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## **RUSSIAN WAR AGAINST UKRAINE: HOW TO FIGHT BACK AGGRESSION**

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Dear Colleagues!

Russia launched war against Ukraine in February 2014. The first stage of this war was the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbass. At that time Kremlin pretended that it's not their responsibility but political initiatives of the local inhabitants who felt themselves threatened after the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine and wanted to see Putin as their defender. Soon after the illegal annexation of the peninsula, President V. Putin proudly announced that special operation in Crimea which led to its annexation had been preparing more than 10 years before. No doubt the same is true about the temporarily occupied territories of Donbass, where Russia announced the formation of so-called Donetsk and Luhansk Peoples' republics.

Proxy or hybrid war with a lot of victims had gone there for 8 years. Russia tried to infect Ukraine with separatist movements all over the country as well as with a non-stop propagated idea of a civil war in our country and tried to make an impression of their irresponsibility for the War on Donbass for domestic and foreign audience. However, it did not help Moscow get the desired goals of destroying the Ukrainian state and nation.

From the early morning of 24 February Kremlin began a full-scaled war in Ukraine. Still, again under a false flag of "a special military operation", horrors and cruelty of an unprovoked war came into our lands.

Ukrainian defenders try to do their best to stand against the aggressor. Sure, Russia had made the military preparation for years and it is much bigger than Ukraine. Ukraine is neither a member of the NATO, nor the EU, despite the fact that we have aimed at this for many years. Still, although we have got some support from our western allies and partners we crucially need much stronger support in our fight against the second largest army in the world.

Under these terrible circumstances the Research Institute of European Integration and Regional Studies, Chernivtsi Yuriy Fedkovych National University in cooperation with our partner Center of Eastern Europe, Marie-Curie Sklodowska University of Lublin invited some international scholars to take part in our discussion “War against Ukraine – the struggle for the future of Europe and the World”. The main points to discuss are as follow:

1. Your opinion on the Russia’s war against Ukraine.
2. Possible scenarios of the war solutions.
3. What should be done to end the war?
4. How should we cooperate as experts and analytics and researchers?

I am very pleased to see here my colleagues and friends from Georgia, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and the USA. In the end of our talks we should agree on our further steps we should do together, including preparing a text of Appeal to International community and the most influential international organizations. I am sure, that this war will be victorious for the people of Ukraine and all who are guilty for committing the war crimes will be punished in the end. Of course, each of us is invited to share her/his opinions and suggestions with regard to the possible scenarios of resolving the Russian War against Ukraine as well as suggestions of the ways how to establish peace and security for Ukraine and whole Europe.

Finally, I am very grateful to everybody who agreed to take part in our Experts’ discussion. I’d like to address my special thanks to Professor Arkadiusz Modrzejewski who proposed to publish the notes of our meeting on the pages of “European Journal of Transformation Studies”, where he is the editor-in-chief.