ICN says protection and safety of nurses and all health workers in Ukraine is paramount

Geneva, Switzerland, 25 February 2022 - The International Council of Nurses (ICN) and its more than 130 members across the world stand in solidarity with the people, nurses and all healthcare workers caught up in the conflict in Ukraine. ICN says the protection and safety of nurses and all health workers is paramount. Any attack or targeting of health workers or health facilities goes against the protection of health workers enshrined in international regulations and the Geneva Convention and is an affront against humanity.

ICN is in contact with our nursing colleagues in the region and making every effort to connect with nurses in Ukraine to offer support and solidarity, and share their messages with the world.

ICN President Pamela Cipriano said, "We are extremely concerned about the situation in Ukraine and our hearts go out to all the people caught up in the conflict, including our nurses and all health workers who once again find themselves on the frontlines of another humanitarian crisis.

'The protection and safety of our nurses and health systems are paramount and enshrined in international law. We call on all parties involved in the conflict and the international community to do everything in their power to protect the safety of our nurses who often put themselves in mortal danger to care for others. Access to healthcare and the delivery of humanitarian assistance must remain a priority for all concerned as we see cities under attack and tens of thousands of people being displaced."

ICN CEO Howard Catton added, "We are deeply concerned about the situation on the ground in Ukraine and have reached out to our nursing colleagues in the country in what are hugely chaotic and frightening circumstances. We will continue to try to connect with them and get their messages out to the world.

'Nurses and healthcare workers are a force for healing and reconciliation. The principles of the impartiality of healthcare and medical and nursing neutrality are far stronger than any of the differences between people. Any attack on a hospital or healthcare facility not only goes against international law it is an affront against humanity. Let's remember that the principles of modern nursing were born in the Crimea, during the Crimean War over 150 years ago. When we protect the work and impartiality of nurses and all healthcare workers we maintain our humanity which continues to shine in the nursing community across the world today. We have received many messages of support from our NNAs for our colleagues in Ukraine, not least and poignantly from the Russian Nurses Association."

National Nurses Associations have sent messages of support for their colleagues in Ukraine, including the Russian Nurses Association.

The President of the Russian Nurses Association, Valentina Sarkisova has shared this message with ICN:

"Russian Nurses Association with all nurses of the World are extremely concerned for their neighbouring closest colleagues. Politics is far from nursing, and armed conflicts are opposite to the main designation of our profession. There are no other professions that cherish life and health as much as nurses. Together with the whole world, we hope for a rapid resolution of all conflicts and a return to a normal and peaceful life. We do believe that no political confrontation can affect the mission of nursing. With all the passion we wish no more lives be lost, and all nurses be back to their peaceful duties in safe and secure environment."

* * *

Note to Editors

The **International Council of Nurses** (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.

For more information please contact Gyorgy Madarasz, Press Officer at madarasz@icn.ch

Tel: +41 22 908 01 16

www.icn.ch