

Department of Social Work
Statement on Ukraine

On February 24, 2022, Russia unleashed an unprovoked attack on its sovereign neighbor, Ukraine. Social workers are called to promote the welfare of society and advocate for the dignity and worth of every individual. In the spirit of our values, it is important that the humanitarian crisis of the ensuing conflict in Ukraine be recognized and condemned. At the time of writing this statement, the United Nations stated that 1,119 civilians had died and 3.6 million refugees had fled the conflict into neighboring countries, the fastest growing refugee crisis since World War II. This does not include the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons. Russia has intentionally bombed civilian targets including TV stations, hospitals, and refugee corridors, highlighting the vulnerability of civilians in war time. In particular, marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, children, elderly, and individuals with disabilities, stand to pay the highest price.

In light of the evident war crimes committed by Russian forces against the Ukrainian people, it can feel hopeless. However, there are many organizations that are doing invaluable work on the ground. We encourage the Appalachian State and Boone communities, and social workers across the state and nation, to continue advocating for those who are unable to advocate for themselves at this time. Ongoing conflicts across the globe have received [less media coverage](#) than the conflict in Ukraine, but the humanitarian crises in other war-torn parts of the world warrant attention as well. The Council on Foreign Relation's *Global Conflict Tracker* sheds light on the grave costs of war in [Yemen](#), [Afghanistan](#), [Ethiopia](#), and numerous [other parts](#) of the world.

Humanitarian organizations assisting with the Ukrainian crisis on the ground provide an opportunity to offer immediate support via direct financial contributions and amplification of their mission:

- [Doctors without Borders](#)
- [Save the Children](#)
- [The International Committee of the Red Cross](#)
- [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#)
- [International Medical Corps](#)

All signs point to a long and difficult path forward for Ukraine and as social workers we stand ready to assist in whatever capacity we can.

April 6, 2022