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**STATEMENT ON UKRAINE**

*(For immediate release, February 20, 2025)*

The war in Ukraine began with Russia's unprovoked and catastrophic invasion on the morning of February 24, 2022. The symbolic significance of this date, Estonia's Independence Day commemorating liberation and freedom from Russia, is alarmingly clear to Estonian-Americans. Estonians endured almost 50 years of Soviet occupation and understand too well what it means to be abandoned by allies and occupied by Russia.

The Estonian American National Council, a nationally elected organization representing the interests of Estonian-Americans, cares deeply for Ukraine and supports the goal of attaining a just and lasting peace. Estonian Americans support the goal of a strong America that leads on the world stage by working with and respecting long-standing allies.

The United States must stand with Europe and NATO in supporting Ukraine and ensuring that Russia cannot threaten its neighbors in the future. A just peace can only be achieved through strength, adherence to international norms, the rule of law, and the involvement of Ukraine and our European allies in any negotiations. Nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine. Increasing support and security guarantees for Ukraine, and increasing pressure and sanctions on Russia, are necessary actions for ending this war unjustly started by Russia.

Why should Americans care? Because the US itself benefits from a secure and stable world. Any agreement giving Russia what it wants will only fuel further regional instability, resulting in few winners and many losers, among them America's trusted, dependable allies. "If Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania were not part of NATO, Putin would have already invaded them," said Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE). "Putin denies their sovereignty as it is. These countries want democracy, independence, free markets and the rule of law. NATO serves a great purpose and remains relevant."

The cards are on the table, and it is increasingly clear how easy it is to strike a deal when you give away the store. Concerned constituents are asked to contact their elected representatives immediately as events are moving quickly, asking them to convince their colleagues in Congress that appeasing an aggressor by abandoning an ally will not work. This misguided Russia-positive foreign policy must not be carried out. We do not want to see history repeating itself, with Estonia, the Baltics, and Ukraine at risk of losing their independence once again amidst a world in turmoil.

More info and resources at [www.estosite.org](http://www.estosite.org).

**Contact:** [erku@estosite.org](mailto:erku@estosite.org)