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## **PREDICTABLE BUT UNBELIEVABLE. RUSSIAN WAR AGAINST UKRAINE**

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February 24, 2022 became a black date in the Ukrainian, European and, I truly believe in it, the world's history. To be honest, the Russian war against Ukraine started in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea and occupying the part of Donetsk and Luhansk oblast' through supporting of separatists' enclaves there. Those events prompted Ukrainian-oriented people to leave their homes and to search the possibility for a new start in other regions of Ukraine.

But in eight years a new invasion started. The attempt for fast conquering (or blitzkrieg) of Ukraine has failed. And the expectations that Russian-speaking people will meet Russian invasion with "bread and salt" were failed too. From the first days of the war a "scorched earth" tactic has been used with increasing power. Only during the first day of the war around 160 air strikes were inflicted on Ukrainian cities and villages. And the war is continuing. In more than three weeks a number of Ukrainian cities and villages have been almost totally destroyed. Amongst them Mariupol, Kharkiv, Irpin', Bucha are the most horrifying examples of cynicism, inhumane cruelty and violation of international norms and obligations by the Kremlin. What are the Russian troops doing in Ukraine is really unbelievable: bombing of maternity houses and civic buildings, looting, killing of civilians (women, kids, elderly people), destroying

everything on their way and non-recognition of their actions by allegations “we did not know that this was not training”.

In this case the most painful question for all of us is as follow: how to stop this unbelievable aggression towards not only Ukraine, but the whole democratic world? And, in my personal opinion, it is necessary to unite our efforts in counteracting aggression at all levels – economic, political, informational, and of course, military one. Otherwise, Putin will not stop in Ukraine. He’ll destroy the democratic system as the basis of the world order. And he’ll do it by killing the wedge between western democracies through military-political blackmailing, including the fact that Russia is a nuclear state.

So, the only way for the democratic world is to unite and to give a worthy rebuff to the aggressor, recalling the historical lessons of the twentieth century, when the enmity of the aggressor led only to its intensification.

To conclude, I’d like to express my thanks to all of You, Your authorities for support and aid for Ukraine and the Ukrainian society.