



Foreign, Commonwealth
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Peter Webster

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Dear Peter Webster,

Thank you for your letter of 26 February enclosing the resolution of the Executive Committee of the London and South East region of the United Nations Association on Russia and Ukraine. Your correspondence has been passed to the FCDO Correspondence Team for response.

We are appalled by reports of atrocities in Ukraine, including Russia's barbaric missile attacks. Intentionally directing attacks against civilians and civilian objects constitute war crimes. We want to hold accountable those responsible for the atrocities that have been committed in Ukraine, including military commanders and other individuals in the Putin regime. The Ukrainian authorities and International Criminal Court (ICC) investigations into atrocities in Ukraine are underway and will determine what has taken place. The UK is supporting both investigations.

The UK is open to all proposals on how to ensure accountability in Ukraine and, as announced by the Foreign Secretary on 20 January, has also accepted Ukraine's invitation to join a 'core group' of international partners to consider options to pursue criminal accountability for Russia's aggression against Ukraine. This includes assessing the feasibility of a new "hybrid" tribunal (a specialised court integrated into Ukraine's national justice system with international elements).

We and our partners also support Ukraine's Application instituting proceedings against the Russian Federation before the International Court of Justice under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. This seeks to establish that Russia has no lawful basis to take military action in Ukraine on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations of genocide. We have urged Russia to immediately suspend its military operations in Ukraine, as ordered by the Court in its Order on Provisional Measures of 16 March 2022. On 1 August 2022, the UK filed a declaration of intent to intervene in proceedings concerning Ukraine's application against Russia before the ICJ. It is right that as the principle judicial organ of the

United Nations, the court should provide judgement on Russia's allegations of genocide as basis for its unprovoked and brutal invasion of Ukraine.

On the question of the proscription of the Wagner group, whilst we keep the list of proscribed organisations under review, it is Government policy not to comment on whether a group is under consideration for proscription. To proscribe an organisation, the Home Secretary must have a reasonable belief that it is concerned in terrorism. This means the organisation participates or commits; prepares for; promotes, encourages or unlawfully glorifies; or is in some way otherwise concerned in terrorism. As well as considering whether the statutory test for proscription has been satisfied, the Home Secretary's decision to proscribe must be necessary and proportionate, having taken into account all relevant factors.

The UK has sanctioned over 1,500 individuals and entities, including over 120 oligarchs with an estimated global net worth of over £140 billion, and 24 banks with global assets worth over £940 billion, in response to President Putin's invasion of Ukraine. In total, over £18 billion of assets have been frozen in the UK. We are looking at what we can do in the long term to raise money for the reconstruction of Ukraine using Russian assets. We are exploring what options there may be to do so and are working closely with HM Treasury to make progress.

In addition, the United Kingdom supports Ukraine's ambition to establish a register of damage to ensure that the evidence of the destruction caused by Russia is documented and preserved. Only one country, Russia, is responsible for the damage to Ukraine and it is absolutely right that Russia pay for that damage. Russia must be held to account for actions which are in clear violation of international law, including the UN Charter. We remain steadfast in our support for Ukraine, and for justice and compensation for the damage which Russia has caused.

As Ukraine enters its second year living under a full-scale Russian bombardment, we must work together to secure a lasting peace which respects Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty and defends the UN Charter. President Putin will not negotiate while he thinks he has military options. Ukraine and its partners seek a diplomatic solution to the war, and an end to the bloodshed and destruction inflicted on the Ukrainian people.

The shortest route to end to the war and the uncertainty and suffering it has caused is peace on Ukrainian terms. Allowing Russia to drag the war out would guarantee further aggression, further worsening food and energy security instability, and extend the global economic downturn. An end to the war on Ukrainian terms is the quickest route to stability. That is why the UK and our partners are supporting Ukraine by being more proactive with our military support, and by helping to build a strong Ukraine to secure a prosperous peace. The UK's military support and diplomatic efforts are aimed at creating a decisive shift in the battlefield in order to secure a lasting peace as quickly as possible, not a pause while Russia rearms. One year on from the start of the conflict, the Foreign Secretary said in Parliament"we and our

allies must step up our efforts to ensure that Ukraine wins this war and secures a lasting peace”.

We support Ukraine’s right to choose its own path and its own security arrangements. That means working with Ukraine to strengthen and guard the country’s long-term security beyond the end of the war, providing the kind of assistance needed to guarantee Russia can never act in this way again. Training Ukraine in NATO-standard cutting-edge equipment is the best way to do that. Under NATO’s longstanding Open Door policy any European country has the right to aspire to NATO membership. Any request to join NATO must be agreed by all 30 Allies.

Yours sincerely,

FCDO Correspondence Team
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