

## UKRAINE UPDATE #12:

### *A PERPLEXING PLEA; A PHENOMENAL OPPORTUNITY!*

The KYIV POST (an English language newspaper in Kyiv, Ukraine) has reported, in several articles, about the latest Russian offensive in Ukraine. The reports from the KYIV POST, Associated Press, Reuters, AFP and other news bureaus have now publically confirmed the evil that Russia continues to initiate and support—the missile attacks specifically targeted civilian areas—a large outdoor market, kindergartens, and living complexes. By the end of the day last Saturday it was reported that over 30 were killed and over 100 wounded. Security reports and media photographs about this terrorist attack are very disturbing. One woman had fled the Russian evil in Donetsk only to have her newly found living quarters in Mariupol destroyed—her story is one of hopelessness and dark despair.

Last Saturday Russia's Anarchy was, again, clearly illustrated...30 killed 100+ wounded!

Here is part of a media report by AFP...

## **Attack on Ukraine's Mariupol targeted civilians: UN**



People look at burned out cars as they walk along a street in the southern Ukrainian city of Mariupol on January 25, 2015 a day after a rocket barrage blamed on Kremlin-backed Ukrainian rebels killed 30 in the city (AFP Photo/Anatolii Boiko)

United Nations (United States) (AFP) - A rocket attack on the Ukrainian city of Mariupol that killed 30 people at the weekend deliberately targeted civilians and the perpetrators must be brought to justice, a senior UN official said Monday.

UN Under Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman told an emergency Security Council meeting that a crater analysis by European monitors showed the rockets were fired from territory controlled by pro-Moscow rebels.

"Mariupol lies outside of the immediate conflict zone. The conclusion can thus be drawn that the entity which fired these rockets knowingly targeted a civilian population," said Feltman.

Targeting civilians is a violation of international humanitarian law, he added. "We must all send an unequivocal message: The perpetrators must be held accountable and brought to justice," he said.

Separatist leader Alexander Zakharchenko initially claimed Saturday to have launched the offensive to seize Mariupol, but as the extent of the bloodshed became apparent he denied ordering an assault on the industrial port on the Sea of Azov.

Kiev-controlled Mariupol is seen as a strategically important link between separatist-occupied territory in eastern Ukraine and the Black Sea region of Crimea, which was annexed by Russia last year.

The 15-member council was meeting after **Russia blocked a statement condemning the violence in Mariupol and citing Zakharchenko's announcement of the offensive.**

US Ambassador Samantha Power shot back, charging that Russia was seeking to "move the line of Russian-controlled territory deeper into Ukraine" through its support for the new rebel offensive.

"Despite Zakharchenko's statements, Russia continues to try to play the international community for the fool, and blame the violence on the Ukrainians," Power said.

**The US envoy accused Russia of re-supplying the rebels over recent weeks with "hundreds of pieces of military equipment" including tanks, armored vehicles, rocket systems, heavy artillery and advanced missile air defense systems.**

More than 5,000 people have died in the nine-month conflict and more than one million have been driven from their homes.

**The council has held more than two dozen meetings on Ukraine since the outbreak of fighting that have yielded fierce criticism of veto-wielding member Russia, but no concrete action to address the crisis.**



Relatives of Ukrainian man Oleksander Demchenko, who was killed during shelling, look on during his funeral at a cemetery in Mariupol on January 26, 2015 (AFP Photo/Oleksandr Stashevskiy)

## CALLS BEGGING FOR HELP HAVE INCREASED SINCE RUSSIA'S LATEST EVILS...

Even before the news of the latest terror attacks on Mariupol was published I had received communication asking for our continued help with those displaced, wounded, and orphaned. The total number of the population of Ukraine that has now been displaced has well exceeded 1.5 million! Many who fled Donetsk, Crimea and Lugansk have now found they are no longer safe in the locations where they sought refuge.

Those reading this have safety and security and possessions that are often taken for granted. In Ukraine over 1.5 million have had these cherished treasures ripped from their possession.

Among the many calls I have received one is the most memorable. It was a telephone call from Odessa, Ukraine. The caller and I have talked often about operations and how is the best way that the Lord's People can help those victimized by Russia's evil invasion and occupation. But the conversations this weekend were much more serious. After the usual courtesy in greeting the caller said, "*John, Ukraine needs everything right now. This latest bombing has been horrible. Right now we need help. How many containers can churches of Christ send? Can you send 20-50 containers each month? We need clothes, food, medical supplies and shoes. We need everything. We have cooperation for approval and security.*"

Incredible...20-50 containers EACH MONTH! Only those who have assisted in collecting, packing, and loading can appreciate what is involved in this request. It envisions work that seems impossible. The request was made based upon the respect and recognition the Lord's Church has developed in our efforts.

The need is urgent. The predicament is perplexing. But still...the request seems impossible.

I told the caller that I did not see how we could supply that many containers. I assured him that we would do everything we could to respond to the need.

I am reminded that what often appears to be impossible with man is a simple matter with God. In times of perplexity and seeming impossibilities the simplicity for God provided the answer. Such situations are often recorded in Scripture so we will be reminded of God's power (Romans 15:4). Recall the situation of Abraham being asked to sacrifice his only son or when Israel was fleeing Egypt and found herself trapped between Pharaoh's vicious army and the Red Sea or later when the nation was faced with deathly thirst and disabling hunger or Gideon as he watched his army be whittled down to "nothing"—what seemed impossible was answered by God's power.

Yes at times life does look bleak. It is distressing. It appears impossible...BUT GOD is greater than any calamity that man's evil can concoct. God will provide the means for His People to step up and respond so that faith can be illustrated and God can be glorified.

And now there is another perplexity...

We have been asked to send a phenomenal number of containers in the name of the Lord's Church. I am not sure how many we will be able to put together, but we are going to try. I can relate to Andrew's perplexity when he replied to the Lord saying "what are these for so many people?" (John 6:9)

- ✓ *We need the commodities* (food; clothing; medical supplies; shoes; hygiene items; general commodities for everyday living).
- ✓ *We need the labor to sort, pack and load* these commodities at YOUR location!
- ✓ *We need assistance in transporting* these commodities.

After we get the commodities into Ukraine we are confident that the distribution will be with integrity. We have been given the assurance of security so the shipped commodities will be delivered to the Consignees and then distributed according to the plans.

While the perplexity appears overwhelming at first glance, I believe it can be done. It will require the brotherhood of God's People joining together and working in harmony to seize a phenomenal opportunity!

Here is what we can do to make a strong response to this urgent need...

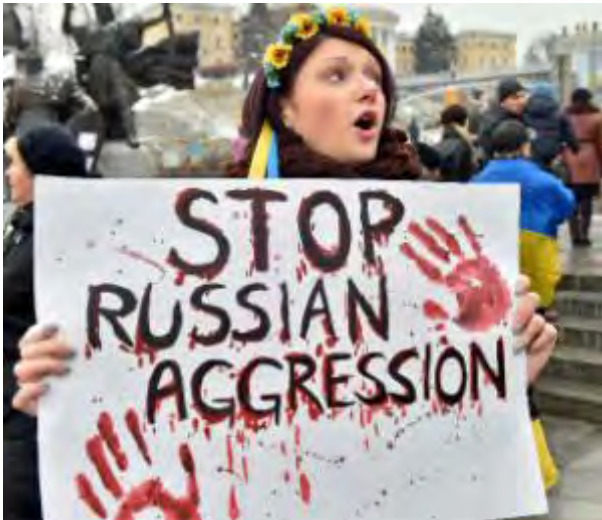
- ✓ Collection sites scattered in a number of places where a congregation/group is in charge of the task and is willing to coordinate the preparation. We have had collection sites throughout AL, MS, TN, MO, KY, IN, VA, CO, GA, and TX. If we can get brethren to join this relief effort then we will have ample locations.
- ✓ Commodities can be solicited and the response will be astonishing. We need announce what is needed, where it will go and the integrity with which its success is assured and the response will be overwhelming.
- ✓ Transportation will be provided. Some in Ukraine are willing to help with transportation. Some in the USA are willing to help pay transportation costs. Although we do not have a full assurance that all transportation will be paid, I believe it will not be a problem.

So...what we need right now are these responses...

- ✓ **We need** congregations/groups that are willing to collect and sort and plan to load a container from their location. We will help you do this. We will not leave you alone!
- ✓ **We need** a constant supply of the commodities listed so we can keep these supplies going into Ukraine to help those who have been devastated. We need you to coordinate collection drives for these supplies. We need you to contact companies and corporations that will donate container loads of commodities so we can ship them into Ukraine. I was recently called by a contact in Indiana who said she thought she could get the US Dairy Association to donate an entire container of dry milk for Ukraine! (See the shoes story below)

If your congregation is interested then I will gladly come and discuss how you can become a part of this effort and as a result bring glory to God!

UKRAINIANS HAVE STOOD IN SILENCE AS THEY RECOGNIZED THE EVIL OF THE ATTACKS ON MARIUPOL AND CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES THAT HOLD RUSSIA ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE EVIL INVASION AND OCCUPATION!



A woman holds a placard reading "Stop Russian aggression" during a rally on Independence Square in Kiev, on Sunday January 25, 2015 following Russian aggression on Mariupol that led to 30 deaths and 100+ wounded.

(AFP Photo/Sergei Supinsky)

People hold signs which translate as "USA and EU, how long can you watch the killing in Ukraine?" and "Peoples Republic of Donetsk and Peoples Republic of Lugansk are terrorists!" during a rally in Lviv on Sunday January 25, 2015. The placards had hand prints illustrating that "blood is on the hands" of those who fail to respond to Russia's evil.

(AFP Photo/Yurko Dyachyshyn)



## AN INCREDIBLE OFFERING...26,000 PAIRS OF NEW SHOES!

Yesterday I received an email from a corporation that is willing to donate a container of shoes! Here is part of the communication...

*John, If you wish to receive an entire container of shoes, we may be able to arrange shipment of one of our Skechers donations from China. The 40' container holds about 26,000 pairs of unisex rubber clogs. You would be responsible for coordinating and funding the shipping from China to the Ukraine. We assign containers every 2-3 months and our February containers are already spoken for. Are you interested in working on a container to be shipped Spring 2015? I would need a signed distribution agreement (attached), your 501c3 determination letter and a distribution plan of action on organization letterhead to review. We are definitely interested. Please feel free to come and stop by the offices. We are assigned containers every 2-3 months, so the next anticipated time we could possibly assign a container to you would be for April or May. If this changes, we will let you know immediately.*

### **Did your eye read accurately...26,000 pairs of NEW shoes...**

I am following up on this and hope to confirm all parts so the shoes will be on their way to those who desperately need them in Ukraine.

Is this not incredible? There are many, many more willing to assist with the relief work in Ukraine. But they need to know about our efforts. YOU can help contact companies and groups that are eager to join efforts as we are coordinating. We can assure total transparency. We work on an all-volunteer basis so everything that is donated goes to the relief effort—100%!

And it is all done in the Lord's Name!

## PLEAS FOR PARTNERSHIP CONTINUE!

# Will you help?

**How easy it is to "pass by on the other side" when an opportunity comes for alleviating the suffering that has fallen upon another—especially if it is far away.**

*He who is generous will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor...He who oppresses the poor to make more for himself or who gives to the rich, will only come to poverty (Proverbs 22:9, 16).*

## **WE NEED HELP TO HELP THOSE IN UKRAINE. PLEASE SEND A DONATION TO:**

**College Church of Christ/UKRAINE MISSIONS  
2934 East Moore Street  
Searcy, Arkansas 72143**

**Thank you to all who have responded. Please think of congregations and individuals who are like-minded and willing to help us ship more containers to assist those struggling against devilish evils! Forward this report to others who are able to join with us and fulfill Galatians 6:10!**

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