

## FAFICS PRESIDENT STATEMENT ON MILITARY OPERATIONS IN UKRAINE

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Following the Second World War and its procession of deaths, the peoples hoped that the world had acquired the wisdom of resolving conflicts and disputes through dialogue and negotiation. They created the United Nations Organization with a Charter (*We, the peoples of the United Nations determined...*) that pledged a just and lasting peace founded on the respect of human dignity, rights and fundamental freedoms. However, contrary to expectations, this century already has seen a succession of crises which have heavily penalized civilian populations. Today we can even fear the use of devastating nuclear weapons.

We are all former international civil servants, concerned about the application of the United Nations Charter protecting civilian populations and we must, today more than ever, relay and support the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

*We are seeing Russian military operations inside the sovereign territory of Ukraine on a scale that Europe has not seen in decades. It is against the Charter. It is unacceptable. But it is not irreversible. I repeat my appeal from last night to President Putin: Stop the military operation. Bring the troops back to Russia. We know the toll of war. — ANTONIO GUTERRES*

To show even more solidarity with the populations affected by this armed conflict, in particular the millions of children, women, men and elderly people who are fleeing, I would encourage our Member Associations to make donations to international organizations who manage humanitarian aid, and we urge our Member Associations to do likewise, to organizations such as UNHCR, ICRC, “Médecins sans Frontières” or any other.

We also have a special thought for international retirees from Russia and Ukraine who will have difficulty receiving their pensions, either because of the embargo on the banks or because they will have left everything behind them to flee the fighting. The United Nations Pension Fund is suspending pension payments to the hundreds of retirees and their dependents in Russia or those whose benefits are transferred through Russian banks as on March 2022. However, it is exploring alternative solutions to make the payments and we thank them for their responsiveness and their dedication. Finally, it should be recalled here that the sister associations of former international civil servants in Russia and Ukraine will need logistical support, in particular to help their colleagues to appeal, if necessary, to the Emergency Fund of the UN Pension Fund.

We acknowledge that this conflict is one of many around the world, and urge member associations to do all they can to assist people from their region who are affected by armed conflict and forced displacement.

For further information, you may contact Georges Kutukdjian, Chairperson of the FAFICS Standing Committee on After-Service Health Insurance and Long-Term Care (ASHIL).

**FAFICS President Statement - 10 March 2022**