

22 October 2016

His Excellency Mr. Saber Chowdhury
President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

His Excellency Mr. Martin Chungong
Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Secretariat

Honourable Heads of National Delegations
Inter-Parliamentary Union
Chemin du Pommier 5, C.P. 330
CH-1218 Le Grand-Saconnex
Geneva, Switzerland

Re: 137th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Dear Mr. President:
Dear Mr. Secretary General:
Dear Heads of National Delegations:

It has come to our attention that during the 135th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union you will be selecting the location for the 137th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and specifically discussing a proposal to convene this session in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation.

The Ukrainian World Congress (UWC) representing the 20-million strong Ukrainian diaspora is very troubled by this proposal to convene the 137th IPU Assembly in a country that does not espouse the values of this distinguished body and considers that such decision would counter a focal point of your organization, namely the promotion of human rights, parliamentary democracy and development.

The international community has condemned the actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine which are in violation of international law, agreements and principles, including the illegal occupation of Crimea; persecution of the residents of the peninsula and denying their fundamental human rights and freedoms; ongoing military aggression being waged in Eastern Ukraine which has escalated in recent months despite a so-called “ceasefire”; and illegal detainment of Ukrainian political prisoners in the Russian Federation.

The international community has also confirmed its vigilance and keen awareness of the powerful disinformation campaign of the Russian Federation designed to convince that Ukraine is a failed state and to incite the international community to bargain it away under the sphere of influence of the Russian Federation for political and economic considerations.

Russian aggression is not isolated to Ukraine as most recently demonstrated in Syria where, without regard for human life, the Russian Federation has engaged in the heavy bombing of civilian sites, specifically in Aleppo.

The Russian Federation has blatantly violated critical international agreements including the UN Charter, Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances and Minsk agreements, outright rejected the principles of fundamental democratic values and basic human rights, and with its military aggression in a time of peace has declared an intent to pursue its imperialist ambitions that clearly threaten stability, peace and security in Europe and beyond.

The UWC commends the theme of the 135th IPU Assembly, *Human rights abuses as precursors of conflict: Parliaments as early responders*, as timely and critical when fundamental democratic values and basic human rights in various parts of the world are being openly challenged.

The UWC, therefore, urges you to reject the proposal to convene the 137th IPU Assembly in St. Petersburg in order to deliver a clear and united message to the Russian Federation that the IPU will never compromise or tolerate any violations of human rights, or the independence and territorial integrity of any country, including Ukraine.

Sincerely,

UKRAINIAN WORLD CONGRESS



Eugene Czolij
President

The UWC is the international coordinating body for Ukrainian communities in the diaspora representing the interests of over 20 million Ukrainians. The UWC has a network of member organizations and ties with Ukrainians in 53 countries. Founded in 1967, the UWC was recognized in 2003 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council as a non-governmental organization with special consultative status.