

A Message Regarding Ukraine

March 14, 2022

Russia's invasion of Ukraine caused us great indignation and deep sorrow. An immediate ceasefire and a peaceful resolution must be called for urgently.

Our university has produced teachers for over 140 years. Their calling is to look after children's growth with sympathetic interest, setting children's happiness as a primary goal. Who could ever deny that a world in which children enjoy happiness is the best place for everyone?

Children always suffer greatly in war. The weak are war victims in all ages. It is unpardonable savagery that thousands of Ukrainian civilians have been killed in this conflict, including many innocent children. It has been reported that schools and a children's hospital were bombarded. Also, young soldiers, Ukrainian and Russian, who are about the same age as our students, have lost their lives in this war that they did not want to fight.

The war is not somewhere remote from us. Kyoto and Kyiv, ancient capitals with glorious cultural heritage, have cultivated friendship as sister cities for fifty years. Our university has welcomed students from Ukraine. Two Ukrainian students, who have begun studying online in our curriculum and are planning to visit Kyoto to attend on-campus classes, remain in war-torn Ukraine. Apprehension concerning their safety is mounting.

To our Ukrainian friends who have studied at our university and those who wish to in the future, we are seriously concerned that you are left in confusion and peril. Do not give up hope. We are always with you.

It is unacceptable that guiltless people in Ukraine have their lives threatened. Here we strongly appeal to the international community to act to terminate this military aggression and realize peace in Ukraine without delay.

Kojin OTA
President, Kyoto University of Education