



CHURCH OF NORWAY

National Council, Council on Ecumenical and International Relations, Sami Church Council

Council of Churches and Religious
Organizations of Ukraine

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Your ref:

Letter of solidarity four years after

Dear esteemed leaders.

On behalf of Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations, we send you our heartfelt greetings and deep solidarity on this solemn day, 24 February, marking four years since Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine began. As our council gathers today, we pause in prayerful remembrance of all who have suffered, resisted, served, and hoped throughout these years of brutality. From the very beginning, our church has spoken clearly in condemning the Russian invasion and standing with Ukraine in its struggle for freedom, dignity, and peace. Not least, we must continue to resist and condemn the false theology from the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church supporting this war. Thank you for the strong appeal recently (January 21), expressing a profound indignation at yet another instance of the Russian state's use of religion and religious institutions to justify and sustain its aggressive policies.

From the Church of Norway we look back with gratitude on the meaningful encounters we shared with you during the visit of the Presiding Bishop Olav Fykse Tveit and General Secretary Einar Tjelle in Ukraine in October, as part of the Nordic Presiding Bishops visit. And not least the visit from your delegation to Oslo few weeks after, with Christian Council of Norway as host. The conversations, testimonies, and moments of prayer together strengthened our understanding of your daily reality and deepened the bonds of fellowship between our churches. They confirmed for us once again the vital, courageous work your communities carry out under the most demanding circumstances. Through Norwegian Church Aid/ACT Alliance, the Bible Society and others, we will continue to support. Your unity across traditions and faiths remains a sign of hope: Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim leaders standing together, offering humanitarian aid, shelter, spiritual care, and moral clarity in the midst of war. Your witness continues to inspire and challenge us. Please receive this letter as a renewed assurance of our friendship, our prayers, and our unwavering solidarity.

**"A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out.
In faithfulness He will bring forth justice;" (Isaiah 42:3)**

Yours sincerely

Kristine Sandmæl
Moderator, Council on Ecumenical
and International Relations

Einar Tjelle
Director for Ecumenical and International Relations

Postal address:
Postboks 799 Sentrum
0106 OSLO
NORWAY

E-mail: post.kirkeradet@kirken.no
Web: www.kirken.no
Org.no.: 818066872

Phone: +47 23081200
Fax:

Case worker:
Einar Tjelle

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The Embassy of Ukraine in Norway
Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kyiv
Christian Council of Norway
Norwegian Church Aid
The Conference of European Churches

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Recipients:

Council of Churches and Religious
Organizations of Ukraine