

Transcript: Mayor Eric Adams Announces Over \$2 Million in Funding to Help Currently Residing and Newly Arrived Ukrainians

April 22, 2022

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you so much. And it is good to be here with all who see the importance of our city and country standing up for what is right. We say it over and over again. What happens on the global stage plays out on the streets of New York City, one of the most diverse cities on the globe. And we are well aware as the blood spreads through Europe and the conflict that's taken place on the soil of the Ukrainian people. New York has one of the largest Ukrainian populations in this country. We see our brothers and sisters that are here and live in New York City. They are dealing with the despair that their family members are experiencing in the Ukraine. And we want to be here to say, with the consul general, the ambassador, and the entire Ukrainian diaspora, that we are with you.

Mayor Adams: We stand with you. We support you, not only in words, but in deeds. We are allocating a \$2 million allocation of funds for those who reside here and those who will be coming here as part of the refugee process. We applaud the Biden's administration for the acceptance and look towards helping over 100,000 Ukrainian nationals who will be coming here to our country. And we know New York City as being the home of the Ukrainian community and diaspora. We know many of them would be here in New York. Our tradition is always to welcome our brothers and sisters who flee conflicts across the globe. The statue of Lady Liberty that sits in our harbor has always been a representation of we are here to help people who are fleeing any form of tyranny and violence. This investment builds on the services and resources the city regularly provides to all immigrant New Yorkers during their times of need.

Mayor Adams: The program would be carried out by a coalition of city agencies, citywide nonprofit service providers, and Ukrainian community based organizations. It

means a lot to us that as we assist a particular group, in this case, the Ukrainian community, we believe nothing does it better than those on the ground, nonprofits and organizations who understand the needs of their friends and families that are fleeing the Ukrainian crisis. New York City is home to this community as it home to so many other immigrants. This is a city of immigrants and a diaspora of all populations are right here in the City of New York. And so, bombs have been dropped on Ukraine, but we feel the vibrations of those bombs and the devastation of those bombs right here in our city. We are going to do our job and we're going to partner with all those who are on the right side of history by applying the services that are needed.

Mayor Adams: I want to just take a moment to give a special thank you to the bravery of the Ukrainian people and President Zelenskyy and how they have stood up to the face of tyranny and violence. They have become a symbol of what it is to fight on behalf of your people and fight on behalf of what is right and just in our country and across the globe. And so again, we stand firmly with the Ukrainian people with our support. At this time, I'm going to turn it over to the consul general of Ukraine, Consul General Holubov.

Oleksii Holubov, Consul General of Ukraine: Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Mayor. Ladies and gentlemen, [foreign language]. Thank you for having today, this wonderful, lovely day that gives no question the New York City government controls everything, including the weather around us. Lovely day, which is also the 58th day of a horrific war waged by Russians against my country. 58 days, besieged and ruined cities, killed civilians, killed our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, huge losses to Ukrainian economy. Roughly, we can estimate up to \$2 billion weekly our losses in economy. Infrastructure, we cannot calculate. We cannot even estimate to what extent Ukrainian railways, cities, residential areas, schools and kindergartens are ruined by those called soldiers, but who are really rapists, murderers, torturers. But we can absolutely be sure we are not alone in this war. We're not alone. The world's community is with us standing shoulder by shoulder. And I wish to take this occasion to thank the United States for the leading role in support in Ukraine in our fight against the evil of a planetary scale.

Holubov: I want to thank the United States from the highest federal level to the level of each individual, each American, who is willing to help Ukraine, willing cordially and doing this. And I wish to thank the city, the city which is governed by the team of Mayor Adams and the cities that already helps Ukraine, helps providing humanitarian assistance, helps supporting, morally, Ukrainian mayors through Zoom and other formats, helps with serious friendly hand, which Ukrainians will never forget, but we need more help. As war gives such a huge aftermath in the many dimensions, killed

Ukrainians including civil population, ruined economy, and also people who forced to live their homes from almost 8 million of internally displaced Ukrainians who left the besieged cities and places of war, to more than 5 million calculated now who left the country. And I wish once again to take this opportunity to thank the United States for generous offer of receiving Ukrainian refugees here on this land of hospitality and freedom, freedom which is so important for us Ukrainians. And maybe New York City is mostly populated by Ukrainian city all over the world, beyond the borders of Ukrainian state.

Holubov: I wish to thank you, Mr. Mayor. I wish to thank what you've done already, not just in words, but in deeds. I want to thank you for allocations made for those who would come and for those who are already here. It is indeed needed for them to feel this support, to feel support in medical care, to feel support in housing, to feel support in education of Ukrainian kids, because most of them would come here without their men, without husbands, fathers, because they must stay in Ukraine to protect our land and to protect principles and values we share together. I thank you very much. God bless America. God bless New York City. God bless Americans and [foreign language] Ukraine. I thank you all.

Mayor Adams: We want to bring up to speak on behalf of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, Commissioner Castro.

Commissioner Manuel Castro, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs : Thank you, consul general. And thank you, Mayor Eric Adams. I want to personally thank Mayor Adams for his commitment and support to New York's immigrant communities. From day one at the beginning of the invasion, Mayor Eric Adams and our administration reached out to our federal partners to extend temporary protective status for Ukrainians already here. We also reached out to our federal partners to ensure we are welcoming refugees and asylum seekers fleeing the region. And we also reached out so that the federal government can create an expedited process for refugees to come here to the country and especially those who have family ties. All those things are happening now. And so, I want to thank Mayor Adams for his willingness to advocate for immigrant communities, advocate for those who are fleeing crisis. I want to thank the community partners, the legal services providers, and the volunteers for all your work in making sure that Ukrainian New Yorkers feel supported, feel like we're working for them, and making sure that their families are being considered as they arrived.

Commissioner Castro: I've had a chance to meet many of you over the past couple of months. Just yesterday at the Ukrainian Church of God where we partner with a number of different organizations, I had a chance to meet a couple volunteers volunteering for the clinic who they themselves arrived to the country as immigrants, as children from Ukraine. And now as adults, are volunteering to make sure that Ukrainians and those who are coming feel supported and welcomed. They shared with me that as they were supporting the community here, they were also considering traveling down to the U.S.-Mexico border to pick up relatives who were waiting there for them. And this, for me... Oh, and not only that, let me say. Both of them work for the New York City government. One of them works for the Department of Education and the other for the Department of Fire, right?

Commissioner Castro: So it was special to me because as the commissioner of immigrant affairs, someone who also came here as a child with my mother across the border and who had to make sure that our communities feel supported and welcome. And now as a commissioner, making sure that communities have the services that they need, I am inspired by them. And I am inspired by the community's willingness to come together. So with that, I want to thank all of you. And I look forward to working with your communities and your community organizations to make sure that as people start coming to New York, as children, as mothers and others are connected to services, are connected to a community, and they feel embraced by all of us. Lastly, I want to thank Commissioner Mermelstein, Commissioner Gary Jenkins for their support. I'm going to be partnering with them and other city agencies to make sure that you have everything you need. Thank you.

Mayor Adams: Thank you. Finally, I want to bring up a real partner in government, because in order to get this done, we are going to need partners in government, particularly as we look at those small businesses in heavily Ukrainian population. And no one has done a greater partnership with our administration than Councilwoman Julie Menin, the chair of Small Business Services. Councilwoman.

[...]

Mayor Adams: Before we finish with the Commissioner Mermelstein, I want you to think about immigrant populations and making sure they get the services they deserve. We have a real partner in doing so, Councilwoman Rivera. Councilwoman, say a few words before we depart.

[...]

Mayor Adams: Thank you. So we are going to close it with our amazing commissioner of international affairs who continues to build the bridges, America and New York City as a global community. And our goal is to be there for our global citizenry. And Commissioner Mermelstein has clearly personified the desire to do so. Commissioner.

Commissioner Edward Mermelstein, Mayor's Office of International Affairs: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. As a Ukrainian refugee, I just wanted to say one, how grateful I am to be part of this administration and to work for what I believe is the greatest mayor in America, if not beyond. So this is a very, very exciting announcement, I'm sure one of many for the support of the Ukrainian people. I wanted to keep this short, so I want to thank all of you for coming here today and listening to this very important message that we are with Ukraine.

Mayor Adams: Thank you.