

PM MUST FOLLOW THROUGH ON HIS CALL TO EXPEL RUSSIAN DIPLOMATS

Australian Ukrainian Congress Friday, June 3rd, 2022

The Australian Ukrainian Congress (AUC) has called on Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to make good on his declaration that all Russian Federation diplomatic staff should be expelled.

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AUC spokesperson, Mr Andrew Olexander, stated that in April the then-Opposition Leader, Mr Albanese, led the way in Australia by calling for the removal of Russian Federation diplomats.

“He said that the ‘sickening abuses being carried out by Russian forces in Ukraine must trigger immediate consequences’,” Mr Olexander said.

“Mr Albanese said without qualification that those responsible must be held to account and in the first instance there must be immediate diplomatic consequences.

“Since then, Russian forces have continued to commit multiple breaches of the Geneva Convention by targeting civilians and non-military infrastructure, and committing crimes such as rape and murder. The list goes on, as do the atrocities against the people of Ukraine.

“Numerous countries have expelled more than 350 Russian diplomatic staff and Australia should do likewise.

“Staff within the Russian Federation Embassy in Canberra have been known to post propaganda and misinformation on social media. They have tried to blame some of the alleged war crimes on Ukraine when independent verification has shown that Russia-aligned forces were the perpetrators.”

“These Embassy activities are an insult to war victims and refugees, Australian Ukrainians and Australians generally.”

Mr Olexander recognised that events in the Pacific region have forced Australia’s foreign affairs focus to shift there now. However, the situation in Ukraine continues unabated and a strong signal must be sent to Russia’s leadership.

“The Russian Federation’s government cannot be allowed to presume that a change of government has led to a change of heart in regards to this illegal and lawless invasion.”

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The Australian Ukrainian Congress (AUC) is an alliance of Ukrainians in Australia and Australians who are friends of Ukraine. It is the single largest nationwide Ukrainian organisation in Australia with over 6000 members. It is governed by a Presidium of 22 representatives drawn from every Australian State & Territory.

The First Lady of Ukraine - Mrs Olena Zelensky, wife of President Volodymyr Zelensky is the AUC Honorary Patron and a member.