SUD-Rail and Solidaires demand free transport for refugees from Ukraine!

written by SUD-Rail and Solidaires | February 24, 2022

The warlike events taking place in Eastern Europe cannot leave us indifferent. All wars bring their share of innocent civilian casualties and displacement of refugees fleeing bombing and violence. It is established that the Russian invader intends to subject the entire Ukrainian population to its domination and will not tolerate any civil opposition. Lists have been drawn up to subjugate Ukrainian civil society and human and social rights activists, including trade unionists, may legitimately fear for their freedom and security. Today hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians, mainly women and children, have already had to flee their country, and are trying to find refuge in Europe. Reception capacities in neighbouring countries will quickly become saturated and France, like every European country, must open its borders and welcome these refugees in the best possible conditions.

It is therefore necessary to implement rapid, concrete and massive assistance to facilitate the transport of these people throughout Europe, to their reception centers or their families; it is an imperative of dignity and solidarity. Already, the German, Austrian, Polish, Hungarian, Slovak, Czech and Romanian railway companies offer free trains to all Ukrainian nationals, upon presentation of the passport. It is unimaginable that the SNCF does not react in turn to concretely show its help and solidarity by extending this free European to all trains on the French network. Our organizations, which demand the values of the international workers' movement, the universal struggle for human dignity and the mutual aid of workers across all borders, have therefore seized the Minister of Transport as the organizing authority of public transport in France and the President of the Management of the SNCF Public Railway Group, to grant, without delay, complete free access to the rail network and public transport for all refugees from Ukraine.

Stop Russian aggression in Ukraine! No to NATO! For a free and sovereign Ukraine for workers! On Thursday, February 24, Russia began its military operation in Ukraine after Vladimir Putin recognized the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk territories. Russian troops invaded the territory of Donbass, attacking suspicious military installations. Reports and recordings of bombings and ground attacks throughout Ukraine, including in the capital Kiev. The Putin government's offensives are aimed at weakening military resistance in order to overthrow the Zelensky government, which is subordinate to the imperialist interests of the United States, NATO and the European Union.

We cannot accept Russia's military repression and intervention against the people; it is equally unacceptable to open any space for the representatives of imperialism who seek to extend their domination with wars that guarantee profit and more power for the capitalists. The Russian military invasion has dramatic consequences in terms of population displacement, regression of workers' living conditions, regression of trade union freedoms and other democratic freedoms. War only benefits the powerful, arms dealers and capitalists. The workers, the people will suffer death,

deprivation of liberty, rape and looting, destruction. The military and economic consequences go beyond the territory of Ukraine. But contrary to what European governments, employers and bourgeoisie would have us believe, there are already many other wars in the world! They are fueled by the arms sales of those who pretend to regret this war in Ukraine. To be against war is to reject militarism, the arms race, arms sales…

We condemn and denounce Russia's aggression against Ukraine and express our full solidarity with the people under attack. For the self-determination of the peoples of Ukraine and for a Ukraine liberated from the clutches of Russia, NATO and the American and European imperialists! • Russian troops out of state Ukraine! • Dissolution of NATO. Let's get rid of American troops and bases in the countries of Western and Eastern Europe! We call on the organizations of the international trade union network of solidarity and struggles to join the anti-war mobilizations in the coming days. Support for those in Russia who reject Putin's policy because they are fighting for peace, solidarity between peoples, against nationalism and the far right. Support for people residing in Ukraine, who reject any xenophobic, exclusionary or fascist policy. Solidarity with independent trade unionists from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Poland, … whose demands and expressions we rely on the Network's website.

Letter to the Minister of Transportation and Head of Public Railway Group

Mr. Jean-Baptiste DJEBARRI Minister Delegate, in charge of Transport

Hôtel de Roquelaure 246 Boulevard St Germain 75007 Paris

Mr. Jean-Pierre FARANDOU Chairman and CEO of SNCF

2 place aux Étoiles CS 70001 93633 LA PLAINE SAINT-DENIS CEDEX Paris, February 28, 2022,

Mr. Minister, Mr. President of the public railway group. The warlike events taking place in Eastern Europe cannot leave us indifferent. All wars bring their share of innocent civilian casualties and displacement of refugees fleeing bombing and violence. It is established that the Russian invader intends to subject the entire Ukrainian population to its domination and will not tolerate any civil opposition. Lists have been drawn up to subdue Ukrainian civil society and human and social rights activists whose freedom and security trade unionists may legitimately fear. Today hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians, mainly women and children because men aged 18 to 60 have to stay to defend their country, have already fled their country to find refuge in Europe. Reception capacities in neighbouring countries will quickly become saturated and France, like every European country, must open its borders and welcome these refugees in the best possible conditions.

It is therefore necessary to implement rapid, concrete and massive aid to facilitate the transport of Ukrainians throughout Europe to their reception centres or their families, this is an imperative of dignity and solidarity. Already the German, Austrian, Polish, Hungarian, Slovak, Czech and Romanian railway companies offer free trains to all Ukrainian nationals on presentation of the passport. It is impossible to think that the SNCF would not react in turn to concretely show its help and solidarity by extending this free European to all trains and the French network. Our organizations, which demand the values of the international workers' movement, the universal struggle for human dignity and the mutual aid of workers across all borders, therefore awe ddress to you, Mr. Minister as the organizing authority of public transport in France and to you, Mr. President

of the Management of the public railway group SNCF the urgent request that the total free of charge on the rail network be granted without delay for all Ukrainian nationals.

For then Solidaires Labor Union and For the federation SUD-Rail

Mrs Murielle GUILBERT

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