



## Solidarity for Ukraine –issue 36- White stone

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The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (iriv) has been associated since 24 February 2022 with international solidarity in favour of Ukraine attacked by Russia. The COVID pandemic has weakened democratic countries. Conspiracy theories and hate speech have exploded on social media. This new war in Europe is no longer peripheral, it has become existential for the European Union which plays its influence in the world. This newsletter is the 2nd published in 2025 and the 36th since the Russian aggression against Ukraine. White is an ambivalent color. The white flag is raised to call for a ceasefire, as a sign of surrender. It is a symbol of neutrality or peace, symbolized by a white dove and its olive branch. Russian and Soviet regimes have instrumentalized pacifism and the defenders of peace in Europe

to wage a clandestine war against the West. The KGB archives uncovered undercover operations during the Cold War; only the terms and means have changed. Ukrainians are the first victims of this offensive and insidious strategy, which has dragged them into a long sleepless night since 2014. The Scandinavians know well those nights, sometimes without sleep, when the day is without light for months. The construction of Europe is threatened. Some pioneer countries are destabilized. Faced with so much uncertainty, we can lose ground. There are also new avenues to be explored. The economic weapon is compelling. White stones were laid in January 2025 with the first payment of a European loan for Ukrainians and a Strategic European Defense Plan suggested under the Polish presidency with the support of all Europeans to prepare for peace in Ukraine and Europe. White may also be a color full of hope...

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\* logo designed by Caritas Canada in February 2022

## White color

For the historian and anthropologist Michel Pastoureau, the question of whether white is a color is modern. In ancient societies, colorless was defined by the absence of pigments, in paint and dyeing, the hue of the medium. With printing, paper became the main support for texts and images. White is then “the zero degree of color”, or its absence. After discussions with physicists, ancient wisdom has prevailed- white is a color in its own. The French lexicon has kept track of these doubts by associating white with an absence- white page (without text), white voice (without stamp), blank ball (without powder).(1)

In many countries worldwide, white refers to purity or innocence. White is also associated with cleanliness. In the Middle Ages, the fabrics touching the body had to be white for reasons of hygiene but also practical (when boiling, the textile lost its colors). Laboratories where bleach is used to disinfect and protect against microbes and bacteria are immaculate. The advertisements for laundry have taken this symbolic for a well-washed cloth. In this spirit, “dirty” money which is acquired by criminal enterprises (racket, murders, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, human beings, prostitution or procuring, modern slavery...) is laundered when it is invested in legal activities with a legal background. This is called money laundering or reputation (for well-known criminals). Treasures of financial innovation are developed by expert firms (lawyers and accountants) registered in tax havens with offshore accounts to lose western justice (for instance Dubai in United Arab Emirates revealed by the Pandora papers in 2021 but also in European countries). Misappropriation of public money (financial optimization is tax avoidance) is used by unscrupulous legal or natural persons or by proven criminals (mafia and terrorist organizations) who use the same channels (2). Confusion between legal and illegal activities is never good for democracy.

During the Hundred Years' War, in the 14th and 15th centuries, a white flag was raised for the first time to call for an end to hostility. White (end of the fight) was opposed to red (associated with blood). The Royals adopted white to distinguish themselves from their vassals or opponents with colored bulwarks - the royal banner and scarf were white (cockade of Louis XVI, horse of Henry IV...). The French Republic has taken up the color white in its flag by associating it with equality, one of the cardinal principles of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen - “Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions can only be based on common utility.” (3)

Equal opportunities are a founding principle of the European Union, a priority for its European projects and structural funds to catch up with the economic backwardness of certain less well-off regions. Financial redistribution helps to combat inequality; misappropriation of public funds and money laundering undermine democracies.

## White zone in Russia

In editing, a blank is an “Interval, a free space left in a writing”, a line spacing. (4). A white area in the telecommunications field is an area of territory that is not served by any given network, telephone or Internet (5). It should not be confused with “white space”, which are frequency bands located in unused channels between the broadcasting layers. This confusion in terms was maintained by the USSR and then by present-day Russia. They presented themselves as the defenders of peace and solidarity among peoples, equality between citizens.

The cold war pitted the West (united under the NATO banner for their security) against the Soviet world (countries of the Warsaw Pact). The two blocs were engaged in indirect wars by supporting guerrillas in countries of the South (Africa, Latin America, Asia...). The clashes were peripheral. In Europe, the USSR intervened militarily in the countries of its bloc by sending tanks to Budapest (Hungary, 1956) or Prague (Czechoslovakia, 1968) to repress any desire on the part of the Hungarians or Czechoslovakians to emancipate themselves from the Soviet yoke.

The Soviet intelligence services recruited influential agents in the West to serve their interests. A former Soviet defector, Vasily Mitrokhin, in 1992, handed over to the West copies of KGB archives detailing their methods and undercover operations (6). France has been a favorite ground for the Soviet services in political, media, academic and intelligence circles. French personalities served as relay, unwittingly or with their consent, to serve the interests of the USSR during the Cold War. Between 1974 and 1979, the KGB sent 36 officers from the “X-line”, the branch responsible for science and technology, to France. The goal was to catch up with the West in terms of technology. The Soviet civil and military industries needed highly qualified researchers from the West. Some «agents» were motivated by the desire to gain; others were sincerely convinced that the USSR was a factor of peace, in front of the United States which they considered belligerent.

The USSR’s fear was that a European Defense would develop, which would allow Europeans to ensure their security outside and in combination with NATO. Pacifists, sincere or manipulated, have campaigned within the Peace Movement for an “active neutralism”. Peace conferences and committees were funded by the USSR in the 1970s - in 1972, in Brussels, an “Assembly of social forces for security and cooperation in Europe”; in 1975, a conference denouncing “American cultural imperialism”. In 1973, French newspapers vilified the book written by a political opponent, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, “The Gulag Archipelago”, which describes the Soviet world of concentration.

Peace was used for war purposes by the USSR and then Russia. NATO and European Defense have always been "casus belli".

## White night in Ukraine

Since the Maidan Revolution in February 2014, Ukrainians have entered a long and endless night without sleep. They wanted to get closer to the European Union. The Russian reaction was violent. President Putin has mobilized his agents in the Donbass and in Crimea, invoking the excuse already used by the USSR: the West is attacking us and arming the arm of our detractors. The Westerners present in Kiev, Maidan, have been accused of being Western intelligence agents, agitators. The clashes were violent. Nothing had changed in the Soviet and then Russian methods. The peaceful intentions displayed by their neighbor are a decoy. Russia has continuously attacked them on all levels- military (hot war), and informational (on social networks by a massive misinformation campaign). Hybrid war is also a strategy of infiltrating influencers in European countries. This was previously called psychological war.

Within the EU, Russia has allies. Viktor Orban's Hungary supported Vladimir Putin during the Hungarian presidency of the European Union in 2024. Robert Fico's Slovakia followed suit, citing economic and energy reasons – the Slovak president disassociated himself from the EU when he met with Vladimir Putin. A destabilization strategy is underway in Romania with an «influencer» who created the surprise in the presidential elections of October 2024 before the manipulation was denounced by the Romanian intelligence and the election was suspended in December 2024 by the Constitutional Court. The infiltration of influence agents has been perfectly successful in Georgia with a conservative political formation, «Georgian Dream», which won the parliamentary elections before imposing an unauthoritative president, replacing a pro-European president. The opposition is being violently repressed. Georgia is moving away from the European Union despite the main protests organized in the streets by its supporters.

The greatest threat to Ukrainians would be “resignation syndrome” (7). He was identified in the families of Russian refugees who fled their country after the «special operation» launched by their president. This condition affects children of refugees whose parents are in a situation of extreme insecurity. They do not know what their future will be like. The latest opinion polls published by the Survey Institute KIIS (8) show uncertainty in Ukraine – 64% would accept an end to war with a postponement of territorial negotiations if their country joined NATO and the European Union. In January 2025, the arrival of a new US president , Donald Trump, who has criticized the massive aid provided to Ukraine without a prospect of peace questions. His speech has changed. He is no longer talking about a settlement in 24 hours but in 100 days. Another destabilizing element in Europe is the behavior of his informal diplomatic advisor, the billionaire Elon Musk, who has launched an active campaign on his social network "X" to support radical candidates, of extreme right (9). His interference is causing concern in several European countries (UK and Germany) by attacking elected leaders. His provocations are a signal to the Europeans - a balance of power is taking shape. They must keep their self control. Even though this is most frightening to see that in uncertain geopolitical times, a trade war with our Allies is brewing but we must keep a cool head.

## White stones in Europe

In times of torment and uncertainty, opening new paths is the only way out. Financial innovation is fortunately not just about money laundering. The European Commission has innovated by paying the first tranche of its exceptional macro-financial assistance (MFA) loan to Ukraine on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2025 (10). It will be repaid with the proceeds of fixed assets of the Russian State in the European Union. This loan, of a maximum amount of €18.1 billion, is the EU's contribution to the G7 Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration (ERA) initiative. The Western initiative aims to provide financial support of around €45 billion to Ukraine. This first instalment of January 2025 underlines the EU's unwavering commitment to Ukraine; with almost half the support. An initial short-term objective is to help the Ukrainians cope with Russia's large-scale war of aggression. A second, longer-term goal is to allow for macroeconomic and fiscal stability in Ukraine, to rebuild vital infrastructure, including its energy systems, and to invest in defense infrastructure. End the war and prevent it from resuming in the future.

Peace is wanted by President Zelensky. Since the summer of 2024, he has presented a plan to negotiate with Russia. He wants a guarantee that the Putin regime will not use a ceasefire to regain strength and attack again. Western countries support this peace initiative while being skeptical about Russian intentions. After the Maidan Revolution, the German chancellor and the French president could not prevent President Putin from attacking Ukraine in February 2022. Talks have been going on since December 2024 between the Americans and Russians, without involving the Europeans who are advocating a Helsinki approach to avoid another Yalta. A major asset of the Ukrainians can come from the Polish presidency of the European Union. Poland has the ambition to have the first army in Europe (11). It has strengthened its eastern defense infrastructure. For Cezary Tomczyk, Polish Secretary of State for Defense Poland must be prepared for the possibility of a conventional threat as hybrid. It's the security of NATO as a whole". The Polish government wants to break with the warmongering and nationalist rhetoric of its predecessor, the conservative PIS (12). Donald Tusk recalled Poland's unwavering support for its Ukrainian neighbor, in a pragmatic and constructive approach, in the spirit of the "Baltic defense line" launched by the Baltic states (Lithuania; Estonia, and Latvia). A promising step in a common approach to European defense.

A double white stone is laid at the beginning of 2025, both financial to prepare Ukraine's future and strategic for the constitution of a common defense policy. Europeans are more than ever on the side of Ukrainians. Our futures are closely linked in Europe but also in the world with our Allies (Democracies). *Slava Ukraini !*

- (1) Michel Pastoureau et Dominique Simonnet (2005) « Le petit livre des couleurs », Paris : Editions du Panama
- (2) Surveys carried out by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), of which Le Monde was one of the members in France with other international media. They first published the “Offshore Leaks” in 2013, then the “Panama papers”, with 108 media, in 2016. For a year, they worked on an internal database of the Panamanian firm Mossack Fonseca, one of the world’s leading offshore companies domiciliation firms, 11.4 million documents, for a total of more than 2.6 terabytes of data. Finally, the “Pandora papers” in 2021, Le Monde with 150 media partners, had access to the confidential archives of 14 firms specializing in tax havens
- (3) Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 which is part of the "bloc de constitutionnalité" of the French Constitution of 1958- <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/le-bloc-de-constitutionnalite/declaration-des-droits-de-l-homme-et-du-citoyen-de-1789>
- (4) Attested in 1351 according to the Dictionnaire « Le Petit Robert », revised and corrected edition and updated for 1990, Paris, 1989.
- (5) the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications and Postal (ARCEP),
- (6) Jacques Follorou « Le temps des taupes », série de 5 reportages, publiés entre le 31 décembre 2024 et le 6 janvier par Le Monde
- (7) a Greek film detailed this very particular mental and physical phenomenon in a film - [Aléxandros Avranás](#) ,« Quiet life », 2024, récompensé par le prix Orizzonti
- (8) polling Institute quoted by Thomas of Istria « Le moral des Ukrainiens à l’épreuve après presque trois ans de guerre », Le Monde, 7 janvier 2025
- (9) Elon Musk – des ingérences qui inquiètent l’Europe- France info, 9 janvier 2025- [https://www.francetvinfo.fr/internet/elon-musk/elon-musk-des-ingerences-qui-inquietent-l-europe\\_7003298.html](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/internet/elon-musk/elon-musk-des-ingerences-qui-inquietent-l-europe_7003298.html)
- (10) European Commission press release, January 10, 2025- [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/ip\\_25\\_223](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/ip_25_223)
- (11) Jakub Iwaniuk « Le plan de la Pologne pour devenir le rempart de l’UE », Le Monde, vendredi 3 janvier 2025
- (12) Defeated in the elections of October 2023, the PIS, conservative and nationalist party, was called to order by the European Union for its attacks on the rule of law (homophobic campaigns of some cities, women’s rights attacked with prohibitions to abort even when the life of the mother was engaged...)

Newsletter written on Friday, January 24, 2025

## Useful Contacts

To help Ukraine, we would like to share the contact with the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine (National Union of Journalists of Ukraine) - <https://nuju.org.ua/>

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**Source** : <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15542>

**Support Ukraine** – une plateforme accessible sur - <https://www.supportukraine.co/>

**Croix-Rouge Française** - [Croix-Rouge française](#) pour des dons financiers, en soutien de la Croix-Rouge ukrainienne, au Comité International de la Croix-Rouge - <https://www.croix-rouge.fr/Nos-actions/Action-internationale/Rechercher-un-programme/LA-CROIX-ROUGE-FRANCAISE-EN-UKRAINE>

**Médecins sans frontières** - [fonds d'urgence](#) dans les pays limitrophes de l'Ukraine et cherchent à faire entrer du matériel médical et du personnel. - <https://soutenir.msf.fr/faire-un-don/~mon-don>

**Secours populaire** - lance un appel aux dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine .- <https://don.secourspopulaire.fr/ukraine/~mon-don>

**Protection civile** - un appel aux dons pour financer d'autres besoins (défibrillateurs, respirateurs, groupes électrogènes, etc.) : <https://don.protection-civile.org/soutenir>

**Fondation de France** - lance un [appel à la générosité](#) pour soutenir les centaines de milliers de personnes affectées par le conflit en Pologne et en Roumanie - - <https://dons.fondationdefrance.org/solidarite-avec-les-ukrainiens/~mon-don?>

**Agence des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés** - situation d'urgence de niveau 3 pour la crise en Ukraine, le plus élevé. L'UNHCR a renforcé ses opérations en Ukraine et dans les pays voisins, our la soutenir, vous pouvez faire un don : <https://donner.unhcr.org/fr/fr-fr/urgence-ukraine? cv=1>

**Unicef** - un besoin urgent de financement pour répondre aux besoins essentiels des enfants Pour faire un don sur le site Unicef.fr - <https://don.unicef.fr/b/mon-don?cid=322& cv=1>

**ONG Care International** - un [formulaire en ligne de dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine](#) pour apporter une aide d'urgence aux populations et aux réfugiés - .- [https://soutenir.carefrance.org/mon-don/~mon-don?ns\\_ira\\_cr\\_arg=IyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyPkRj6HFA1Y69SN8wBpGdbU49oyB0t9PJwOohrrNCWZ1E1xvYyuCP14dJQ2nrY0C9CFXInHRxueOqPBpQ7tkkn%2F&private\\_server\\_time=1672227862538&cid=13& cv=1](https://soutenir.carefrance.org/mon-don/~mon-don?ns_ira_cr_arg=IyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyPkRj6HFA1Y69SN8wBpGdbU49oyB0t9PJwOohrrNCWZ1E1xvYyuCP14dJQ2nrY0C9CFXInHRxueOqPBpQ7tkkn%2F&private_server_time=1672227862538&cid=13& cv=1)

**L'ONG française ACTED** organise des convois humanitaires pour l'Ukraine

**association Solidarités International** – une [collecte des fonds](#) pour envoyer des convois de vivres et biens de première nécessité, distribuer de l'eau et des repas aux réfugiés - <https://dons.solidarites.org/b/mon-don?cid=880& cv=1>

**Plan International**, en Pologne, Roumanie et Moldavie, pour apporter aide matérielle et psychosociale aux jeunes ukrainiens et à leur famille, et [sollicite des dons](https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don) pour ce faire.- <https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don>

**L'Aide médicale et caritative France-Ukraine** - envoi de convois d'aide humanitaire, des soins aux blessés, des échanges de savoir-faire médical, une aide psychologique et organise des colonies de vacances pour les enfants orphelins - HelloAsso - <https://www.helloasso.com/associations/aide%20medicale%20caritative%20france%20ukraine/collectes/aider-ukraine-amurgence-help-ukraine/don>

**Le Comité d'aide médicale Ukraine** - réfugiés en transit dans l'ouest du pays, et collecte fonds, médicaments et équipements pour l'hébergement et les soins via ses partenaires français, l'association SAFE et l'organisation FONDEMOS. - <http://www.cam-z.org/en/news/121/>

**JeVeuxAider.gouv.fr** est la plateforme publique du bénévolat, - une page dédiée Mobilisons-nous pour l'Ukraine .- <https://www.jeveuxaider.gouv.fr/engagement/benevolat-ukraine/>

**Les Banques alimentaires** - une aide d'urgence à apporter aux frontières de l'Ukraine, dans les pays frontaliers accueillant des réfugiés - <https://www.banquealimentaire.org/urgence-ukraine>

**La Protection Civile et l'Association des maires de France** ont établi une [liste](#) (lits de camps, sacs de couchage, lingettes, conserves, pansements hémostatiques, solutions antiseptiques ...).

**L'Association des maires de France** a dressé les [lieux de collecte](#) à travers toute la France. Les Maires de France appellent à la [solidarité avec l'Ukraine](#) . De nombreuses villes de France organisent des collectes de produits de première nécessité - <https://www.amf.asso.fr/documents-les-maires-france-appellent-la-solidarite-avec-lukraine/41122>

**La plateforme officielle** « *Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine* » lancée le 8 mars 2022 par le gouvernement pour accompagner les Français souhaitant héberger chez eux des Ukrainiens réfugiés et accueillis en France.- <https://parrainage.refugies.info/>

Les associations, fondations, entreprises et collectivités territoriales peuvent utiliser ce [formulaire en ligne](#) pour renseigner leur capacité d'hébergement.- <https://www.demarches-simplifiees.fr/commencer/hebergement-personne-morale-ukraine>

**Bibliothèque sans frontière (BSF)** - Depuis le début de l'offensive russe en Ukraine, BSF se mobilise et déploie, partout en Europe, des solutions d'urgence pour l'accueil et l'intégration des populations réfugiées. « Bonjour France » est une application pour smartphone innovante et totalement gratuite, qui propose un apprentissage accéléré du français depuis l'ukrainien, disponible depuis le 19 octobre 2022.

<https://www.bibliosansfrontieres.org/2022/10/14/bsf-lance-bonjour-france-une-application-innovante-dapprentissage-du-francais-pour-les-refugies-ukrainiens/>

La mission catholique de l'Eglise polonaise en France suggère également le lien suivant : <https://mission-catholique-polonaise.pl/polska-we-francji/pere-brzys-la-mcp-lance-une-initiative-nationale-pour-aider-lukraine/> - **Source** : conférence des évêques de France