

April 12, 2022

## Briefing Note

### Current Situation in Ukraine and the Work and Roles of Parliamentarians

*Prepared by the Parliamentary Centre and the Agency for Legislative Initiatives under the Parliamentary Accountability for the Security Sector (PASS Ukraine) project, funded by the Peace and Stabilisation Operations Program of Global Affairs Canada.*

*The analysis included in this note is based on media reports and information obtained from the Verkhovna Rada and other legislative bodies. It is essential that Ukraine's democratically elected officials continue to perform their duties while enduring Russia's unprovoked, illegal and horrific invasion.*

*This note is for information only and is not meant to convey opinions regarding policy decisions in the Verkhovna Rada's sole purview. The contents of this note do not necessarily reflect the views of PASS partners or Global Affairs Canada.*

*This note may not necessarily reflect the up-to-date current state of affairs as the situation changes every hour. Every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy of all information, acknowledging the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian and security situation, the disruption of the flow of information and organized disinformation all present incredible challenges.*

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Sanctions

The Rada Committee on Youth and Sports proposed excluding the Russian Federation from the UN Security Council as a state that commits genocide on the Ukrainian people and kills Ukrainian children <sup>1</sup>. Members of the Budget Committee<sup>2</sup> and the Human Rights Committee<sup>3</sup> also called for the exclusion of the Russian Federation from the UN Security Council. The Secretary of the Committee on Education called for the termination of all bilateral and multilateral agreements with the aggressor on education and science and non-recognition of their documents on education and degrees.<sup>4</sup> The Deputy Chairwoman of the Committee on Anti-Corruption Policy Olena Moshenets called on SUN PHARMA and ABBOTT not to cooperate with the aggressor and withdraw from the Russian market <sup>5</sup>. The Economic

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<sup>1</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221501.html>

<sup>2</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221536.html>

<sup>3</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221553.html>

<sup>4</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221534.html>

<sup>5</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221526.html>

Development Committee has called for an embargo on Russian energy <sup>6</sup>. The embargo on Russian energy was supported by the Committee on Youth and Sports<sup>7</sup> and the Committee on Anti-Corruption Policy<sup>8</sup>. Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze, the European Integration Committee Chairwoman, called for stopping the work of 11 different Russian media in Europe as "mouthpieces of propaganda".<sup>9</sup>

Members of the Finance Committee reminded international companies that the first-reading bill №7232 provides for taxation in Ukraine of international companies whose divisions continue to operate in Russia - a ratio of 1.5 to corporate income tax rates, environmental tax, rent and property tax.<sup>10</sup>

### **Food crisis**

The Committee on Agrarian Policy informs about the food crisis. The Russian army has been trying to destroy Ukraine's fuel infrastructure since the first days of the war, and these actions have intensified in recent weeks. About 20 oil depots of Ukraine were bombed in different regions of Ukraine. In addition, the enemy left mined agricultural land in the liberated areas. The occupiers are massively stealing agricultural machinery and planting materials. As of April 7, 2022, the projected sown areas of the mainspring crops for the 2022 harvest in the territory controlled by Ukraine are 13,648 thousand hectares, which is 3,268.3 thousand hectares less than last year (16,916.3 thousand hectares)<sup>11</sup>.

### **Activity of the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada**

The Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Ruslan Stefanchuk, together with the initiator of the inter-parliamentary network "United for Ukraine" (U4U) Andrius Kubilius, signed the "Declaration of Unity for European Ukraine."<sup>12</sup> During the meeting with MEPs Ruslan Stefanchuk discussed issues of economic and military assistance, sanctions, and assistance to Ukraine in its EU membership <sup>13</sup>. Ruslan Stefanchuk met with a delegation of the European Parliament and members of the national parliaments of the EU member states,

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<sup>6</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221516.html>

<sup>7</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221627.html>

<sup>8</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221601.html>

<sup>9</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221624.html>

<sup>10</sup> (UKR/ENG) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221505.html>

<sup>11</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221523.html>

<sup>12</sup> (ENG) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/uploads/documents/73197.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> (video UKR) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILg10p8kE7E>

which arrived in Kyiv. The interlocutors discussed the coordination of European parliaments in support of Ukraine.<sup>14</sup>

Ruslan Stefanchuk reacted to the refusal of the Speaker of the Georgian Parliament Shalva Papuashvili to visit Bucha and Irpin and reminded of the support that Ukraine provided to Georgia during the 2008 Russian-Georgian war<sup>15</sup>.

Ruslan Stefanchuk addressed the spring session of the standing committees of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. He stressed the importance of closing the skies and providing heavy weapons.<sup>16</sup>

The Chairman of The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Ruslan Stefanchuk, met with a delegation of Members of the European Parliament, National Parliaments of the EU Member States and members of the European Liberal Political Family of the ALDE. He called to provide heavy weapons to Ukraine, embargoing Russian energy, disconnect all Russian banks from the SWIFT system, block and confiscate Russian accounts in EU banks, and withdraw and suspend visas to Russians.<sup>17</sup>

### Diplomatic Work

The President of the European Commission and the Chief Diplomat of the EU visited Ukraine and they visited Bucha<sup>18</sup>. A delegation of the European Parliament and members of the national parliaments of the EU member states also visited Bucha (36 parliamentarians in total)<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> (video UKR) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58TtcO9g6nA>

<sup>15</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/Top-novyna/221583.html>

<sup>16</sup> (ENG) [https://www.rada.gov.ua/en/news/News/top\\_news/221565.html](https://www.rada.gov.ua/en/news/News/top_news/221565.html)

<sup>17</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/Top-novyna/221629.html>

<sup>18</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221546.html>

<sup>19</sup> (UKR) <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/razom/221545.html>

## Additional Details

### Details on the Ruslan Stefanchuk address to NATO member states:

Speaking at the spring session of the standing committees of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Ruslan Stefanchuk, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, noted that it is time for NATO member states to choose which bloc they aspire to. "If the choice is the Anti-Hitler coalition, I meant to say the Anti-Putin coalition, then we are glad to see you and will consider you our brothers-in-arms and friends. If your country wants to belong to the "union of the axis," then you'd be prepared for the consequences. If you want to sit on the fence, it will not happen - you will still end up having to decide on your choice. The terms will be getting worse and worse, though," said Ruslan Stefanchuk.

Ruslan Stefanchuk reminded that Ukraine has been paying a terrible price for these painstaking 45 days, but has not given up on European and Euro-Atlantic integration. "We expect NATO to be as committed in all its actions to the principles it enshrined in its founding act of April 4 1949, namely "its desire to live in peace with all peoples and governments, determined to defend freedom, common heritage of their peoples and their civilization, based on the principles of democracy, individual freedom and the rule of law," the politician said.

The Speaker of the Parliament of Ukraine thanked for all the assistance that NATO member states have provided and continue to provide. He stressed that now is the time for this assistance to acquire a new quality status. "Give us not only what you have left, but also what we ask for... We have been asking for closed skies and heavy weapons. In vain, though. I will say this: every day of the closed skies will save hundreds of lives of peaceful Ukrainians and dozens of lives of our children. Besides, it will also save money, which the world then provides for humanitarian aid to Ukrainian cities shot and mutilated by Russian missiles and bombs. Every day of the closed skies over Ukraine will give more confidence in tomorrow to every inhabitant of the EU and other countries of the world", Ruslan Stefanchuk emphasized.

He stressed that parliamentary diplomacy during this war began to play a unique role and became one of the key drivers of change. "We are representatives of our peoples. I know that your peoples, your voters, call on you to provide more assistance to Ukraine, to a full-fledged partnership with Ukrainians, to take more decisive action to stop and destroy the threat posed by the russian aggressor. Do it now, because tomorrow will be too late. And your peoples and history will not forgive you," Ruslan Stefanchuk stressed. He reminded that history and current times have already proved that in the case of Russia, pacifying the aggressor only leads to even greater aggression. "Do you wish your people what the Ukrainian people are experiencing now?" If not, join us as brothers-in-arms, help us, stand with us, join us. Now is the time for responsible decisions and decisive action. This means that it is a time for great victories," said the Speaker of the Parliament of Ukraine.