



# QUNO

Quaker United Nations Office

4 March 2022

Dear Friends,

Like us, you have undoubtedly been watching in horror the unfolding events in Ukraine. When we accepted responsibilities as the Directors of the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva and New York this past November, the possibility of such a war was little imagined by us or by the millions of people in Ukraine and Russia. We pray for Friends in Ukraine and Russia, and all impacted by this conflict. We are deeply grateful to hear of the efforts being carried out by Friends in Poland, Estonia and Georgia to provide much needed humanitarian relief.

Quakers have had a presence at the United Nations (UN) for over 70 years. Grounded in our calling to uphold that of the Divine in all of us, we are committed to multilateralism as an approach to find just and non-violent solutions to disputes and to honour the dignity of all members of our human family. In the past weeks we have witnessed a direct challenge to the core principles of peace and collective security embedded in the UN Charter - conflict that has been openly provoked by a permanent member of the UN Security Council, whose responsibility it is to uphold these very principles. This is not the first time that a permanent member of the UN Security Council has ignored the UN Charter. We are deeply concerned that these actions will further undermine multilateralism and erode the purpose and underlying principles of the UN.

These past days, we at QUNO, assisted by our UN Representatives, have closely followed the developments in the UN Security Council, General Assembly, and in the Human Rights Council. We would like to take this opportunity to share some information regarding measures taken in those bodies in New York and Geneva. The situation in Ukraine has gone beyond being a country or regionally specific conflict. It raises issues of global importance for our work for sustainable peace, human rights and climate justice.

QUNO will continue to work, as we have for decades, in supporting a UN that is able to fully carry out its mandate for global peace and justice. It is work that is critically important and requires a long-term and sustained effort. This terrible conflict, like others that rage around our world, should not lead us to lose confidence in the purpose, impact and work of the UN, but only redouble our commitment to building together a world where peace leads the way.

In peace,

Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge  
Director, QUNO Geneva

Sarah Clarke  
Director, QUNO New York