасна Україна знає, що таке насилля, війна та терор. Це досвід нашої довголітньої історії. Ми те все перетерпіли, перебороли та без сумніву переборемо й сучасні недоліки.

Ми мусимо вірити у можливість досягнення миру та припинення страждання невинних бо віра це потужна внутрішня енергія, яка допомагає пережити страх перед насиллям.

Я увірений, що Україна переможе. У неї достатньо волі. Бракує лише додаткової зброї. Боротьба ще не завершилась. Вона вимагатиме подальшої допомоги та самопосвяти.

**Народ мій є ! Народ мій завжди буде ! Путінська Росія та її вислужники не знищать мій народ !**

**Слава Україні ! Героям Слава !**