



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South African and Ukrainian experts suggest next steps for the Africa Peace Mission: Regional Security, Nuclear Safety and Deportation of children

Planned events 11-15 March 2024:

11 March (Monday): 14h00 - 16h00, Seminar “South African Insights on Ukraine's Path to Peace: Regional Security, Nuclear Safety, and Human Rights Perspectives”, **Stellenbosch University**;

12 March (Tuesday): 9h30 - 12h30, Seminar “South African Insights on Ukraine's Path to Peace: Regional Security, Nuclear Safety, and Human Rights Perspectives”, Department of Political Sciences at the **University of Cape Town**;

15 March (Friday): 09h00 - 10h30, Seminar “AU Policy Brief on Ukrainian children under Russian control: addressing deportations, repatriation and justice”, Centre for Human Rights, **University of Pretoria**;

15 March (Friday): 12h00 - 13h30, Seminar “Lessons from the Ukraine war and African governments' role in resolving the conflict”, Institute for Security Studies, **Pretoria**

A group of experts from South Africa and Ukraine have studied the current situation in Ukraine, to draw conclusions on what the next steps could be towards a safer African continent and ensuring long-lasting peace in Ukraine.

Despite the extensive media coverage of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there remain significant gaps in establishing practical steps to ensure the long-lasting peace in Ukraine, identifying underlying obstacles preventing the regulation and prevention of armed conflicts, as well as averting gross violations of human rights and damage to the environment. The development of the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine into a full-scale armed conflict exemplifies the global security system crisis, one where powerful states dominate those less powerful. What characterises the Russian war against Ukraine is the following:

- 1) the scale of the war poses tremendous negative repercussions to the world's energy, financial and food resources;
- 2) the war is being waged between a country possessing nuclear weapons against a country that voluntarily relinquished its nuclear capabilities, and joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); and
- 3) it is the first time since 1945 that the military aggression of a global nuclear power is aimed at redrawing the borders of an internationally recognised sovereign state by the annexation of its territories.

In recognising the importance of addressing the gaps in international regulation and the need to develop practical steps to ensure the long-lasting peace for military



conflicts, the group of experts have put together some practical steps that will be presented during the seminars conducted in Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Pretoria. The platform for expert collaborations was initiated by the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation, the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation, the Democratic Institute Foundation (DIF), and the Ukrainian Association of South Africa (UAZA).

The topics and experts involved:

- **Regional Security Architecture and Just Peace** - power disbalance of the countries with the veto rights at the UN Security Council and under-representation of the African continent;
- *Experts from the following institutions involved: the [Institute of Justice and Reconciliation](#), [Political Department of the University of Cape Town](#), [Centre for Sustainability Transitions](#), [Stellenbosch University](#), [Democratic Initiatives Foundation](#), [National University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy](#)*
- **Nuclear safety** - risks related to the occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station.
Experts from the following institutions involved: [South African Institute of International Affairs](#), [Dixi Group](#), [Centre for Sustainability Transitions](#), [Stellenbosch University](#)
- **Forceful deportation of children** – which international and regional mechanisms can be used to prevent children's unlawful and forceful deportation and transfer to Russian territories, and how the national identity of children can be protected during the war.
- *Experts from the following institutions involved: the [Centre for Human Rights](#), [the Centre for Child Law](#), the [Regional Center for Human Rights](#), and the [Centre for Civil Liberties](#)*

For media inquiries and further information: Olga Kononenko +27646192237 (WhatsApp), info@uaza.co.za

Project coordinator: Dzvinka Kachur dzvinka.kachur@gmail.com

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