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# **CSOS' HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE TO COUNTER RUSSIA'S UNPROVOKED AND UNJUSTIFIED INVASION**

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Civil society organisations (CSOs) are well-known for playing a key role in promoting fundamental rights, and thus, contributing to the functioning of democracies. At present time of challenges and threats, Ukraine can be regarded as a sort of political 'laboratory' in which Russia has been testing a wide range of measures to exert its immediate impact, and simultaneously as an excellent proof of Ukraine's resilience and fierce counter offensives. Furthermore, vulnerabilities of Ukrainian society point out high levels of insecurity stemmed from the Russia-fueled war; and consequently, resulted in highlighting key factors for supporting Ukraine's cohesion, strengthening its democratic identity and critical measures have been taken by the state and civil society to mitigate vulnerabilities.

Importantly, the capacity of population consolidation and civil society's self-organizing potential serve as a powerful tool for counteracting the humanitarian catastrophes in the context of RF's full-scale military invasion. Meta's ongoing efforts are taking extensive steps to help the community to access crucial resources, to exchange information, cooperate and take action to support people in need.

At present, civil society includes a wide and vibrant range of organised and unorganised groups, as new civil-society actors blur the boundaries between sectors and experiment with new organisational forms. The humanitarian construct of civil society organisations can be determined as one of the most vital aspects of the public management, whereas the humanitarian policy is explored in terms of identifying the

objectives, mechanisms, various programs and other measures aimed at protecting and ensuring basic human rights and needs, both at the level of individuals or small groups and at the level of large groups of people. Civil society organisations (CSOs) provide aid and supplies to refugees, displaced people and their host communities in conflict zones around the world, refugees, civilians in war-suffered areas, etc. The humanitarian component of civil society organisations is fully demonstrated when human life, health and other fundamental rights and opportunities are put at risk. Civil society organisations identified such following challenges as: armed conflicts, natural and man-made disasters, famine, acts of terrorism, discriminatory policies, and others. These challenges make it difficult for CSOs to promote and support human rights and their implementation. Beyond the impact that this has on the organisations themselves and on human rights, it can also have wide-ranging negative consequences for the democratic functioning of our societies. In this context, the humanitarian component includes various types of assistance, support and protection, they help “give a voice” to people on issues that matter to them, assist rights holders, monitor governments and parliaments’ activities, give advice to policymakers, and hold authorities accountable for their actions.

Civil society organisations’ assistance takes different forms that distinguish it from other activities of the non-governmental sector. First, the circle of ultimate beneficiaries of the humanitarian direction is formed by specific people. That is, the humanitarian component, both in its goals and in its practical forms, is most clearly focused on preserving human lives, health, and ensuring fundamental rights and opportunities. From this perspective, the effectiveness of the humanitarian component can be assessed. Secondly, the humanitarian component of civil society organisations is characterised by a combination of altruistic and rational principles. For example, an operation to provide free assistance in areas of hostilities, armed conflict and humanitarian catastrophes may also reduce the influx of IDPs or refugees from these areas. Civil society organisations’ humanitarian support offers a wide range of support, in particular: (1) assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons; (2) assistance to civilians in areas of hostilities, armed conflict and humanitarian catastrophes; (3) food aid; (4) assistance in creating a safe and enabling environment in which civil society can operate free from hindrance and insecurity.

Since Russia’s invasion began, unprovoked aggression, full-scale invasion made people flee for safety and suffered from shelling and air raids, the efforts of the entire civilised world are aimed at supporting and providing Ukraine with various assistance in countering the aggressor. According to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, as of the beginning of March, our state received humanitarian aid to meet the living needs of people who were forced to change their place of residence or suffered from hostilities in more than 20 countries. Part of the humanitarian aid is also aimed at providing those who join the ranks of territorial defence. Ukraine has received humanitarian aid from organisations in Ireland, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Slo-

venia, Croatia, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Turkey, China and others.

The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine reported that during March 2-3, 2022, Ukraine received more than 1,000 tons of humanitarian aid. Revenues include food (375 tons), clothing (147 tons), personal hygiene products (90 tons), medicines (35 tons) and other goods (324 tons).

According to the chairman of the National Bank of Ukraine K. Shevchenko, since the beginning of large-scale hostilities, Ukraine has received international support totaling about \$ 15 billion (as of March 10, 2022). It is worth noting that a significant part of this amount is humanitarian aid from governments and organisations of individual countries. In particular, the United States has allocated \$ 50 billion in humanitarian aid to Ukrainians suffering from the Russian war. The French government first announced the allocation of \$ 300 million, and then added another \$ 100 million to the amount of aid, thus increasing it to \$ 400 million. In addition, the Foreign Ministry stressed that the money is intended for Ukrainians who have suffered from hostilities. Switzerland has also decided to increase humanitarian aid to Ukraine and other countries in the region to 78.4 million euros. A quarter of this amount will be used to help Ukrainian refugees in neighbouring countries. Three quarters - to help those who remained in Ukraine. The United Kingdom has allocated about 355 million pounds in humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Germany, whose government has allocated 15 million euros, has also joined Ukraine's humanitarian aid. The National Bank of Poland has allocated \$ 950 million to Ukraine (subject to currency swap, increase in foreign exchange reserves).

Thus, continuously strengthening human rights protection, civil society organisations' humanitarian assistance is building blocks of safeguard against humanitarian catastrophes and a mechanism for managing the risks caused by military aggression. CSOs have raised concerns regarding safety and an adequate response to humanitarian conflicts and proceed with promising practices that can counteract these worrying patterns.