

Editorial

Help Ukraine

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Dear Radiation Oncology Community,

My name is Nataliya Kovalchuk. I am a medical physicist at Stanford Radiation Oncology, and I am Ukrainian.

As you know, my beloved, beautiful country Ukraine is under attack by the Russian army on the order of the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin. These attacks are brutal, unprovoked, and unjustified—the Russian army

has caused absolute destruction and chaos for everyone in its path. Ukraine has lost thousands of civilian lives, of whom many were innocent children. Many more have been wounded, and millions have been displaced because of this ruthless war.

We, Ukrainians, believe that this war is not only Ukraine's responsibility, but that of the entire world. Our soldiers are fighting for every nation now, against



Fig. 1 “Help Ukraine”, pastels on sandpaper by Nataliya Kovalchuk.

Sources of support: This work had no specific funding.

Disclosures: none.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adro.2022.100955>

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the geopolitical ambitions of a merciless dictator. It is the battlefield for liberty, human values and democracy, and a fight for the survivorship across borders and continents.

In light of these horrible events, I am asking you for your support and solidarity with Ukraine. We have a population of almost 8 billion. If each of us stands up and speaks up to support Ukraine in its fight to freedom, not only can we stop the war, but we can demonstrate the value and importance of freedom; we can demonstrate a model of how community can help bring hope and provide support to my nation torn apart by aggressors. Stanford Ukrainian Association students have created the website StandWithUkraine.org that explains some of the ways we can help.

I created this article after hearing the devastating news from Mariupol, a besieged city in the South of Ukraine, 80% of which was destroyed by the non-stop bombing by the Russian army. Thousands of residents without water, food, electricity, heat, and medical care are sheltering and

slowly dying there. My heart bleeds for them and for all of Ukraine paying this horrendous price for its freedom. The painting (Fig 1) depicts Ukraine as a young child walking through the ruins of the war, crying, but still proudly holding its flag. My daughter was the model; I took her to 10 protests and rallies around the Bay Area.

I have already received a ton of messages from my workplace, Stanford, and I'm extremely grateful to be part of such a caring community. Ukrainians are brave, bold, and dedicated people who will never stop fighting until the last breath, and your contribution to this cause will amplify our voice across the continents.

During WWII Remembrance Day we always say "never again," yet the proof of the fragility in this phrase is unraveling right in front of us. Please help us prove that the power of community can make it possible for hope to rise amid the travesty of war.

Slava Ukraini! (Glory to Ukraine!),

Nataliya Kovalchuk