

EASTERN EUROPE TERRITORY
TERRITORIAL SITUATION REPORT
UKRAINE REFUGEE CRISIS



February 2022 - February 2023



On the Photo:

Kyiv Mayak Corps officers and volunteers delivering humanitarian aid to the people whose flats were ruined due to the heavy fighting in Kyiv region. Photo taken in July 2022, after liberation of Kyiv region.

Photo credit to David Giles.

Foreword by the Eastern Europe Territory Commander, Colonel Kelvin Pethybridge

Psalm 46 verse 10 starts off with a very simple command – “Be still”. On the surface this would seem to be a very easy thing to do – to “Be still”.

In this Psalm, the psalmist is not only talking about physically being still, but he is also talking about our whole being coming into his presence – our body, mind and spirit. We come before Him in confidence Knowing that He hears our prayers and is able to answer our prayers.

Over the past twelve months as we have witnessed the senseless violence unfolding in Ukraine and there have been many times when although I may have been physically stationary, my mind has been racing and my spirit disturbed.

Today, on the anniversary of the commencement of hostilities, we pause and are ‘still’ before God. As a people of “Faith & Courage” we recognise that God is sovereign over all things, and we ask Him to bring peace to the people of Ukraine.

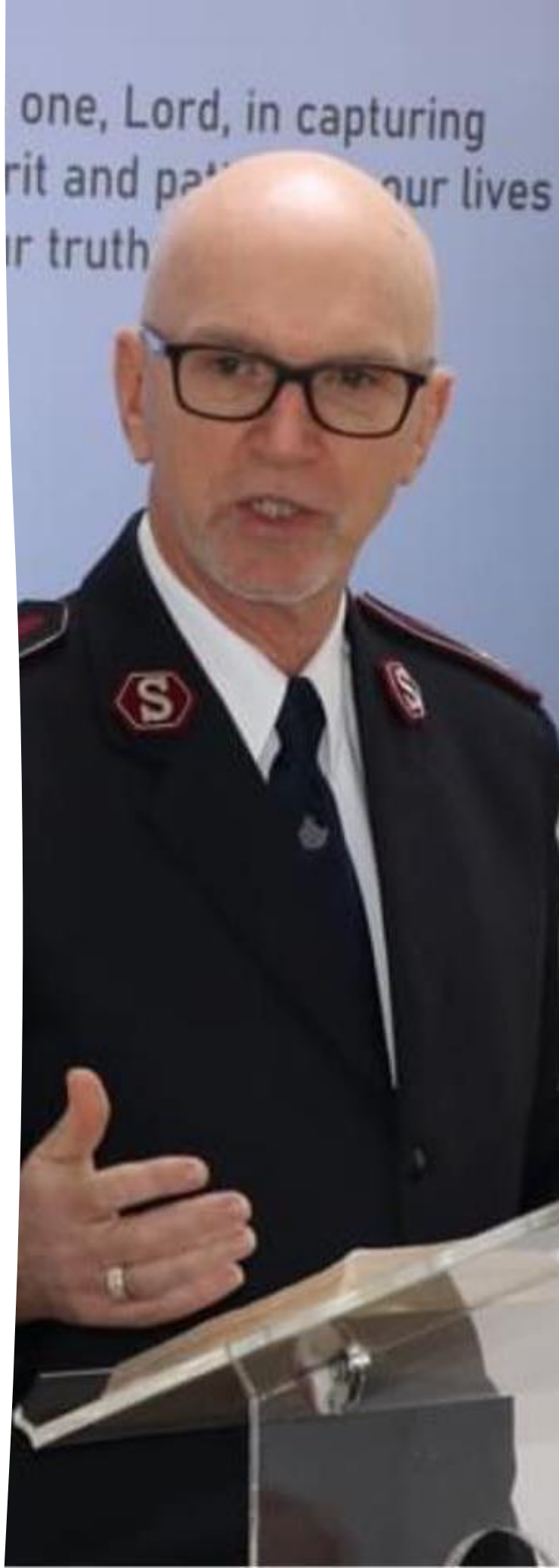
We also celebrate and give thanks to God today because He has been with us, His people, in the middle of previously unimaginable circumstances, providing His peace and providing all that we need.

So, today, wherever you are, we invite you to join with us and to ‘Be still’ before God. We stand before God today in the confidence that He is at work in our world, he hears our prayers and still acts in miraculous ways.

Let us bring our prayers for Peace in Ukraine before God today. We do this as a people of Faith & Courage, knowing that as we wait for God to answer our prayers, He is with us.

Colonel Kelvin Pethybridge

Eastern Europe Territory Commander



Territorial Situation Report Ukraine Refugee Crisis

February 2022 – February 2023

At the beginning of the war in Ukraine, 24.02.2022, Salvation Army personnel and volunteers in Eastern Europe Territory (EET) immediately responded by helping Ukrainians both within the country and at its borders with Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria. Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) were provided with basic necessities. They were frightened, depressed and grief-stricken, desperate to find a safe place for themselves, their children and their families. There were countless families with children, elderly people and people with disabilities.

In order to provide better care for Ukrainian refugees, The Salvation Army in Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Georgia has cooperated with local shops and supermarkets to issue shopping vouchers. This support is intended to provide an immediate response to the basic needs of the refugees, beside supplying them with standardized kits. Working like this has proved to be swift and effective.

To ensure an efficient response to the numbers of people crossing borders, Salvation Army personnel and volunteers created mixed response teams led by the Divisional and Regional Leaders. These teams worked side by side, assisting with translation, feeding, counseling and resettlement. In 2022, The Salvation Army in Moldova opened Corps-based Refugee Accommodation Centres where food was provided, people could shower and have a safe place to stay. Further to this, some individuals in Moldova offered private accommodation to Ukrainian refugees.

In order to maintain effective communication with refugees, chat groups were created using various messaging services, in order that the refugees might identify their needs so that Salvation Army personnel could respond as quickly as possible.

Since the beginning of the war, The Salvation Army across Eastern Europe has established a number of partnerships with different organizations, institutions and NGOs who are helping Ukrainian refugees. This allowed for better communication, coordination and response to their needs.

In turn, Ukrainian refugees in EET countries, once they felt settled, joined in Salvation Army initiatives, participating in charity fairs and some other events as a sign of gratitude for everything The Salvation Army did for them.

In Ukraine, in the cities and towns where it was relatively safe, Salvation Army Corps buildings were and are used as overnight accommodation. When Corps ran out of space for people to stay, Corps Officers accommodated IDPs at their homes. Since the war began on February 24th, different type of assistance has been provided to the people fleeing the war, many of whom had lost homes and relatives, and who suffered from a lack of funds for even the most necessary items. This kind of support has been provided at Corps buildings and has also being delivered in some places via Projects supported financially by international donors.

Salvation Army Corps' in Ukraine host a variety of programs for IDPs of various ages. These include: Children's Clubs, Youth Meetings, Women's Clubs, Specially developed Scout Meetings/lessons and many other activities have aimed to help offer some respite to these young people from the worst of their suffering.

Salvation Army personnel and volunteers have made several trips to the areas particularly affected by the hostilities. The purpose of these trips has been the delivery and distribution of food, humanitarian and other aid, which are especially needed by people in these most affected and destroyed areas. Salvation Army personnel and volunteers in Ukraine have and continue to provide moral and spiritual support to the people affected by the war.

The Salvation Army Eastern Europe Territory adjusted its Divisions and Region activities to help Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) since the war started in Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

Since the beginning of the war, The Salvation Army in Eastern Europe conducted 56 multifaceted projects of rapid response to the needs of a large number of people on the borders of Ukraine with Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria - in the cities and towns of these countries; in the cities of Ukraine, where it is conditionally safe; covered and covering the following areas that provide people with everything they need:

- Food kits
- Hygiene products kits
- Clothes and underwear
- Linens
- Warm blankets, blankets
- Medicines

The Salvation Army Corps in Eastern Europe are in use for providing Ukrainian refugees and IDPs different kind of help and support. Also, this kind of support gets delivered to the most remote corners of the countries where refugees temporarily live.

The Salvation Army in Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Georgia, provided Ukrainian refugees with vouchers that allow them purchasing all the necessary items for children and toddlers from the local shops and supermarkets.

Children, who witnessed the horrors of war, the loss of homes and relatives are provided a special support. As part of that, The Salvation Army personnel and volunteers organized interesting excursions, summer recreation camps and other youth camps during school holidays in picturesque places for rest and recovery.

Divisions and Region run Children Clubs where children have the opportunity to make some crafts, dance, sing and draw. This allows smiles to return to children's faces and make new friends.

The financial support from international donors available to The Salvation Army in Eastern Europe allowed purchasing school supplies and backpack to the Ukrainian refugees and IDPs. Children and their parents were pleased with the help, and festive events that were organized on the occasion of the beginning of the school year. The Salvation Army Corps-based educational programs provided students with opportunity to study, learn languages, do homework after school and have the opportunity to receive professional advice on the subjects they are studying.

The Salvation Army in Eastern Europe sets a goal to make Ukrainian refugees and migrants to feel that they are not left alone with their problems. Psychological and spiritual support has been available for them across our Territory with high involvement of competent staff and volunteers. This kind of support gives people faith, restores strength and energy to live on and raise their children.

Professional consultations regarding the refugees` rights to stay and travel, both nationally and internationally, are available to Ukrainian refugees in all countries that constitute Eastern Europe Territory: Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine. People are also provided with information on combating human trafficking, the most shameful form of modern slavery, and receive leaflets in Ukrainian with emergency phone numbers.

International donors supported projects` activities for a total amount of \$6,961,900.00.



*Major Elizabeth Garland,
Territorial Development Officer*



On the Photo:
Dnipro Corps Leaders and volunteers, Ukraine Division.

UKRAINE REFUGEE CRISIS RESPONSE IN FIGURES (February 2022-February2023):

- Number of Ukrainian people received any kind of help from the Salvation Army - 516 638.
- Number of children and babies among them - 1444
- Number of children and teenagers participated in the events and camps - 1 782
- Number of Ukrainian people have connected to the Salvation Army corps or centers in EET - 52 548

My heart is filled with hope, my heart is filled with joy that we are not alone.

Well, before February 24th, all my acquaintances from abroad and in Ukraine, who are confident in politics and who are connected to different authorities, were saying that the war is going to start in Ukraine. My friends from different parts of the world tried to convince me to take my family abroad. But we decided to stay. Although I knew that the war was going to begin. I firmly believed that God would save us. I couldn't imagine how it could be in the 21st century, in the centre of Europe, such a horror could ever happen. February 24 started for me with telephone calls from my friends and relatives, who described the horrors of the war. They said they heard rockets, saw tanks, heard explosions. Our life has changed.

Endless crowds of people from the East of Ukraine were fleeing to Europe via western part of Ukraine. They passed through Vinnytsia both at night and during the day. Regardless of the curfew people were endlessly arriving.

We opened Vinnytsia Corps doors for people to sleepover. The number of people was too great for the Corps building, so many of them stayed at our home. Our home was filled with people, different people every day. Our house was so full of people that I had to step over people in my bedroom to get to the bathroom. People were sleeping on the floor because we had nowhere to put them. But people cried and thanked us for sheltering them.

From the first days of the war, this horror gripped every Ukrainian. But I do not know in what way God gave us the strength to hold on and still gives us. There was still some hope in our hearts that God was in control, and everything would end well.

I remember when I was carrying humanitarian aid in the Kyiv region. I was driving along the road on which tanks drove recently, I saw broken cars, cars with peaceful people who were shot and burned alive, I saw broken houses. It is a horror; it is pain and tears. Despite all of that, I had a feeling that God was giving me hope and still gives me hope to this day. Not just me, but thousands like me. We have hope that God is in control and will bring us all out.

I see and hear today that other states, other international organizations are helping Ukraine. My heart is filled with hope, my heart is filled with joy that we are not alone. At the same time, every care shown for Ukraine and for Ukrainians fills my heart with the light that God controls everything. We are not alone, and we are not destined to perish.

I thank everyone who helped us, who is helping us. I thank God that I belong to The Salvation Army, which takes an active part from the very first days in alleviating the suffering of other people, many people: children and adults. We clothe, feed, encourage, help in every way. I am proud to be a part of The Salvation Army, which brings comfort, support and encouragement.

Even today bombs and rockets are still whistling over us. There is still a threat of death over us today, but I don't know, I'm not afraid, I know that God holds us in His hands.



Major Kostiantyn Shvab
Ukraine Division Commander

The light always wins because the one who created the light is stronger than the darkness

The war caught me unprepared. I cannot say that I did not know that the war could start. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers, who gathered near the borders of my Motherland with full weapons, with jet fighters, with tanks, with artillery, said the opposite. My mind told me that war was inevitable, but my heart continued to believe that it could be avoided.

On the morning of February 24, I woke up to the roar of fighter jets and the sounds of distant explosions, and I was not ready for this. I don't know at all how you can prepare yourself for this - to prepare for the fact that all your plans are no longer worth anything, your way of life is completely destroyed, stability and security have just left your house with a loud slamming of the door. Although no, it wasn't a slamming door - it was another explosion, this time even closer to my house. I don't know how to prepare myself for this.

Instead of normal emotions, feelings came fear, uncertainty, sadness, the future no longer seemed bright and clear. It has plunged more and more into the darkness and there is only one thing that can stand against the darkness – a light.

In Genesis 1:3-4 said: “And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.” God is the source of light, He is the author of light. He is the one Who dispelled the darkness. He did it at the creation of the world. He did it 2000 years ago and He continues doing it today.

I found light in God for myself and for my future; and the darkness receded. His light has one important characteristic - it does not only light you, it gives you the power to shine yourself. To shine where it is darkest.

You can't avoid lighting yourself when His light is in you. Today, this is often expressed in help for those people who suffered from the war in Ukraine, which has been going on in our country for a whole year.

There are millions of people in Ukraine today who have lost everything: houses, property, lost friends, relatives, lost hope. They need help and support. They need light. And the light that is in me, it prompts me to do everything that depends on me, so that they receive this help, support and see the light. The light that chases away the darkness. The light always wins because the one who created the light is stronger than the darkness.



Major Daniil Lukin

Kropyvnytskyi Corps Officer

Ukraine Division

The love of Christ, which penetrates through people into this troubled world is the light that helps to survive physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Ukraine...explosions, fear, cold, despair, pain, tears, hunger, confusion, sadness, rage. Ukraine is filled with all of that. Every centimeter of this land is "burning" - somewhere like in Bakhmut because of fire, somewhere like in Mariupol from sheer horror, somewhere like in our Dnipro from a hole the size of the lives of people who died in a destroyed house.

Despite all of that, Ukraine fights, holds on and is healed by the love of people who support each other every day, give love and care for those who need it most. People share water, food, clothes, blankets, shoes, but there is nothing more valuable than time, attention and love.

The love of Christ, which penetrates through people into this troubled world is the light that helps to survive physically, emotionally and spiritually. A child's smile who recently saw his friend torn apart, the one they play together yesterday; a child's hug, who stopped talking because a rocket flew straight into their home; the lively eyes of a boy whose father was killed in combat... these are the things that do not fade away and is the same light. Children are exhausted by the war, teenagers in search of themselves, women lost their support, men do not understand what to do, grandparents had to leave their entire lives and start their lives from scratch, volunteers, ministers who 24/7 search, distribute, comfort and love. These are the people who inspire and hold Ukraine, because they do not give up, because they live.

Our team consists of an actor, a store owner, an animator, a boy with disability, a biochemist, a rescuer, a few teachers, a translator and many other people who have become one family, who, despite everything, bring the love of Christ into people's lives.

God opens his arms in this terrible time for everyone, again and again. He seems to hold every Ukrainian, every disappointed soul, wipes away the tears of despair and sadness and gives a reason to smile, joy and feel happiness in every day.

This is our tired but happy Ukraine. Ukraine with the desire for peace in our hearts and around us. We are strong in Jesus Christ. We are free in our Saviour. We are healed by His wounds. We are enlightened by His love.



Leader of the Dnipro corps,

Soldier Rak Natalya

Ukraine Division

Elena Cotruta, Major
Territorial Secretary for Program,
Communication & Fundraising

Ivan Berezkin
IT and WEB-Technology

Kelvin Pethybridge, Colonel Territorial Commander