



EDITORIAL

Condemning the War in Ukraine & the Need for Peace

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We and our colleagues call for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine. We wholeheartedly condemn the Russian Federation's recent invasion of Ukraine, which began on 24th February 2022. This attack is an unprovoked and unacceptable breach of international law and the UN Charter. We further call on the Russian Federation to withdraw its forces back to international borders as agreed and operated as of 2013. The Russian invasion has already resulted in significant loss of life, as well as the wholesale destruction of crucial elements of Ukraine's infrastructure. We are extremely alarmed at the number of people, including civilians, killed to date, as well as the number that has been injured both mentally and physically. The impacts of the war will be felt for decades to come. The trauma of those enduring the conflict and those who have been forced to flee will undoubtedly result in adverse health outcomes that will be felt across generations. We anticipate significantly higher rates of anxiety, depression, addiction, self-harm, and suicide across impacted populations. War is anathema to health, health protection, and health improvement. We understand that the Russian invasion will have further harmed the health of the Ukrainian people through adversely impacting those with chronic health conditions, as well as those currently requiring treatment and those in need of diagnostic services. We are appalled at the targeting of Ukraine's health infrastructure by invading forces, as evidenced by the Russian Federation's attack on the maternity hospital in Mariupol. We are equally appalled by the systematic bombardment of civilian areas in Ukraine by invading Russian forces and their targeting of civilians attempting to flee the conflict. We further condemn the Russian Federation's targeting of vital civil infrastructures such as water plants, power stations, and transportation systems. Such infrastructure is vital to health and health services and will take many years to repair. The environmental damage in Ukraine has also been significant, as has the impact on industry and business. We understand that in addition to the direct impact of the war, almost all factors associated with the determinants of health have been adversely affected. We are equally cognisant of the negative physical and mental impacts of the conflict upon invading Russian Federation forces and call on them to lay down their arms and refuse to continue to participate in this illegal and unprovoked war. We are concerned that the recent invasion by the Russian Federation will lead to increased militarism and military spending across Europe. The opportunity cost of such defence related expenditure may well be less spending on essential health and social programs. We admire and applaud the courage of individuals within the Russian Federation in speaking out and protesting against the war. In the increasingly authoritarian state that is the Russian Federation, such protestors are risking their lives. We call upon all EU countries to continue to work for a diplomatic solution to the conflict and continue to support Ukrainians forced to flee because of the conflict.

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