

## **Statement by the African Studies Association on Discriminatory Treatment meted out to Africans, including Scholars and Students, fleeing the war in Ukraine**

The African Studies Association (ASA), founded in 1957, is the flagship membership organization devoted to enhancing the exchange of information about Africa in the United States.

The Association has received with dismay news that Africans, including scholars and students who had been living and studying in Ukraine, have been discriminated against as they try to flee the conflict. It is believed that Africans make up more than 20% of Ukraine's international students. Reports indicate that some Ukrainian authorities deliberately pushed Africans to the end of long lines and prevented them from boarding trains heading to neighboring countries. There are also reports that immigration officials in some neighboring countries have prevented refugees, especially Africans, from entering their respective countries. As a result of their actions, many Africans have been left out in freezing weather without shelter, drink, or food.

We join the call of the African Union and several African leaders to condemn this discriminatory, inhumane, and racist treatment of Africans fleeing Ukraine, which clearly violates international law. ASA calls on Ukrainian and authorities in neighboring countries to treat all those fleeing the conflict equally, with dignity, and without discrimination based on race or status.

We welcome the public acknowledgment by the Ukrainian Foreign Minister that African refugees seeking to flee the violence have faced racist, disparate treatment and the setting up of a hotline +380934185684 for all Africans and Asians who want to leave Ukraine. We hope they will continue to take measures to end the mistreatment of all refugees. We urge the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organizations to swiftly engage and ensure that every refugee receives equal treatment.

We commend efforts by several African governments, including Nigeria, Zambia and Ghana, to evacuate their nationals from Ukraine and call on other African nations with citizens in Ukraine to take the necessary steps to ensure that they are protected. The foremost responsibility of the state is to take the necessary steps to protect its nationals.

We express solidarity with the people of Ukraine, especially scholars and students who are suffering as a direct consequence of this terrible conflict and whose work has been adversely impacted by the ongoing conflict. We are deeply worried and concerned about the humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

We endorse the comments by Kenya's Ambassador to the UN, Martin Kimani and "reject irredentism and expansionism on any basis, including racial, ethnic, religious, or cultural factors... further strongly condemn the trend in the last few decades of powerful states, including members of this Security Council, breaching international law with little regard." As Ambassador Kimani aptly noted, "(W)e must complete our recovery from the embers of dead empires in a way that does not plunge us back into new forms of domination and oppression."