

Dear friends, colleagues, members of the Emmaus movement!

First of all, I would like to thank you very much for joining this meeting dedicated to the third anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The number of participants, your interest, your constant solidarity inspire us, the members of the Emmaus movement in Ukraine and all Ukrainians to continue our resistance.

How does a country that has been at war for 11 years and in a high-intensity war for 3 years change? What do Ukrainians feel? What strengthens their resilience and allows them to stay calm? Everyone's experience of war is different - military and civilians, men and women, children and adults - and each Ukrainian has his or her own private answer to these questions. Every day we still experience death, shelling, stories of captivity, economic and social problems. The war is indeed a challenge that I do not wish any of you to go through. At the same time, war is a time of contrast between black and white, a time when this contrast is extremely clear, the contrast between good and evil, the contrast between death and life.

Today, on the 3rd anniversary of the full-scale war, you will see a lot of statistics about the war in Ukraine. The normalization of our suffering makes societies abroad insensitive to these statistics. Especially when the numbers get into the hands of populists who talk about millions of victims on both sides, throwing around numbers that would impress and shock somebody. Unfortunately, in the world of post-truth and chaos, statistical accuracy and caution in manipulating certain figures are no longer so important. The dead and wounded military, the missing, the wounded and dead civilians, the families of those who lost someone, those who lost their homes, children who continue to live in the frontline regions and ukrainian children deported by Russia, people who face poverty and live on the edge, people who live under occupation, blackouts, destroyed infrastructure, a missile or drone flying over your house - all of this is of course measured by statistics, but no statistics can equal the value of each individual story. I can illustrate each of these categories with personal stories of my friends, acquaintances, and relatives.

The world plays with statistics but does not draw conclusions. Just a year ago, Ukrainians rejoiced that at least the entire civilized democratic world was on their side, and what do we see today? Russia is breaking out of political isolation, the leader of the democratic world is returning to a policy of isolationism, and the chairman of the Munich Security Conference cannot hold back tears in his final communiqué. Europe is paralyzed by populism, fear, and helplessness. Ukrainians are trapped between two worlds - totalitarian Russia and the new axis of evil and the West's internal battle between liberalism and far-right and far-left ideologies, and people continue to die every day. It seems that the only adults left in this world are the strong Ukrainian men and women in the trenches of the bloodiest war of the 21st century.

What can we, as the Emmaus movement and as Europeans, do in this difficult time? First of all, we need to prepare for even greater challenges and crises. The global chaos is multiplying and 2025 is the beginning of a new era, an era where international law no longer plays a role, but the right of the strong returns. In this situation, the first to suffer even more are the most vulnerable categories with whom we work and build our movement. We are not powerless. We can and must act,

develop scenarios, and model the future. We can continue to support people who find themselves in the most difficult situations - those who have lost their homes, jobs, relatives, and the meaning of life. We can work more actively with international partners and partner organizations of Emmaus, reminding them that this war is not only a problem for Ukraine, but a challenge for the whole world. We can spread truthful information and expose the manipulations that are part of the information war. We can continue to put pressure on businesses in Europe and around the world that continue to have trade relations with Russia. Peace for Ukraine at any cost is only a path to more delayed conflict, and I have a strong feeling that the next conflict could be even more bloody if Ukraine does not receive the security guarantees that not only Ukrainians need, but also the whole of Europe, because Europe is the real desired target of the newest axis of evil and the war in Ukraine is only the first stage that, thanks to our unity, has not been realized.

Thank you for your support, for being together, for being able to speak with you sincerely and feel the friendly shoulder of solidarity.