

FEAMC Presidency Statement on war in Ukrain

24 February 2022

In this dramatic time for Europe, we strongly condemn Russia's inexcusable and violent aggression against the Ukrainian people. We stand by the Ukrainian Catholic doctors, their families, the Greek Catholic Church and the Roman Latin Church, and all Ukrainian citizens, believers and non-believers alike.

Pope Francis reminded us that "God, Father of all, of Christians and non-Christians - Father of all - wants peace. Under the temptation of the evil one, we, men, make wars in order to earn money, to take more territory"; "we cannot close our ears to the cry of pain of these brothers and sisters of ours who suffer from war", because "if today we close our ears to the cry of these people who suffer under the bombs, who suffer the exploitation of arms dealers, it may be that when it is our turn we will not get answers" (cf. Assisi Speech, 20 September 2016).

This is why we ask the Orthodox brothers of the Church of Russia to take concrete action to put an end to the armed aggression senselessly desired by their rulers, to show that they believe in the Gospel in deeds, not only in liturgies. Let them do it!

Christians and women and men of good will, in fact, repudiate "war as an instrument of aggression against the freedom of other peoples and as a means of settling international disputes" (cf. art.11 Italian Constitution). Paul VI at the UN (4 October 1965) recalled that "relations between peoples must be governed by reason, justice, law, negotiation, not by force, not by violence, not by war, nor by fear, nor by deception" and exhorted to be "not one against the other, not any more, not ever!".

After two devastating world wars, we are still shocked to see the resurgence of ideologies of oppression and war: haven't the generations told and witnessed enough to the new generations? Has the historical memory of humanity already forgotten the horrors of battles, extermination and nuclear threats?

We pray to God to enlighten the minds of those who waged war and death, so that we may return to paths of peace and peaceful coexistence in Ukraine, in Europe, in the whole world.

Vincenzo Defilippis
FEAMC president