

# STATES OF JERSEY



## UKRAINE – CONDEMNATION OF RUSSIAN INVASION AND SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

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Lodged au Greffe on 28th February 2022  
by Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier  
Earliest date for debate: 29th March 2022

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STATES GREFFE

## **PROPOSITION**

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –**

to condemn the Russian government's invasion of the sovereign state of Ukraine and, in pledging the support of the States and people of Jersey to the people of the Ukraine, to request the Council of Ministers to report back at the next meeting of the States Assembly on the steps taken by the Government of Jersey to provide support and deliver aid to the people of the Ukraine.

DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER

## REPORT

As an Island that has known invasion and occupation by a foreign power our hearts go out to the people of the Ukraine.

I believe it is the duty of all democratic nations to condemn the actions of autocratic states, such as that ruled by Vladimir Putin, that try to impose their will by military force on democratic states and to resist their actions in whatever way(s) they can and to assist the people in the states under attack.

Although Jersey is not an independent country or state, and our defence and foreign affairs are primarily the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government, we do still have a voice and role that we can play in this crisis. We may not have our own army, navy or air force but we do have, at the very minimum, an international aid budget and an international financial services industry that can be utilized to aid and support the Ukrainian people and penalize the Russian government and its enablers.

We need to urgently track down any Russian property and money in, or placed through the Island, and strictly adhere to any sanctions laid down by the British Government, the E.U. and international agencies. We need to aid the British Government to obtain details of property owned in London and the rest of the country by Russian oligarchs that are owned by Jersey companies, foundations and trusts. We need to do this quickly and I regret the failure of past governments of Jersey to introduce a register of trusts to sit alongside our companies register so that we would know what assets are held through trusts; who ultimately settled the trusts and who will benefit from them in real time rather than having to ask the Trust companies to trawl through their records to find out the details with the associated added delays. We also need to urgently introduce the Digital Commercial and Residential Property Register that the States Assembly voted to adopt in September 2020 and was supposed to be introduced by the end of 2021 so we can identify what property, if any, they own in the Island.

Unfortunately, Russian money corrupts and I also believe that we should hold all those engaged in financial services (no matter how big and powerful), their owners and directors fully accountable for any failures to follow the regulations and that the States of Jersey should financially stand fully behind the Jersey Financial Services Commission to prosecute without hesitation all those who break the rules or are profiting through dirty money, or oligarchs who have deep financial pockets and want to challenge matters through the jersey courts. We should also adopt additional measures contained in the new proposed English Economic Crime Bill.

The finance industry should also step up to see how it can help Ukraine recover from the war, rebuild their cities and industry. And Jersey Overseas Aid should also provide financial and other humanitarian assistance to the people of Ukraine who have been displaced and suffered in other way from the conflict.

The list above is not exclusive, and we should consider all and any ways in which we can assist the people of the Ukraine.

In the wording of the proposition, I state that we pledge our support to the people of the Ukraine within our means and capability, which means exactly that. There may be some things we cannot do but we must look at all forms of aid and options. To do nothing is unacceptable in what is the biggest threat to Europe since World War II.

This proposition is not directed at the people of Russia who have had no say in the actions of their leader who not only stifles dissent at home: by assassinating and imprisoning members of the political opposition and independent media; by banning political opposition parties; labeling many non-governmental organisations as foreign agents; breaking up and arresting peaceful protests by his own citizens, and poisoning those he considers traitors to Russia in Britain and elsewhere.

### **Financial and manpower implications**

Adoption of my proposition would not require any additional expenditure or manpower. However, implementing measures to support the people of the Ukraine may require a reprioritisation of the Government's resources and a redirection of both funds and manpower from existing work. The implications of any such measures would be apparent from the reporting to the Assembly which my proposition seeks.

### **Child Impact Statement**

These measures should have no impact on children in the Island except to educate them as to some of the evils in the world and the need to stand up for the those who are being bullied and to aid them. It could also have a positive impact for the children of the Ukraine.