

Weekly Top 10

WASHINGTON, D.C. March 4, 2022

TO: NCSEJ Leadership and Interested Parties

**FROM: James Schiller, Chairman;
Mark B. Levin, Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO**

Dear Friend,

Ukraine continues to valiantly fight for its survival as a free and independent country. NCSEJ is maintaining regular contact with Ukrainian Jewish communities during this invasion. We are trying to be of assistance to them in every way possible. We are sending out bulletins, updates and organizing webinars for our members and the entirety of the American Jewish community. Our organization is also in continuing contact with US and Ukrainian government officials as well as international Jewish and non-Jewish NGOs sharing information, facilitating connections, and dispelling false and inaccurate propaganda.

In addition to the regular list of articles and reports contained in this week's update, we would like to inform readers that videos of webinars NCSEJ hosted with the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States, Oksana Markarova, and the President of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine, Boris Lozhkin, can be found on Facebook. In addition, we are including a link to a [powerpoint presentation by Mr. Lozhkin](#).

NCSEJ continues to speak about the current situation in Ukraine to a number of audiences around the country, including a webinar hosted by the UJA Federation of New York and the Jewish Federations of North America where close to 4,000 people participated in the call.

Our most recent statements condemning the invasion and the missile attack on the Babyn Yar grounds can be found on our social media pages, [The NCSEJ](#) for Facebook and [NCSEJ](#) on Twitter.

The violation of Ukrainian territorial integrity has resulted in a massive humanitarian disaster. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians are on the move to seek safer ground inside their own country or moving across the Ukrainian border into several neighboring countries. American Jewish and Israeli organizations are on the border and inside Ukraine joining the relief effort.

NCSEJ connected the AFYA Foundation which focuses on bringing medical supplies to global disaster areas with the US-Ukraine Foundation. These organizations have combined their efforts to airlift needed medical and other supplies to Poland and then into Ukraine. Please see their statement below.

Finally, we are in regular contact with Jewish leadership in Ukraine. Chief Rabbi Shmuel Kamitnesky from Dnipro told us this morning that the community continues to evacuate people by trains and buses and the Menorah Center is assisting refugees from Kharhiv. He described the situation as dire.

NCSEJ will continue to update you as this situation warrants.

Sincerely,

Mark B. Levin
NCSEJ Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO

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NCSEJ WEEKLY TOP 10

Washington, D.C. March 4, 2022

Update from NCSEJ Representative in Ukraine, Ilya Bezruchko **March 4, 2022**

The 7th day of the Russian invasion of Ukraine was very difficult for Jewish communities in Ukraine.

Many members of the Jewish community of Kharkov managed to evacuate by trains or travel by car out of the city. Kharkov's Jewish community infrastructure is located for the most part in the city center and is under constant threat from air and missile strikes. Hillel was heavily damaged during the air strike. The Or Avner school run by Rebetzin Moskovitz was also shelled during the night.

In Russian-controlled Kherson, not far from the Crimean Peninsula, Rabbi Yosef Wolff and his colleagues spent days collecting food and distributing them to the city's 1,500 Jewish families, until it became unsafe for them to leave their shelters. Since yesterday, Russian forces turned off Ukrainian TV and changed local channels to Russian broadcasts to brainwash local citizens with Russian propaganda.

In Odessa, Rabbi Avraham Wolff of Chabad-Lubavitch of Odessa is working to arrange safe transfer for the children's house, Mishpacha Orphanage, one of three orphanages run by Chabad in Ukraine, all of which have been evacuated.

Long bus rides, temporary shelters and lots of phone calls: Inside the Jewish response to the mounting refugee crisis in Poland **Toby Axelrod** **Jewish Telegraph Agency | March 3, 2022**

Zohar Spivack's bus company, Kings Travel — "the logo is blue and white, and I don't have to tell you why," he said — has been picking up refugees every day since Russia's attacks began. Leaving Warsaw empty after sundown, stopping at shelters near the border, and returning after sunrise, carrying mothers, children, grandmas, and men too old or disabled to fight.

Spivack is one of a growing number of Jewish individuals and organizations propelled into action by Russian President Vladimir Putin's brutal attack on Ukraine. With the exception of the Jewish Agency's emergency fast-tracking of applications for immigration to Israel, which is available only to Jews, most of the help is given regardless of religion. According to the United Nations, 1 to 3 million Ukrainians are likely to leave their country in the coming weeks. Many are coming through Poland.

The Jewish Agency has doubled down its efforts to bring out Jews who had already started the process of emigration to Israel before the war. Warsaw is one of the hubs where Jews are waiting to fly out; the first Ukrainian immigrants are expected to arrive in Israel on Sunday.

About 300 Ukrainians are expected on three different flights from Warsaw, Moldova and Romania, according to the Jewish Agency. A third of them are orphans who evacuated to Romania under the supervision of Chabad, which ran their Ukrainian orphanage.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

The Biggest Winner in Ukraine So Far: Turkey's Erdogan

Louis Fishman

Haaretz | March 2, 2022

Up to this point, Turkey has managed to maintain good relations with both countries. Erdogan even visited Kyiv just a day after Russia declared the Donbas and Luhansk regions as so-called "people's republics," a day before the Russian invasion, and he was welcomed by Zelenskyy with open arms. Turkey also has supplied Ukraine with Bayraktar surveillance and attack drones which are already in active use against the Russian army.

For now, that balancing act has the implicit OK from the U.S.-European coalition against Putin's war. Turkey is important for the coalition as an interlocutor with Russia, and at the same time, Turkey's engagement in the crisis is the best chance to fix what have been severely strained relations between Turkey, the U.S., and Europe.

Turkey knows that the real value of its relations with Russia is to serve as a pressure point for leverage with the United States. Simply put, Russia can never replace Turkey's economic, social, and cultural ties with the United States and the Europe Union; to claim otherwise would be preposterous.

If a boost in Turkey's global standing through its conduct on Ukraine could entice Erdogan into restoring relations more substantively with the West, it would necessarily have to include an end to his government's widescale clampdowns on civil and political freedoms, and the jailing of those who dare voice dissent outside the narrow parameters his government deems acceptable. Without it, there is a glass ceiling on relations with the U.S. and the EU.

The question Erdogan is juggling is whether loosening his near-authoritarian grasp on power in Turkey could save his political career – or end it. If he does not make the choice to change, the Turkish electorate might just make that choice for him in next year's elections.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

Hundreds of Jews fleeing Ukraine to arrive in Israel next week

Judah Ari Gross

Times of Israel | March 4, 2022

Hundreds of Ukrainian Jews fleeing the ongoing war will land in Israel at the beginning of next week, the Jewish Agency for Israel said Wednesday.

The refugees will immigrate to Israel on three separate flights,

leaving from Poland, Moldova and Romania. They will reach Israel on Sunday.

Many thousands of people have already contacted the organization about immigrating to Israel in the past few days amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a Jewish Agency official told The Times of Israel on Saturday, asking not to be identified by name.

The Jewish Agency, a semi-governmental body that is responsible for encouraging and overseeing immigration to Israel, has been working to facilitate the expected wave of migration from Ukraine to Israel in light of the Russian offensive, including setting up emergency hotlines to answer questions about the immigration process. Some 200,000 people in Ukraine are eligible to immigrate under Israel's law of return, which requires a person to have at least one Jewish grandparent in order to receive Israeli citizenship.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

Operation "Ukraine Airlift" first shipment loaded and ready for take off! **US - Ukraine Foundation | March 2, 2022**

The US-Ukraine Foundation announces today that Operation "Ukraine AirLIFT" has loaded its first shipment of medical supplies. With the generous donations from around the world, the Foundation was able to fund an airplane to get this shipment in the air and on its way to Poland for forward trucking into Ukraine. This first shipment is destined for the Military Hospital in Kyiv.

The Foundation is working with the Afya Foundation. Afya rescues unused medical supplies which would otherwise go into landfills. Since 2008, Afya, has rescued and shipped supplies valued at more than \$39 million to 79 countries.

Thank you to everyone who worked on this, but the job is not over. Now, we need the next shipment, and the next and the next. If you have medical goods to donate, please contact airlift@usukraine.org

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In Dnipro, Orthodox father and son soldiers are 'ready to kill Russian soldiers' **Dinah Spritzer/ JTA** **Israel National News| March 4, 2022**

Until just a few months ago, David Cherkaskyi was finishing a degree in cybersecurity, praying at his Chabad synagogue and posting selfies from his travels across the Jewish world.

Now, he's standing by in his hometown of Dnipro, Ukraine, "ready to kill Russian soldiers."

The father and son are part of the Territorial Defense Force, the civilian army that Ukrainian leaders hope will help the military push back against what is proving to be a full-scale air and land Russian attack — including, increasingly, on civilian targets.

It's also significant to the Chabad Orthodox Jewish movement, whose last leader, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, was the son of the city's chief rabbi from 1903 to 1939 and spent much of his adolescence in the city. A 22-story Jewish community center, built to resemble a Hanukkah menorah, is a testament to that history.

"Everyone is ready to fight. It doesn't make a difference if you are

Jewish or not — no one is thinking about that,” Cherkaskyi said, adding that his Jewish identity didn’t cause him problems before the war either.

“Everyone can see me and my dad are Jewish and we all want to defend our country. This idea that Ukrainians are neo-Nazis is made up by Putin,” he added, referring to one justification that the Russian president has offered for the unprovoked war.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

Lithuania unleashes unprecedented humanitarian effort to aid Ukraine

Linas Jegelevičius

Baltic News Network | March 3, 2022

In an unprecedented humanitarian effort, Lithuania has ferociously sprung to assist a war-ravaged Ukraine – on all possible fronts. The country’s government has greenlit 4 million euros in reserve funds to be used to welcome Ukrainians fleeing the invasion. Purportedly, thousands of the Riflemen Union (RU) members have expressed determination to go and fight as part of the Ukrainian troops, as social media was teeming with other profuse individual initiatives aiming to help the Ukrainians.

A total of 3.27 million euros have been allocated to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, including 151.6 thousand euros for the activities of NGO mobile teams. Also, 1 965.6 thousand euros for catering. Another 880 thousand euros for hygiene and other personal effects and medicines. And 275 thousand euros for the procurement of three-day food rations.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

Kazakhstan braces for impact of Russia sanctions regime

Almaz Kumenov

Eurasianet | March 3, 2022

With Russia poised to enter a period of economic recession under the weight of punishing international sanctions, neighboring Kazakhstan is scrambling to minimize the fallout.

This week, the government in Nur-Sultan was poised to discuss the drafting an anti-crisis plan to “respond to the likely negative socio-economic consequences for Kazakhstan arising from the events in Ukraine.”

“The plan is to consider the development of an anti-crisis action plan amid a worsening geopolitical situation and tougher anti-Russian sanctions,” the president’s spokesman, Berik Uali, wrote ahead of the planned March 3 meeting.

The government’s main stated areas of concern are keeping inflation under control, keep the national currency stable, and promoting job creation

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Russia attempts to contrive appearance of support

from Central Asian allies
Eurasianet | February 27, 2022

Russia's search for vindication over its massed armed assault on Ukraine among traditionally trustworthy allies in Central Asia is yielding meager returns.

In what appeared to mark its only success to date on this front, the Kremlin press service on February 26 reported on a telephone conversation between President Vladimir Putin and the president of Kyrgyzstan, Sadyr Japarov.

"Sadyr Japarov noted Kyiv's responsibility for its failure to abide by the Minsk agreements and expressed support for the decisive actions undertaken by the Russian side to protect civilians in Donbass," the statement read.

"Vladimir Putin thanked the president of Kyrgyzstan for his principled position of solidarity."

The readout from the Kyrgyz presidential administration, however, made no note of those approving remarks, stating only that the leaders had discussed the "current situation around Ukraine."

There appeared to be nothing in Japarov's remarks, even as they were conveyed by the Kremlin, that suggested Bishkek supported a major military intervention by Moscow.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

Putin's War At Home: Russian Government Pushes Hard To Enforce Total Unanimity On Ukraine War
Robert Coalson
Radio Free Europe | March 3, 2022

On March 3, a key Russian parliamentary committee approved a draft law that would impose prison terms of up to 15 years for disseminating "fake" information about Russian military operations.

The same day, the board of directors of the legendary Ekho Moskvyy radio station **voted to liquidate the channel and its website** under intense pressure from the Russian government over its coverage of the invasion of Ukraine. The station was taken off the air and its site blocked on March 1, as was the liberal television station Dozhd.

And, also on March 3, Russia's Education Ministry **held an "online lesson"** to explain to schoolchildren and their teachers "why the liberation mission in Ukraine was necessary."

With President Vladimir Putin's unprovoked war on neighboring Ukraine entering its second week, his government has stepped up its battle at home -- seeking not only to control the narrative about the war and the consequences of unprecedented Western sanctions, but also to impose a Soviet-style national unanimity.

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