

Ukraine: Protection International Calls for an Immediate End of Military Attacks and for a Diplomatic Solution to the Conflict

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Protection International stands with the people in Ukraine and strongly calls for the government of Russia to immediately stop its military attacks and put an end to the violent use of force, which have already had a terrible impact on civilian lives, goods and infrastructure.

Protection International calls upon all the parties in this conflict to resume the diplomatic path, as the only way to protect human rights and for a just, sustainable and peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Protection International calls all the parties and multilateral institutions and mechanisms to prioritise and safeguard the lives and work of people that defend human rights in the region, including in Russia, Ukraine and its neighbouring countries.

As the UN General Assembly recently stated¹, **“States should develop and implement appropriate and effective protection mechanisms for human rights defenders at risk or in vulnerable situations”**. **Such situations include conflict and** post-conflict settings. Therefore, PI calls for all parties involved to ensure protection mechanisms and to provide extraordinary support for human rights defenders in Ukraine. Such mechanisms should address the fact that, in some cases, in conflict contexts, state and non-state actors orchestrate opportunistic ways to either

¹ UNGA Resolution A/RES/74/146

make defenders appear to be supporting hostilities, or to label attacks against defenders as **“collateral damage” of the hostilities, as a way to disguise direct attacks against their work.**

The international community should also advocate for and commit resources to strengthen the resilience capacity of civil society and HRDs in Ukraine and Russia, including support to combat criminalisation, surveillance and digital attacks, as well as to access psychosocial support.

Finally, Protection International urges all parties to negotiate the establishment of humanitarian corridors that allow people who want to leave the country to do so safely, and for humanitarian organisations to carry out their activities without fear of reprisal or attacks. Any approaches to security matters should be based on the preservation of human life and human rights and should ensure security forces operate in line with International Humanitarian Law (IHL), human rights, as well as the UN Declarations on Women and Children in Emergencies and Conflict and on Human Rights Defenders.