

#NURSESFORPEACE



International Council of Nurses
The Global Voice of Nursing

Press Information . Communiqué de presse . Comunicado de prensa

#NursesforPeace: Ukrainian nurses tell International Council of Nurses of mounting humanitarian crisis

- **ICN launches #NursesforPeace social media campaign**
- **ICN, EFN and EFNNMA demand protection of healthcare and end to hostilities**

Geneva, Switzerland, 3 March 2022 – The International Council of Nurses (ICN) yesterday hosted a special webinar with European nurse leaders bringing together nursing groups to discuss the crisis in Ukraine. Several Ukrainian nurse leaders joined the meeting from the basements of their hospitals. Participants voiced their solidarity and support for the nurses and people of Ukraine in a message of unity from nurses around the world.

Following the meeting, ICN, the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) and the European Forum of National Nursing and Midwifery Associations (EFNNMA) issued a joint [statement](#) strongly condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the disruption to health services and the attacks on healthcare facilities and innocent civilians. ICN, EFN and EFNNMA are calling for an immediate ceasefire, an end to all hostilities and for the commencement of intensified diplomatic negotiations to secure peace.

Entitled *#NursesforPeace – Ukraine and the nursing response*, the webinar brought together leaders of the national nursing associations of Ukraine, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, as well as the leaders of ICN, EFN and EFNNMA to share intelligence and decide on actions to safeguard nurses and other healthcare workers, protect facilities and supplies, and ensure access to humanitarian aid.

In addition to the joint statement, ICN has launched a **#NursesforPeace** social media campaign to join nurses across the world in solidarity with the nurses of Ukraine. Banners, social media tiles and other campaign resources can be downloaded [here](#). ICN encourages campaign supporters to post photos of themselves holding the banners on social media using the tag #NursesforPeace.

What can you do?

[Sign](#) the ICN-EFN-EFNNMA joint statement

[Download](#) the #NursesforPeace images and show your support by sharing on social media

[Donate](#) to the ICN Humanitarian Fund

ICN President Pamela Cipriano said,

“ICN, EFN and EFNNMA are adding their voices to the calls for an end to hostilities in Ukraine and a concerted push for a diplomatic solution to end this invasion. The world’s 28 million nurses stand in solidarity with their colleagues in Ukraine, and speak with one voice demanding an end to the aggression which has already seen an unknown number of deaths, and hundreds of thousands of people displaced. No more lives should be lost. Under the banner #NursesforPeace we will continue to use every avenue available to us to support the humanitarian efforts in both Ukraine and its bordering countries, where nurses are once again playing a central leadership role. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the courageous Ukrainian nurses and those in neighbouring countries who are endeavouring to find practical solutions to protect and care for their patients in seemingly impossible circumstances. The stories from the ground we heard on the webinar were both humbling and awe inspiring.”

Howard Catton, ICN Chief Executive Officer, recognised the incredible testimony of the Ukrainian nurses saying, “Health and peace are inseparable and as a global nursing community, our values are to promote health, provide care and compassion and through healing bring reconciliation. The pandemic is not yet behind us but once again the people of the whole world are witnessing the unwavering courage and strength of nurses to protect our health and humanity. We call on everyone to show their solidarity with Ukrainian nurses and support #NursesforPeace”.

Nurse Testimonies

Nataliya Lishchenko, the former director of a nursing school in Ukraine who is working with ICN to liaise with Ukrainian nurses, facilitated translation for the Ukrainian nursing colleagues who joined the call. She spoke about the situation of nurses in the Ukraine, many of whom are living in the hospitals where they work in order to care for patients. “I know that my colleagues in Ukraine need a lot of psychosocial support, emotional support. The situation is incredibly difficult, dangerous, and traumatic for Ukrainian nurses, but they are committed to care. Knowing that they have the support of the international nursing community is really important and helps to sustain them during these incredibly difficult times.”

Tetyana Chernyshenko, President of the Nursing Association of Ukraine, joined the webinar from Kyiv. She spoke about the ongoing conflict, saying that a lot of cities are under fire and many civilians have been wounded or killed. “Our people are looking for shelter in subway stations, and bombs are hitting not only places of residence but also hospitals... Babies have even been delivered in the subway shelters or in the hospital basements.” She thanked the bordering countries who have taken in and cared for many Ukrainian refugees.

Aneliya, a senior nurse from Kyiv, is one of those nurses who are living in the hospital. “We are seeing increased attacks in Kyiv and preparing for a large number of wounded. We are particularly worried about the growing lack of basic medical supplies, including tourniquets. We are also providing first aid training for civilians but we desperately need more supplies.”

Halyna, a nurse leader in Ukraine, said she had received messages from nurses across the country who are spending the nights in the shelters and in hospitals. “They are sending their children and grandchildren to neighbouring countries and I am very thankful for this help.”

Svitlana, a nurse leader in Ternopil, said nurses have done everything themselves. As Ternopil is in the west of Ukraine, the situation is calmer than in Kyiv and Kharkiv. “We have distribution

centres with students and other volunteers and we are receiving supply chains from Poland and other countries. We are distributing everything we receive to the cities that need it.”

The Ukrainian nurses made an appeal for psychosocial support and medical supplies including: wound care supplies such as tourniquets, medication and antibiotics, as well as disposable scrubs. Anyone wishing to donate to the **ICN Humanitarian Fund** in support of nurses in Ukraine, can do so [here](#).

Representatives of the national nursing association in countries neighbouring Ukraine spoke of the situation of refugees and how they are helping to get supplies into Ukraine. The nursing leaders from Slovakia, Poland, Romania and Moldova spoke of the “huge wave of solidarity and support from individuals” to help refugees flooding their borders. They described the influx of people – mainly women and children – arriving after days on the road: tired, cold, hungry and in shock. Many nurses are taking refugees into their own homes, but the nurse leaders warned of the danger of trying to get supplies through to Ukraine on an individual basis and recommended that people who want to help use official channels. ICN’s [Humanitarian Fund](#) offers a way for nurses to provide financial support to their nursing colleagues in Ukraine.

Elizabeth Adams, EFN President, thanked ICN for its great leadership in hosting the meeting, saying, “Our heartfelt condolences and thoughts are with all our colleagues in Ukraine. We know the incredible work you are doing, and we are looking for any opportunity to be able to support you in any way possible. We have heard your pleas today, particularly to try and move towards a more peaceful resolution in the future. You have EFN’s full support, and we continue working with all our colleagues to continue to support you. We sincerely thank our other colleagues in border countries for the incredible work they are doing as well.”

Mervi Jokinen, Vice President of EFNNMA, also expressed solidarity in support of all nurses and midwives in Ukraine. She highlighted the importance of working together, “We should have a united front, we can be influential in our own organisation and work in collaboration with international agencies experts in health crisis management and we need to have practical psychosocial support for all our nurses and midwives.”

ICN will continue to work with national nursing associations in the region to support the people of Ukraine, including those who have been forced to flee their country.

To show your support for the nurses and people of Ukraine, please sign the joint ICN-EFN-EFNNMA statement [here](#), donate [here](#), and join our social media campaign #NursesforPeace [here](#).

* * *

Note to Editors

The **International Council of Nurses** (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.

For more information please contact Gyorgy Madarasz, Press Officer at madarasz@icn.ch
Tel: +41 22 908 01 16

www.icn.ch
[@ICNurses](#)