

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MD

**RESOLUTION CONDEMNING RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE AND
EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE**

WHEREAS, Ukrainian culture has a history stretching back more than 1,000 years, with the modern Ukrainian nation first becoming independent in 1917, and most recently in 1991; and

WHEREAS, Ukraine has a democratic form of government, with fair and free elections, is a member of the United Nations, and is entitled to self-determination; and

WHEREAS, Ukraine voluntarily gave up its nuclear arsenal following the breakup of the USSR; and

WHEREAS, Ukraine has faced hostility from Russian for many years, including overt Russian sponsored military attacks since 2013, and Russia illegally annexed Crimea in 2014; and

WHEREAS, Ukraine is facing a massive, unprovoked military invasion by Russia in contravention of international law, and thousands of innocent civilians including children have been killed; and

WHEREAS, on March 2, 2022 the United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution “deploring” Russian’s invasion by a margin of 141 - 5; and

WHEREAS, Russia is targeting civilian facilities and civilian areas in Ukraine, and has used weapons banned under international law, which can cause indiscriminate death and injury to civilians, and as a result Russia is now being investigated by the International Criminal Court for war crimes; and

WHEREAS, the Russian military knowingly attacked a nuclear power plant in Ukraine, an action the US Embassy in Ukraine called a war crime; and

WHEREAS, Russia has suggested a willingness to use nuclear weapons in response to efforts by the international community to sanction Russia or otherwise provide support and assistance to the government and people of Ukraine; and

WHEREAS, Russian President Vladimir Putin has justified Russia’s military action by claiming a goal of the invasion is de-nazification, notwithstanding that the Russian military is engaging in Nazi-like tactics such as targeting civilians, that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is Jewish, and that Russian attacks have damaged the area around the holocaust memorial in Kyiv; and

WHEREAS, Putin’s appeal to an expansive, cross-border view of Christian orthodoxy that is intolerant of other political and religious views and nation/state sovereignty threatens to further destabilize Eastern Europe; and

WHEREAS, despite the risk of arrest and worse, thousands of Russians in dozens of cities are protesting their country’s aggression and the efforts of the Russian government to mislead its

populace about the reasons for, and the extent of, the invasion and its harmful impact on civilians in Ukraine; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that more than 1 million Ukrainian refugees have fled to neighboring countries, and as many as 1 million more are internally displaced; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of President Zelensky the Ukrainian people, government, and military are heroically fighting back and resisting the Russian invasion despite their huge military disadvantage; and

WHEREAS, the United States government and our international partners have imposed a series of virtually unprecedented sanctions against Russia and its government and leaders, and they are considering further sanctions and additional options for supporting Ukraine's resistance; and

WHEREAS, Takoma Park has a history and tradition of condemning oppression and autocracy, and supporting displaced people, as we did in the passage on November 30, 2015 of Resolution 2015-66 "Welcoming Syrian Refugees", which affirmed the City's duty and willingness to welcome Syrian refugees, committed to identifying ways to help support refugees, and led to the establishment of a local organization which coordinated with area resettlement groups to help raise funds and provide other assistance for Syrian refugees; and

WHEREAS, war, political instability, natural disasters, and food and clean water shortages, among other factors, are contributing to violence against, and mass displacement of, civilians in many countries in the world today, including Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan, South Sudan, Cameroon, Mauritania and Ethiopia, with citizens of those countries who have been able to reach the United States frequently facing fear and uncertainty due to their immigration status; and

WHEREAS, this crisis reminds us that violence, conflict and displacement in majority Black and Brown nations often receive much less international attention, news coverage, humanitarian aid and even Temporary Protected Status here in America, a trend which is a result of systemic racism;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Takoma Park condemns the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine, and expresses our solidarity with the Ukrainian people;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council urges the international community to continue providing assistance to Ukraine, the Ukrainian people, and Ukrainian refugees, as well as maintaining and strengthening sanctions and other actions aimed at ending the Russian invasion and the indiscriminate slaughter of civilians;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council condemns autocracy and authoritarianism and violence against civilians, and expressions of support for them wherever such expressions of support may occur, including within the United States;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby reaffirms the City of Takoma Park's commitment to remain a place of sanctuary and a safe haven for refugees from around the world, regardless of their national origin;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council calls for humanitarian and other vital assistance not only for the citizens of Ukraine, but for all civilians facing unprovoked or illegal military attacks and for all displaced persons and refugees worldwide, and in particular for displaced persons from majority Black and Brown nations, with a focus on addressing long-standing systemic racism and gaps in attention and support too big to comprehend which they continue to face;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council urges our Federal elected officials to support and work for the adoption of policies aimed at achieving the goals in this resolution, including support for refugee resettlement and legislation that would provide Temporary Protected Status and secure pathways to permanent status in the U.S. for those in need;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council urges residents of the City to support these efforts, and the City commits to work with other levels of government and non-governmental agencies to identify ways in which the community can provide support for refugee families relocating to the Takoma Park area and integrating into our community;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Takoma Park will seek opportunities, through art, film, and other public presentations to further raise awareness of, share information about, and build support for mitigating the impacts of, war and violence on civilians throughout the world, with a specific focus on war and violence against Black and Brown communities, which often receive less international media coverage.