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Standing with Ukraine

Dear colleagues,

At times like these—when violence is visited upon innocents, when a dictator knowingly chooses brutality and rejects peace, when the independence and character of a people are questioned, when human life is sacrificed for personal power—the brighter future we strive to help build at this Agency can feel painfully out of reach.

Despite intensive and relentless diplomacy on the part of the United States, Ukraine, and our allies, President Putin invaded Ukraine in a premeditated and unprovoked attack. Before the attack on Ukraine’s territory, there was his attack on its identity, attempting to rewrite history in a bewildering speech where he falsely claimed that Ukraine was an invention of Russia and that the principles on which former Soviet states won their independence were illegitimate.

We are witnessing the costs of these attacks now—and they are horrifying. Ukrainians piling into bomb shelters or racing toward borders as air raid sirens ring out through their cities and artillery fire and missiles light up their skies. Tanks and troops illegally maneuvering into Ukraine’s territory and encircling the capital. Anti-war protestors across Russia being rounded up by local police for daring to speak out against this flagrant act of aggression.

As President Biden said, America stands up to bullies—and together with our allies and partners, we will support the Ukrainian people as they defend their country. We have already unleashed some of the most devastating economic sanctions ever devised, and we will continue to impose additional severe costs if President Putin does not change course. But we are not just standing up against Putin’s brutality—we are standing alongside our partners in Ukraine—most

importantly our staff.

To our beloved Ukrainian colleagues, I know Jim Hope, our unwavering Mission Director for Ukraine and Belarus, is in near-constant touch with each of you, and he has personally advocated for you at every turn. We are doing our utmost to support you during this harrowing time and will look for more ways to come together as an Agency to do so.

In terms of our response to the needs of the Ukrainian people, for the past several weeks, we have worked closely with the Ukrainian government and neighboring countries in the region to prepare for the humanitarian emergency we now face. In that time, we have significantly ramped up the assistance available to those affected by the conflict, and have successfully encouraged the World Food Programme to return to Ukraine to provide urgent aid. We have dispatched a Disaster Assistance Response Team to Poland to support the Ukrainian people as they are displaced by violence. And we have done everything from equip the Ukrainian government with satellite phones, buttress their cyber and energy security as Russia attempts to disrupt critical infrastructure, and aid them in countering Russian disinformation. We will continue to enhance assistance to those displaced by the violence and seek to support the Ukrainian people however we can.

As searing as this senseless invasion is, these are exactly the times when USAID steps into the breach, ready to help others in need no matter how dire the circumstances. When people's hope is shattered, it is you who strive to help pick up the pieces and fight for that better future, no matter how distant it seems. As we stand with the Ukrainian people in their hour of need, I feel privileged to stand with you.

—Samantha

Any questions concerning this notice may be directed to:

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