Statement of Hong Kong Universities' Students on the Russian Invasion and War on Ukraine

written by Hong Kong Universities Students | February 24, 2022

Hong Kong University – Science and Technology Campus

With a Tsarist Russia dream and for the purpose of competing for global hegemony, the Kremlin Putin officially launched an imperialist invasion war against Ukraine on Thursday (February 24). Since the Revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe, the world has once again entered a crossroads : either the liberation of the oppressed, or the abyss of barbaric tyranny. As university students, looking around the world while on Hong Kong ground is one of our responsibilities. We would like to give responses to the global crisis as follows,

1. Insisting on the anti-war stance

Since the beginning of the war, there had been different rhetoric about the Russian invasion, the pro-Russian Chauvinists spectate the escalation of situation with joy, the western countries and East Asia take no substantial actions, and even the Taliban, which suppressed the Afghan people by force, has performed as a peacekeeper and calls for negotiation. Aggression, civil war, and subsequent status of anarchy have always been the tricks of imperialism, and in such a state of chaos, the people who have been tormented by war and oppressed by different regimes need to unite once again, and rebuild the anti-war fronts that we have once seen in the Vietnam War and the Iraq War – we oppose not only the military aggression commanded by Putin, but also NATO, which has led to the crisis in Ukraine ; we stand in solidarity with thousands of anti-war demonstrators in Russia to insist an internationalist anti-war stance.

2. Opposing the hypocritical attitude which is represented by the United States

After the outbreak of the war, the Western countries, led by the United States, have not provided any substantial contribution for the dissolution of the conflict except its provocative condemnation of Russia. They claimed that there will be serious consequences after Russia's offensive military invasion. These nonsensical condemnations have little impact on Russia's adventuristic decisions and have little contribution to an equal political compromise. From 1945 to 1989, over 300 wars have taken place globally. The United States alone has launched 30 major military operations, while the Western-led United Nations had given no strong opposition to these invasive operations. How many innocent and underprivileged people have been sent to the battlefield ? How much contribution had been given by the Western condemnations during these wars ? What Ukraine needs is definitively not the empty checks that Western society has been issuing since last century. What Ukraine needs is substantial support that aims at an equal and sustainable political agreement that

takes all Ukrainian citizens' welfare into consideration.

III. Supporting the Self Determination of Ukrainian People

Struggling between the Great-Russian Chauvinism and NATO's expansionary ambitions are the Ukrainian people and the divided and oppressed ethnic minorities who bear the cost of the failed negotiations between the two populist governments. The Soviet Republic established by Russia after the October Revolution in 1917 advocated the establishment of a voluntary national alliance. Ukraine, which had been oppressed by imperial Russia for a long time, was then freed from the shackles of being a subordinate nation and the hatred of nationalism, and was able to self-determine. However, under Stalinist dictatorship, Ukraine fell into the hands of fascism and imperialism. In today's post-Soviet era, Ukraine is still a battleground for Putin's imperial Russia and NATO forces. It is clear that neither collusion with Russia nor reliance on the Western powers could lead to the way out of the predicament. Ukraine should never be a pawn in the contestation of great powers. We therefore firmly support the self-determination of the Ukrainian people, just as the Ukrainian revolutionary government fought for "freedom of association", "internationalism" and "national liberation" in the early 20th century.

IV. What can the international community do?

The best way for the international community to assist Ukraine while exerting pressure on Russia is : (i) to confiscate the property and assets of Russian oligarchs and officials ; (ii) to draw up a plan which aims to restore the war-affected areas and to support the local population with the properties had been confiscated from the Russian and Ukrainian oligarchs that were accumulated through plundering and exploitation at the first place ; (iii) to abolish Ukraine's foreign debt and support the War-torn Ukrainian economy. It is clear that the spontaneous self-condemnation of the government will not be enough to execute all these actions of justice. The international community cannot count on the bureaucratics, but to unite and pressure their governments: just like those truly meaningful acts that had been shown by thousands of anti-war demonstrators in Russia, who protested against the atrocity of their government.

V. What can we do in Hong Kong?

Whereas the civil society in Hong Kong is also in retreat, there are still countless Hong Kong people concerned about the situation in Ukraine. Some courageous journalists volunteered to document the truth in the local area, some people donated to the Ukrainian government and companies, hoping to help Ukraine fight against Russia. While putting all the efforts into helping Ukraine, we should not forget to investigate the causes and consequences of this war of aggression, and to probe deeper into the multi-ethnic history of Ukraine that has been intentionally distorted or even erased. We should also equip and empower ourselves, and forge connection with all the oppressed in the world.

We stand with all the oppressed in the world.

A group of Hong Kong university students

February 26, 2022

The statement is signed by scores of student organizations and students.