



ASSOCIATION OF UKRAINIANS IN TASMANIA

ACN: 009 483 649 ABN 16 067 640 998

185 Main Road Moonah, Tasmania 7009 (PO Box 558)
Phone: 61+ (03) 6273 4471 Email: UkrainiansinTas@Gmail.com
FaceBook: Association of Ukrainians in Tasmania
WebSite: UkesinTas.wordpress.com

Foreign Affairs
Defence and Trade Committee Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Inquiry: The effectiveness of Sanctions against the russian regime

Association of Ukrainians in Tasmania

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The Association of Ukrainians in Tasmania appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission to the inquiry into the effectiveness of the russian sanctions regime. Our submission will include:

- Detail about our organisation
- Our position in relation to the current sanctions
- Impact of the russia's war on Ukraine.

1. Our Organisation

The Association of Ukrainians in Tasmania is a member based organisation representing Ukrainians who live in Tasmania. We are also a member of the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO). Our primary focus is to foster Ukrainian language and culture amongst our members, and support the wellbeing of our community. We also have significant reach into the broader community, who are regularly informed of our events. We have a premises in Moonah, Tasmania, and strong networks in the North and North West of Tasmania.

The Association has maintained links with Ukraine since the arrival of our first members in 1948, and has consistently undertaken advocacy to support Ukrainian causes. Most recently, it is with the saddest of hearts that we have fundraised, publicly rallied and advocated for Ukraine, and warmly welcomed and supported Ukrainians displaced by the full scale invasion, now nearly in its fourth year.

Our activities are broad and varied, with a significant focus in the past four years being to support our community and advocate for Ukraine:

- **Raising Awareness, solidarity and fundraising:** From the start of the full scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, our community has been holding daily, and subsequently, weekly rallies for Ukraine. The Association supports these rallies, and fundraising activities such as Tassie for Ukraine, a local handmade initiative. The Association has also directly held numerous fundraisers, and sent significant funds to Ukrainian causes in partnership with community over the past four years. These initiatives have not only provided material support to Ukraine, but also an opportunity to act in solidarity and increase resilience in the face of aggression.
- **Supporting those displaced by the Invasion:** We continue to support those community members displaced by the invasion of Ukraine. In the initial period, we collaborated with the Department of Home Affairs, local settlement organisations, service providers, and legal representatives to support those who arrived in Tasmania by passing on up to date information about available services and visa pathways. We also collaborated with the AFUO and local NFP to provide financial support to newly arrived community members for mandatory medical checks, and provided gift cards to newly arrived families purchased from community donations. We continue to advocate along side the AFUO to support the resolution of visa status for those displaced by the invasion of Ukraine.
- **Political Advocacy:** We continue to support Ukraine and actively engage media and undertake political advocacy to the fullest extent possible with our available resources.
- **Children and Youth:** We currently operate a Ukrainian School, Nova Shkola which is available to all Ukrainian young people in Tasmania. We also support the Tasmanian branch of Plast, (Ukrainian Scouting organisation) by providing a premises where they can gather and learn. Both these activities are incredibly important in supporting children and young people to learn and maintain language and cultural traditions. These initiatives were started after a long hiatus, by community members passionate about the need to educate the next generation.
- **Sharing tradition:** The Association facilitates a Ukrainian Choir and Dance group, both of which are open to the broader community. These groups present at both Ukrainian, and local community events. When capacity and resources allow, we also organise cooking classes for our members and the broader community.
- **Cultural Events:** We regularly organise annual cultural events celebrating significant dates such as Ukrainian New Year (Malanka) and Ukrainian Independence Day (August 24). Other celebrations and events include Sviatyj Mykolai, Ukrainian Easter and other important traditions at the relevant time during the year.

2. Position on Sanctions

The Association of Ukrainians in Tasmania supports the AFUO's position on the ineffectiveness of the current sanctions regime.

Australia profiting from russian Blood Oil is a tragedy and it's happening on the current Government's watch. The Government has the power to stop funding russia's war machine.

We call on the government to tighten its sanctions by banning all fuel made from russian crude oil, matching UK–EU rules and requiring importers to prove their fuel is Blood Oil-free.

We also call for sanctioning anyone helping russia sell oil above the price cap, increasing transparency around any russian-linked assets held through Euroclear, supporting the use of frozen russian state assets for Ukraine, and stopping Commonwealth investments in companies that profit from sanctioned russian oil.

Voluntary standards will not work—reputational pressure fails in high-profit, complex sectors like energy and commodities, and it's time to legislate to stop sanctions evasion.

We know we cannot hope to help Ukraine win the war while we are helping russia pay for it. We don't want our country to become a dumping ground for Blood Oil. We advocate for the government to close the sanctions loophole.

3. The impact of russia's war on Ukraine

The war on Ukraine by russia is an avoidable tragedy and is causing indescribable suffering for the population of Ukraine. The men, women and children being killed, injured and left homeless as a result of the actions of the putin regime cannot go unanswered. Our community is deeply affected by the full scale invasion – from those directly displaced due to the actions of the putin regime to those Australians who consider themselves friends of Ukraine and can see the pain and suffering that these actions are causing.

For example, we know that community members have lost those dear to them through the actions of the putin regime, some of whom were serving on the front lines at time they were killed. Others, forced to leave Ukraine, know that their houses and communities are no longer habitable or are in areas occupied by russia, and they cannot return. For people born in Ukraine, and with Ukrainian ancestry, and living in Australia, it is deeply troubling and saddening to be witness to the ongoing terror from a distance, knowing that family, friends and communities, are in constant danger.

Despite the ongoing invasion, Ukrainians continue to show resilience in the face of russian aggression. Many recently arrived community members displaced by the invasion are active members of our Association, contribute directly to fundraising and advocacy efforts, and fulfill a central role in supporting Ukraine, supported by the diaspora and community. This is alongside the hardship of being forced to leave a country that they call home, and the pain of leaving friends and family behind.

It is impossible to adequately describe the impact of russia's war on Ukraine, and the Ukrainian people. These sanctions loop holes must be closed to stop the flow of Blood Oil revenue which furthers arms the putin regime and makes it possible for this unnecessary tragedy to continue.