



President Putin
President of Russia
President Zelenskyy
President of Ukraine

Brussels, 11 April 2022

Dear President Putin,
Dear President Zelenskyy,

In our capacities as, respectively, President of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union and President of the Conference of European Churches, we respectfully request you to declare a ceasefire in Ukraine from midnight on 17 April (00.00 hours) until midnight on 24 April (24.00 hours). This call echoes that of Pope Francis on 10 April. "Put the weapons down! Let an Easter truce start. But not to rearm and resume combat but a truce to reach peace through real negotiations open to some sacrifices for the good of the people".

In a few days from now, Christians throughout the world will be remembering the passion and death of Jesus Christ and celebrating his resurrection. These Paschal celebrations lie at the heart of the Christian faith and are the high point of the liturgical year. They are central to the lives of the faithful.

In 2022, Easter as fixed by the Gregorian calendar is on Sunday 17 April in Western Europe. In Eastern Europe, as fixed by the Julian calendar, it comes on Sunday 24 April.

We would ask for a general ceasefire in the conflict between your two countries so as to give Christians in Russia and Ukraine, sisters and brothers in Christ, the opportunity to celebrate Easter in peace and dignity. Such a truce would also be of benefit to all the citizens of both your countries, giving them a respite from the worrying uncertainty about the lives of their loved ones who are either fighting in the conflicts or affected by them.

We are appealing to Christian leaders to join with us and support this initiative!

Respectfully yours,

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