



Fátima, March 2022

Dear Dra. Roberta Metsola
M.I. President of the European Parliament

Dear Madam President,

For more than two weeks we have witnessed an incomprehensible invasion of a democratic country, in the cradle of the European continent, under the aegis of military force. We condemn this aggression and we resolutely oppose the attack that the Russian President planned and ordered in a cold and unyielding manner.

The reports and images of destruction in Ukrainian villages, towns and cities, schools, day care centers and hospitals, the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians and the escape of millions to neighboring countries, revive memories, over 77 years old, that transport to the distant Second World War.

Without talking about the events facing Ukraine, Europe and the world, we focus and appeal to the need to provide humanitarian support to populations and refugees and, jointly, to reinforce sanctions that force the Russian government to return at the negotiating table to end the conflict. We call on the leaders of the European Parliament, in their person, and on all the Member States to help each other, to act and communicate with one voice, with diplomacy and objective measures.

The Shrines of Europe - Association of the Shrines of Europe, which I have the honor to be the President, is made up of seven municipalities (Altötting - Germany, Czestochowa - Poland, Einsiedeln - Switzerland, Fátima/Ourém - Portugal, Loreto - Italy, Lourdes - France and Mariazell - Austria), have received, for several centuries, millions of people who walk for peace.

Although with different traditions, symbols and languages, in the Shrines of Europe Association we converge for the European identity, around cooperation, solidarity and the promotion of human development, based on the supreme value of peace and free communion between people.



We recognize in the Ukrainian population, European values and common principles that define our society and sustain the European Union: freedom and democracy. Therefore, we would like to wholeheartedly, as the Shrines of Europe – Association of European Shrines cities, support the application signed by President Zelensky for Ukraine to join the European Union. We would like to ask the European Parliament and all Member States to show our friends unanimity and consistency in action at this difficult moment. We support not only granting Ukraine the status of a candidate country to the European Union, but its full inclusion in the structures of the community. The security of future generations of the countries of the Old Continent is in our hands and requires that we all speak with one voice without exception.

We are organizing in our territories the collection of goods that are being sent to the Ukrainian people and creating responses for the reception of refugees. We act out of the respect and admiration we have for this brother people, supporting them in this tragic and deplorable moment, in solidarity.

We understand that this is our duty: to guarantee safety, comfort and trust in an unequivocal manifestation of union, around the principles and values that constitute Human Rights, towards a people who deserve all our respect and gratitude.

We believe in the efforts and political capacity of the European Parliament for a free Europe, committed to the value of human life and committed to achieving peace.

Best regards

Luís Miguel Albuquerque

President of the Shrines of Europe Association

