

Appeal by the leaders of Ukrainian national communities to the Dutch population

March 22, 2016

We, leaders of the national associations and communities of Ukraine, we appeal to the Dutch citizens and urge them to support the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in the April 6 referendum. Millions of Ukrainians of different ethnic origins and religions not only want to live in a fair society, but also to get the prospects of entering the family of European Nations and a common European home.

Currently, Ukraine is experiencing one of the most dramatic moments in its history. The Ukrainian nation composed of many ethnic and religious groups, has made its civilizational choice – to become not only geographical, but a true part of European civilization, to overcome the consequences of totalitarian and imperial past, and to enter the family of free nations which are building their future based on shared values.

For that choice we have paid a terrible price – we have been subjected to military aggression, a part of our territory was occupied, there is a hybrid war against our country. But we are determined to defend our right to Freedom and Independence, and we think that the Dutch people with their history, with their centuries-old struggle for the right to live as free people in their country, can understand and support us.

Ukraine is a multinational country, and in this context we are not only ethnic Ukrainians, but also different ethnic communities and religious groups. But we are one nation. Ukrainian citizens of different nationalities took an active part in the Revolution of Dignity. They fought for a European future for our country, for the rule of law, for the triumph of the principles of tolerance and the inviolability of human rights. Many of them are fighting for a new European Ukraine in the military units opposing the aggressor.

It is important to note that, despite the war and the existing problems, we live in a country where the rights of national minorities enshrined in law. We maintain a confessional identity, national language, and develop national cultures.

Some of us have historical roots in Western and Eastern Europe, others do not, but that doesn't prevent all of us to share and support Ukraine's aspirations towards European and Euro-Atlantic choice.

The Association Agreement is only the first step, it is far from full membership, but it is a clear signal of support for our country and of the readiness of the European community to support the aspirations of Ukraine to freedom and democracy.

We ask you, citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, to come to a referendum on 6 April and vote "Yes!" to the desire of our multinational country to be closer to Europe. Our children are now paying for that desire with their blood and their lives. What we ask you is only to support us in a referendum.

- **Arnaut Fedora**, Union of Gagauz people of Ukraine
- **Avanesyan Ashot**, President of the Council of National Communities of Ukraine, President of the National Council of Armenians of Ukraine
- **Belman Semen**, Vice President of the Ukrainian Jewish Council, Chairman of the Chernigov Regional Association of Jewish Communities and Organizations
- **Boshesku Aurica**, Secretary of the Interregional Association "Romanian Community of Ukraine"
- **Fetesku Anatoly**, President of the Ukrainian Cultural Moldovan Association
- **Hasanov Georgy**, President of the Association of Kurdish Public Organizations
- **Grigorichenko Peter**, Chairman of the Ukrainian Roma Congress
- **Kapalb Adrian**, Vice-President of the Society of Romanian Culture "Petru Movila"
- **Kalimulin Arthur**, Deputy Chairman of the Kiev Tatar Community
- **Khachaturova Violetta**, Head of the Armenian Cultural Center
- **Khoruzha Virginia**, Head of Kyiv Society of Lithuanian Culture
- **Kostova Dora**, President of the All-Ukrainian Assembly of Bulgarians of Ukraine, Chief editor of the newspaper of Bulgarians of Ukraine "Rodni Krai"
- **Kovalenko-Schneider Ludmila**, Head of the German Society of Kiev "Center of German Culture "Widerstrahl", head of Educational-Information Center "BIZ - Ukraine"
- **Leysle Vladimir**, Chairman of the Board of Germans of Ukraine
- **Litnevskaya Mare**, Chairman of the Estonian Communities
- **Mukhina Lyudmila**, Head of the Czech Society of Kiev "Vysehrad"
- **Protsenko-Pichadzi Alexander**, Chairman of the Federation of Greek Societies of Ukraine
- **Sadayev Salman**, Chairman of the Board of the NGO "Diaspora of the Chechen people,"
- **Stefanovich Anthony**, Chairman of the Union of the Poles of Ukraine

- **Shaitan Alexander**, President of the Greek Cultural Center "Zorba the Greek"
- **Shevchenko Alfiya**, Head of the Kiev Center of Tatar Culture "Creative Studio "Alfiya"
- **Taghiyev Rovshan**, President of the Public Organization "Assembly of Nationalities of Ukraine"
- **Tselsdorf Lydia**, Chairman of the Cultural Society of Germans in Kiev "Wiedergeburt"
- **Chubarov Refat**, Chairman of Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, President of the World Council of Crimean Tatars
- **Valeev Emir**, Chairman of NGO "All-Ukrainian Assembly of the Tatars"
- **Zissels Josef**, Executive Vice-President of the Congress of National Communities of Ukraine, Co-President of the Association of Jewish organizations and Communities of Ukraine