OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN WAR

RESEARCH SEMINAR IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN HISTORY

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The Research Seminar in Eastern and Central European History is among the oldest and the most influential networks of humanitarians in independent Ukraine. It was founded in 1995 by Professor Natalia Yakovenko and has been informally operating on the basis of the Department of History of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (Kyiv, Ukraine) for the last more than 25 years.

As representatives of the Research Seminar in Eastern and Central European History, we publish this official statement calling Ukrainian and global academia for solidarity.

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation attacked sovereign Ukraine. It launched the active phase of the Russo-Ukrainian War that started in 2014 when the Russian Federation occupied the Autonomous Republic of Crimea as well as parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. We, representatives of the Research Seminar in Eastern and Central European History, strongly condemn the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine.

After the month of the war in Ukraine the entire World witnessed the inhuman atrocities of the Russian Federation against Ukrainian civilians. As of April 15, 2022, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations confirmed that at least 1,982 civilians are killed and 2,651 are injured. Yet, these numbers could be hugely underestimated, because the precise calculations are impossible during an active phase of the war. Recently published horrific evidence from Mariupol, Bucha, Irpin, Borodianka, Hostomel, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kramatorsk prove that Russian Federation has been committing war crimes on the territory of Ukraine: thousands of civilians were tortured and executed, women and children were raped, hundreds of children were murdered or orphaned. Because of that General Assembly of the United Nations suspended Russian Federation's membership in the Human Rights Council. The collected evidence of the Russian Federation's atrocities against Ukraine has already been transferred to the International Criminal Court. The Russo-Ukrainian War led to a global refugee crisis. Recent official updates from the Refugee United Nations Agency declare that over 6.5 million are displaced inside Ukraine and 3.7 million people have been forced to flee the country. At the same time, the Russian Federation is destroying the cultural heritage of Ukraine and threatening the World Heritage Sites, such as the medieval Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv. According to the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, more than 150 objects of cultural heritage, namely libraries, archives (including KGB archives) and museums were completely destroyed. One of the buildings of the oldest modern Ukrainian university – Karazin National University in Kharkiv – was devastated completely as well. Finally, "on average two per day:

Russia's war against Ukraine damaged and ruined at least 59 spiritual sites in at least 8 regions of Ukraine."

Uncompromising sanctions were imposed on the Russian Federation. Firstly, an unprecedented system of economic and political sanctions was implemented: some major Russian state banks were disconnected from the SWIFT system and their assets were frozen. Secondly, the World began abandoning Russia's energy services *en masse* – gas, oil and coal. Recently the possibility of a coal and gas embargo was considered by the European Union. Thirdly, over 750 global companies ceased operations in Russian Federation, and this number is increasing. Finally, the Russian Federation was excluded from nearly 90-95% of international sports competitions, and this percentage is growing as well.

We, representatives of the Research Seminar in Eastern and Central European History, insist that Ukrainian sanctions against Russian Federation must reflect and complement the uncompromising scale of global sanctions. The toleration of interrelations with the Russian Federation over 2014-2022 after Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk regions were cut off from Ukraine now costs human lives. Ukraine must suspend every possible cooperation with the Russian Federation as this is the only way to defeat the aggressor.

Almost all the academic institutions in the Russian Federation openly supported the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine. On March 4, 2022, the Russian Union of Rectors accompanied by over 250 universities published a statement supporting the Russian so-called "denazification" of Ukraine. Moreover, students of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations supported the Russian war against Ukraine in their "appeal" to the President of Ukraine. At least three academic institutions – Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences, European University in St Petersburg and German Historical Institute in Moscow – remained silent about the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine. Only the Russian Academy of Sciences published an official letter against propagandistically shaped "confrontation in Ukraine"/"military conflict."

We, representatives of the Research Seminar in Eastern and Central European History, strongly condemn Russian academic institutions that support the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine, as well as those who remain silent or use propagandistic terminology to label the Russo-Ukrainian War. We proclaim that there is no room for neutrality or conceptual "glass bead games" when it comes to the life and safety of Ukrainians. We insist that the Russo-Ukrainian War is neither a 'crisis,' 'conflict,' 'invasion,' or a 'Putin's war.' This is the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine, fully supported, according to recent polls, by nearly 74% of Russian citizens.

As nearly all Russian academic institutions support the killings of innocent people and children in Ukraine, we call for the following:

- **Personal and institutional cooperation with Russian academic institutions, especially those under federal jurisdiction, must end.** Participation of academicians affiliated with Russian academic institutions in every possible academic conference, scholarship, internship, fellowship, research / travel grant or exchange must be terminated. Similarly, participation of international scholars in academic conference, scholarship, internship, fellowship, research / travel grant or exchange organized by the Russian Federation must be banned as well. Russian scholars must be removed from the editorial boards of international journals, and international scholars must resign from editorial boards of Russian academic journals. Finally, academicians with Russian

academic affiliation must be left aside from the global practice of blind peer-reviewing.

- **Investments of international academic institutions into Russian universities and research institutions, especially those affiliated with *Gazprom* and *Oboronprom*, as well as Russian funds into the international academic institutions must be fully eliminated.** Russian Federation uses international investments in science to finance killings in Ukraine. The topmost universities have already confirmed that their cooperation with Russian academic institutions if there was such, has been terminated. The president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Leo Rafael Reif in consultation with senior leadership determined that "MIT's relationship with the Skolkovo Institute of Science and Technology (Skoltech) must end." The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Stephen J. Toope, underlined that "the Cambridge University Endowment Fund has no direct investments in Russia, and only negligible indirect exposure through pooled investments."
- **International academic institutions should increase the number of short- and long-term *non-residential* scholarships to support Ukrainian scholars.** Numerous international universities and research institutions offered opportunities to host Ukrainian scholars. However, many scholars do not want to leave Ukraine as they are sure that national intellectual life must go on in Ukraine, not abroad. In the other words, regarding legal restrictions and personal responsibility to keep academic activities in Ukraine residential scholarships are pointless when scholars stay in Ukraine. We invite global academia to create ***non-residential programs,*** such as the following: Non-Residential Fellowships to Support Ukrainian Scholars (Vienna, Austria) or AAJR-Fordham-NYPL Fellowship for Ukrainian Scholars (Chicago, USA).

If you share our values and determination to help Ukraine, please, sign this letter. The Russo-Ukrainian War cannot be stopped if we continue legitimizing it via contacts with the academic institutions of the Russian Federation.

Best regards,
Research Seminar in Eastern and Central European History

THIS STATEMENT IS OPEN FOR SIGNING BY MEMBERS OF THE RESEARCH SEMINAR IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN HISTORY AS WELL AS EVERY REPRESENTATIVE OF UKRAINIAN AND GLOBAL ACADEMIA, INCLUDING STUDENTS, STAFF AND ALUMNI. WE ENCOURAGE ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS TO SIGN THE LETTER AS WELL.

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THIS LETTER HAS BEEN SIGNED BY:

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2. International Peer-reviewed Journal “Ukraina Moderna” (Lviv-Kharkiv, Ukraine)
3. Internet portal Historians.in.ua (Kyiv-Kharkiv, Ukraine)
4. Center for Interethnic Relations Research in Eastern Europe (Kharkiv, Ukraine).
5. Drohobych Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University (Drohobych, Ukraine).

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