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# Church Primates call for peace in Ukraine




Tragic warfare continued throughout parts of Ukraine on Friday, the second day of a full-fledged invasion by Russian military forces against the country along three or four fronts.
As of Friday afternoon, Russian special forces were reportedly within kilometers of Ukraine's capital.

While the United States, via US President Joe Biden himself, promised crushing sanctions against the Putin government in Moscow and the Russian economy, member-states of the European Union appeared unable to come to a consensus on a stricter package of measures, especially one excluding Russian financial institutions and businesses from the swift system of banking transactions.

In the face of this abominable situation, the Primates of Orthodox Churches around the world continued to call for an end to the warfare and for peace to prevail.

The Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, His Holiness Kirill, called on all parties involved in the conflict to do everything possible to avoid civilian casualties.

In a statement posted on the website of the Russian Orthodox Church, His Holiness added that "…I appeal to the bishops, pastors, monastics, and laity to provide all

possible assistance to all victims, including refugees and people left homeless and without means of livelihood… The Russian and Ukrainian peoples have a common centuries-old history dating back to the Baptism of Rus' by Prince St. Vladimir the Equal-to-the-Apostles. I believe that this God-given affinity will help overcome the divisions and disagreements that have arisen that have led to the current conflict."

Back in Greece, the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos, expressed his shock and sadness over the situation in Ukraine.

His Beatitude said his thoughts and prayers are directed to "…our Ukrainian brothers, especially the small children and the elderly, who are experiencing the horror of war, and of course, the thousands of ethnic Greeks in that country. I hope and pray that this war ends immediately, for harmony and reason to reign, and for people to realize that all issues can be resolved through dialogue and understanding, and never with violence."

Halfway around the world, the Archbishop of Australia, His Eminence Makarios, expressed his utter condemnation of what he called Russia's unprovoked attack against Ukraine, while also referring to a violation of the territorial integrity of a sovereign country, the provocation of disasters and unspeakable suffering to the detriment of its people.

During a telephone conversation with the honorary consul general of Ukraine in Sydney, the Archbishop expressed his warm support to the afflicted Ukrainian people, wishing for peace to prevail in the country as soon as possible.

Nearer to the conflict, the Romanian Orthodox Church's Archdiocese of Suceava, in northern Romania, announced that it was ready to provide food, clothes and other essentials to people fleeing Ukraine through the Siret border crossing. The Archdiocese said it will also find accommodations.