

DECLARATION FOR PEACE

Euro Coop calls for a stop to the war in Ukraine.

The news of Russia's war against Ukraine has shocked the whole world. The war is a threat not only to the lives and health of the people of Ukraine, but also to the global community if it were to escalate beyond Ukraine's borders.

Co-operatives are based on for values that are irreconcilable with war. We stand for co-operation, not confrontation.

Co-operatives are people-centered organisations working together with the aim of collective progress. Mutual support and solidarity are core elements of the co-operative idea. As such, we are gravely distressed of the unfolding humanitarian crisis triggered by the internal displacement and mass exodus of civilians. As values-led organisations established 178 years ago with the mission of improving people's livelihoods, we express concern about the potential impact of the conflict on increased food insecurity nationally, regionally and globally.

We stand for democracy, not autocracy.

Co-operatives have a democratic structure based on the principle "one member-one vote" ensuring equality in the decision-making process. Disagreements are resolved through dialogue, inclusion and compromise. Transparency and direct member control ensure accountability of elected representatives who exercise their role in the interest of the co-operative and its members.

We stand for equality and diversity.

Co-operatives are societies open to all, regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, age or gender. We do not discriminate against others nor impose our opinions on others. We respect everyone's views and avoid party politics.

Co-operatives stand for voluntariness.

Only with voluntary membership are co-operatives independent and free to work for their members. This is an expression of (co-operative) self-determination.

Co-operatives support their members in education.

Traditionally, consumer co-operatives have represented ordinary people and supported them in improving their lives. In addition to providing food and housing, this also includes access to information and education. Only well-informed and well-educated people can further develop themselves and the co-operative movement.

The attack on Ukraine violates these values.

The United Nations General Assembly vote unequivocally condemns the war in Ukraine as a groundless and unjustifiable act of aggression¹. The right of self-determination² is embodied in Article I of the Charter of the United Nations and it proclaims the right of a people to determine its own destiny.

The war of aggression violates the sovereignty of the state of Ukraine and the reported acts of aggression against its peaceful civilian

¹ At its emergency special session on Ukraine, 28.02.2022

² According to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (the ICCPR)

population (attacks on residential buildings, hospitals, infrastructure) are deemed unfathomable and inhumane. In particular, the attacks on nuclear plants are to be sharply condemned – the danger of an explosion would have devastating effects.

A policy that is based on lies, that restricts access to free and uncensored press and good information and tries to influence people in this way is fundamentally contrary to our idea.

Such use of force is in breach not only of international law, but also of our principles and values. Led by our principles of concern for the community and interco-operation, the consumer co-operatives united in Euro Coop therefore expressly demand an end to the war through de-escalation, dialogue and peaceful resolution!

We are in solidarity with Ukraine and Coop Ukraine!

Sofia, 24/03/2022
