UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

To: H.E. L. Brent Bozell III,
Ambassador of the United States
of America to South Africa
Cc: Ms Allison Areias,
U.S. Consul General in Cape Town
Date: 22 October 2026
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Ukrainian Association of South Africa calls for the immediate reinstatement of U.S. sanctions against russia and respect for Ukraine's territorial integrity, as assured by the United States

Dear Ambassador Bozell and Consul General Areias,

The Ukrainian Association of South Africa (UAZA) is grateful to the American people for their support and to the United States for its involvement in peace negotiations. However, we express our profound shock and disappointment at the decision to lift sanctions against the russian economy.

We would like to highlight that vladimir putin has repeatedly lied publicly, and thus his words cannot be taken seriously.

In 2014, when russian forces occupied Ukrainian territory, Crimea, and continued their invasion in eastern Ukraine, putin lied when he denied the involvement of russian troops in the military invasion and occupation, only to acknowledge their participation later.

In 2021, putin and his government repeatedly denied plans to invade Ukraine while amassing more than 200,000 troops near its borders. On 24 February 2022, russia launched its unjust, unprovoked full-scale invasion.

In 1994, russia, the United States and the United Kingdom signed the Budapest Memorandum, providing security assurances to respect Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. In return, Ukraine agreed to relinquish the world’s third-largest nuclear arsenal and acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation as a non-nuclear-weapon state. However, annexation of Ukrainian Crimea in 2014 and full scale invasion in 2022, show that russia itself invaded the country whose sovereignty and territorial integrity it had undertaken to respect.

These multiple examples of documented false statements demonstrate why diplomatic engagement with putin must be based on verifiable actions rather than his public assurances.

Since returning to office in January 2025, President Donald Trump has made repeated efforts to negotiate an end to russia's war against Ukraine. However, putin has repeatedly declined to accept U.S.-backed proposals for an unconditional ceasefire.

In March 2025, Ukraine accepted a U.S.-proposed 30-day ceasefire, while russia refused to agree to a comprehensive cessation of hostilities, accepting only a narrower arrangement concerning attacks on energy infrastructure in principle. In May 2025, President Trump renewed his call for an unconditional 30-day ceasefire, but putin again declined to accept it, insisting on further negotiations and conditions. The August 2025 summit between Presidents Trump and putin in Alaska also ended without a ceasefire agreement.

On 15 August 2025, First Lady Melania Trump appealed directly to putin to protect children affected by russia's war against Ukraine. While 34 children out of 20 000 have been reunited with their families, thousands of Ukrainian children unlawfully deported to russia have still not been returned to their families.

While putin pretends to discuss peace, civilian deaths and injuries increased significantly in 2024 and 2025, and the situation has deteriorated further in 2026, according to the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. In the first nine months of 2026 alone, at least 2,570 civilians were killed and 15,211 injured, already exceeding the total number of civilian casualties recorded during the whole of 2025. In July 2026, the UN recorded the highest monthly number of civilian deaths and injuries since March 2022. In September alone, at least 328 civilians were killed and 2,105 injured, an 85% increase in total casualties compared with September 2025.

These figures represent only verified casualties. The actual human cost is likely considerably higher, particularly in russian-occupied territories where independent verification remains extremely difficult.

Can anyone still believe putin when you see these numbers?

As of May 2026, more than 220,000 suspected war crimes committed by Russian forces since the full-scale invasion in February 2022 had been registered. These include the deliberate killing of civilians, torture, rape and other sexual violence, executions of prisoners of war, unlawful detention, the forced deportation and transfer of Ukrainian children, and attacks on residential buildings, hospitals and critical civilian infrastructure.

Is lasting peace possible without demanding accountability for these crimes?

On 16 October 2026, President Donald Trump signed an executive order waiving the application of sanctions, restrictions and tariffs under the *Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026*. This decision is a step towards supporting the aggressor and a step away from peace in Ukraine.

We recognise the importance of diplomatic engagement and are grateful to President Trump, the U.S. administration, and all those who sincerely seek a just and lasting peace for Ukraine. However, genuine efforts to achieve such peace must not come at the expense of truth, international law, accountability, or the dignity of victims.

We therefore call upon the United States government to:

1. **Immediately revoke the recent sanctions waivers against Russia**, reinstate sanctions and restrictions that have been lifted or suspended, and strengthen enforcement of existing measures, particularly those targeting Russia's energy revenues and its capacity to finance the war against Ukraine.
2. **Prioritise the return of Ukrainian children unlawfully deported or transferred to russia**, including the 400 children whose names were provided to President Ramaphosa, and support international initiatives such as *Bring Kids Back UA*.
3. **Use diplomatic and economic pressure to secure an immediate ceasefire**, an end to attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, **and the release of Ukrainian civilian detainees and prisoners of war**.
4. **Ensure that diplomatic efforts towards peace uphold Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and the rights and dignity of the Ukrainian people.**

We call on the United States to demonstrate this commitment through concrete action, beginning with the immediate reinstatement and enforcement of sanctions against Russia.

Sincerely,



Oksana Lissi

President of UAZA

Ukrainian Association of South Africa (UAZA)

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