



## Solidarity for Ukraine – 04/01/2022

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The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (iriv) wishes to join the international solidarity in favor of Ukraine attacked by Russia on 24 February 2022.

We hope this new crisis in Europe, after a major health crisis that has weakened democratic countries with the disturbing rise of conspiracy theories and all the hate speech that has multiplied on social networks, will give us an opportunity to reflect on ways to actively contribute to solidarity, in Europe and with our international allies.

This Newsletter is the second publication of our Institute after the issue 8 of our Newsletter on Diversity dedicated to Ukraine (published on 1 March 2022). We intend to publish a new issue, every first day of the month, as long as this illegal, brutal war will last, that is condemned by all the democracies and institutions representing the international community.

1-The first article was published for the Think Tank “Sport and Citizenship” on 14 February 2022, on the occasion of the Olympic Games in Beijing when the Russian President pretended to be giving a lesson in democracy to the international community;

2-The second article was published for the same European think tank on March 1, 2022, on the occasion of the opening of the Paralympic Games in Beijing and after the Russian army’s attack on Ukraine

3- The third article is an original publication for our newsletter Solidarity for Ukraine, which iriv fully supports since the attack of February 24, 2022

\* the logo was designed by Caritas Canada in February 2022; a large Ukrainian community lives in Canada



This article was published on 14 February 2022 by the Think Tank Sport and Citizenship on the occasion of the Olympic Games held in Beijing (4 to 20 February 2022) by dr Bénédicte Halba, Founding President of the Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering ([www.iriv.net](http://www.iriv.net)).

## JO in Beijing 2022 – *morituri te salutant*

The New Zealand rugby team is nicknamed “All black” because of the black jersey they wear, the mourning of their opponents. Their message is clear: prepare to die. The psychological dimension is as important as physical strength in sport. High-level athletes must have an unbeatable mind, sometimes the strongest do not win. They must first and foremost win the nerves war. Sport is a fight. It can also be the place of confrontation between regimes that do not have the same conception of democracy.

To open the 2022 Olympic Games in Beijing, the Chinese authorities chose an Uighur cross-country skier Dinigeer Yilamujiang to light the Olympic torch. We know the persecutions suffered by the Turkish-speaking, Muslim minority since the accession to power of President Xi Jinping. The legitimate demands of the Uighurs, which have been expressed through main protests since 2014 (1), have been the pretext of a policy of brutal repression from the Chinese regime. Arbitrary arrests in internment camps, where the only crime of the prisoners is to be Uighur have followed. Uighurs are “re-educated” meaning physically and psychologically tortured. Women are sterilized or raped. Forced labour is imposed on men and women who are enslaved, their most basic human rights violated (2). Alerted by several NGOs, institutions eventually denounced the “genocide” suffered by the Uighur people (3). The NGO Human Right Watch called the Beijing Games “genocide games”.

Asking a Uighur athlete to light the Olympic flame is a provocation by China towards western democracies that have chosen not to send leaders to the Beijing Games to denounce Chinese politics. But the national teams are there and playing the games. This is not the radical boycott policy applied in 1980 by the United States at the Moscow Games, in the middle of the Cold War, where American athletes had not participated after the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet army. There are degrees in the war of nerves and in the firmness of the message.

At the 2022 Beijing Games, Russian President Vladimir Putin stood in the official gallery alongside President Xi Jiping. The time is right for authoritarian regimes to assert themselves in the face of Western democracies. Russia has been threatening to invade Ukraine for weeks and is sending thousands of Russian soldiers to the Russian-Ukrainian border. It is not war, but it is not peace, as cyber-attacks are unleashed on social networks. A Sino-Russian declaration signed on 4

February 2022 suggests a new Global Democratic Model for the 21st century, a «new era»; another provocation from the two most famous autocrats of the world (4).

In Roman antiquity, the gladiators addressed this greeting to the emperor «*Ave Cesar, Imperator, morituti te salutant* » before confronting each other. Subliminally, the same message is sent by the young Uighur sportswoman forced to perform and defend the colours of a regime that oppresses her people. It is not certain that the Beijing Games are in line with the democratic “new era” proclaimed by the Chinese-Russian couple. - no Olympic truce for “democratures”.

- (1) A documentary broadcast on German-French TV Arte on Tuesday, February 8, 2022, “China: The Uighur Drama,” François Reinhard, 2021
- (2) according to the Uighur Institute of Europe, there are 600,000 forced labourers in Turkestan
- (3) The European Union did not recognize the Uighur genocide until 2021, when persecution began in 2014-  
<https://www.franceculture.fr/geopolitique/la-reconnaissance-du-genocide-des-ouighours-mobilise-partout-en-europe>
- (4) Sylvie Kauffmann “Moscow-Beijing, a friendship without limits”, Le Monde, Thursday 10 February 2022



This article was published on 4 March 2022 by the Think tank Sport et Citoyenneté on the occasion of the Paralympic Games held in Beijing (4 to 14 March 2022) - Dr Bénédicte Halba, Founding President of the Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering ([www.iriv.net](http://www.iriv.net)).

## The “Games are over”: Kiev 3 – Moscow 0

**Russian President Vladimir Putin** will not appear in the official gallery with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Beijing Paralympic Games, which begin on March 4, 2022 after attacking Ukraine on February 24.

**Sport has often been compared** to war for strategy and for the performance of belligerents/opponents. Let's take this framework of analysis to advance a first «score» for the «teams» involved in the war that is being played in Europe since February 24, 2022. Let us remember three sports criteria: the respect of the rules, the strategy, and the beauty of the game.

**In sport**, you play in your category. You would never see a heavyweight fighting with a featherweight. The 900,000-strong Russian army, with advanced weapons and intensive training, attacked a 200,000-strong Ukrainian army, much less armed and trained. For the note «respect of the rules»: Moscow 0 - Kiev 1.

**In sports strategy**, it is strongly advised not to underestimate your opponent. The Russian army believed itself invincible and like a steamroller thought it had taken Kiev and deposed the Ukrainian president in three days. Against all odds, the Ukrainian population has shown exceptional resistance - 800,000 Ukrainian reservists are preparing to mobilize valiantly against the Russian invader. For the «strategy» note: Moscow 0 - Kiev 1.

**Images in the media are compelling for Russia** - a shower of missiles that relentlessly hit major Ukrainian cities, gutted or collapsed buildings, civilian populations on the roads or seeking to protect themselves in the subway or cellars. The war is deadly - civilian casualties are already high (200 Ukrainian deaths on 27 February and more than a thousand wounded). Russia is great for cyber-attacks but cannot prevent the dissemination of disastrous images for its «image». On the Ukrainian side, there is national solidarity and a courage that inspires admiration. The emotion and the mobilization of the international community are in favour of Ukraine – not military intervention by its allies but military equipment from the United States, the European Union (for the first time in its history) and each of the European countries - Germany, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Czech Republic, etc. But above all the economic weapon is used

against Russia by the United States with Canada with allies of the European Union. For the «beauty of the game»: Moscow 0 - Kiev 1.

**Even more relentless is the “score” of the “team captains”.** Russian President Vladimir Putin appears to be aging, aggressive, and monomaniac; he acts without emotion, without feeling, implementing an implacable logic, like a robot. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, on the contrary, human, sensitive, shows great cold blood and impressive courage when he was not supposed to be a «war leader». He demonstrated in this terrible ordeal for his country and his compatriots that he was endowed with this indispensable quality for any leader worthy of the name: emotional intelligence, which is more simply called the intelligence of the heart.

**The «games are over»** for Russian athletes, deprived of the Paralympic Games because of their president, but also on the international scene: Ukraine is in the process of winning a resounding victory against Russia. The Ukrainians won the battle of hearts, the Russians lost- *Vae victis* (1)

(1) Shame on the defeated



## War in Ukraine -*Dies irae*

dr Bénédicte Halba, Founding President of the Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering ([www.iriv.net](http://www.iriv.net)).

**Since 24 February 2022**, Western democratic Europe has been undergoing a test of fire, both literally and figuratively. Russia, an authoritarian country ruled for twenty years by an autocrat, Vladimir Putin, has entered the war against Ukraine – cities devastated, martyrs (Mariupol, Irpin, etc.). More than 10 million displaced Ukrainians, 3 million left their country under bombs. As of March 23, 2022, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reports a total of 2,571 civilian casualties in the country, 977 killed and 1,594 injured. The actual numbers are much higher.

**The Russian leader** has not only declared war on Ukraine but on the western world. Drunk with anger and resentment, Vladimir Putin did not foresee the reaction of Westerners. He expected a wait-and-see or a guilty passivity, as he did when he attacked Georgia in 2008 or annexed Crimea in 2014. With its «victories», Russia had pushed its pawns on the international stage. It supported the dictator Bashar Al-Assad, the executioner of his people, in Syria, whose civil war had caused a major and destabilizing migration crisis for Europe in 2015. Russia has also allied itself with all the enemies of democracy-China of Xi Jinping, Iran of the Mullahs regime, Turkey of Recep Erdogan... Russia led a campaign of destabilization among people in Africa and the Middle East, using the colonial past of European countries or the American intervention in Iraq to fuel anti-Western hatred.

**This time, the Westerners came together.** The United States and the countries of the European Union spoke with one voice. U.S. President Joe Biden called Vladimir Putin a “war criminal”; British Prime Minister Boris Johnson called him a “dictator”. NATO has finally come out of its torpor and is preparing to defend its most threatened members, in Central and Eastern Europe (Poland and Romania) but also Nordic countries (Baltic States). Germany, a viscerally pacifist country since the end of the Second World War, decided to increase its military budget. Companies are mobilizing to support Ukraine like the satellites of the company Starlink, billionaire Elon Musk , tweeted by the Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister. The satellites of the

American company were moved over Ukraine to thwart Russian attacks by allowing Ukrainian drones to locate and target Russian tanks.

**Anger is a bad counsellor.** The Russian president had not imagined the incredible courage and heroic resistance of Ukraine, the Ukrainians, and their president Volodymyr Zelensky, who became a national and international hero. Vladimir Putin also did not foresee the tremendous Western solidarity for Ukraine, a martyred country, which resists not only for its own survival but also to defend democracy and its values.

**The *Dies irae*** or Prose of the Dead is a medieval song, a liturgical hymn whose inspiration is apocalyptic. It has inspired wonderful Requiem, to musicians like Amadeus Mozart or Giuseppe Verdi. It seems to be the swan song for an aging, hateful and resentful Russian president. "*Death, where is your victory?*" (1)

- (1) First Epistle to the Corinthians 15:51-58, text for a funeral celebration or prayer vigil - <https://croire.la-croix.com/Definitions/Priere/Prieres-pour-le-deuil/Mort-ou-est-ta-victoire>

## Useful Contacts

A list of associations and NGOs mobilized is published on the French website «[Support Ukraine](#)».

**French Red cross** - [Croix-Rouge française](#) for financial donations, in support of the Ukrainian Red Cross, to the International Committee of the Red Cross

**Médecins sans frontières** – [emergency funds](#) in countries bordering Ukraine and seeking to bring in medical equipment and personnel.

**Secours populaire** - appeals to the [emergency donation for Ukraine](#) .

**Protection civile** - a call for donations to finance other needs (defibrillators, respirators, generators, etc.): <https://don.protection-civile.org/soutenir>

**Fondation de France** – has published a [call for generosity](#) to support the hundreds of thousands of people affected by the conflict in Poland and Romania

**United Nation High Committee for Refugees** - Level 3 emergency situation for the crisis in Ukraine, the highest. UNHCR has strengthened its operations in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, to support it, you can donate: site [Donner.unhcr.org](#)

**Unicef** - an urgent need for funding to meet the basic needs of children [donation on the Unicef.fr](#) .

**ONG Care International** - a [form online for Ukraine](#) to provide emergency assistance to populations and refugees.

**L'ONG française ACTED** organizes humanitarian convoys for Ukraine

**association Solidarités International** – a [fundraising](#) to send convoys of food and basic necessities, to distribute water and meals to refugees

**Plan International**, in Poland, Romania and Moldova, to provide material and psychosocial assistance to young Ukrainians and their families, and [call for donation](#)

**L'Aide médicale et caritative France-Ukraine** - sending convoys of humanitarian aid, care for the wounded, exchanges of medical know-how, psychological assistance and organizing summer camps for orphan children - [HelloAsso](#) ;

**Le Comité d'aide médicale Ukraine** - refugees in transit in the west of the country, and collecting funds, medicines and equipment for accommodation and care [association SAFE and FONDEMOS](#).

**JeVeuxAider.gouv.fr** the French platform for volunteering for Ukraine [Mobilisons-nous pour l'Ukraine](#) .

**Les Banques alimentaires** - an [emergency support to the borders of Ukraine](#), in neighbouring countries

**La Protection Civile et l'Association des maires de France** has published a [list](#) for first aid support and material

**L'Association des maires de France** published [locations for the collection of material support](#) in France in the framework of [solidarity with Ukraine](#) .

**The French official platform** « [Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine](#) » launched in March 2022 by the government to accompany the French who want to host Ukrainians refugees and welcomed in France.

**Source** : <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15542>