

FBU conference resolution 65 and Ukraine Solidarity Campaign

We encourage FBU conference to vote in support of Staffordshire brigade's resolution on solidarity with Ukraine and its labour movement and affiliation to [Ukraine Solidarity Campaign](#) (reso 65 – see below); and FBU organisations and activists to get involved in the campaign and in practical solidarity with firefighters and fire and rescue workers in Ukraine. If you'd like more information, or have any questions, please feel free to get in touch: info@ukrainesolidaritycampaign.org

See also:

- Latest stage of financial appeal supporting firefighters / rescue workers in Ukraine [here](#)
- Our website: ukrainesolidaritycampaign.org
- Our social media: twitter.com/ukrainesol // facebook.com/ukrainiansocialistsolidarity // instagram.com/ukraine_solidarity_campaign // web-cdn.bsky.app/profile/ukrainesol.bsky.social

What are the basic issues in Ukraine?

Ukraine is fighting a just defensive struggle – an anti-imperialist struggle – against invasion, slaughter and occupation by the vastly more powerful Russian state, which in different forms was for centuries and until recently its colonial oppressor. Meanwhile firefighters and rescue workers in Ukraine are continuing their life-saving work in the incredibly difficult and dangerous conditions created by the invasion, constant bombardment, etc. The international labour movement should support Ukraine's struggle to defend itself and end the occupation, while most actively supporting Ukraine's labour movement, which is also part of that resistance.

What is Ukraine Solidarity Campaign?

USC (along with our [Scottish sister campaign](#)) is the UK-based trade union and labour movement campaign in support of Ukraine and its labour movement. We promote UK labour movement protest against Russia's war and in support of Ukraine's right to self-determination; help build direct links between UK and Ukrainian trade unions; and organise practical aid through fundraising, collections and regular solidarity delegations. Most recently that has included collecting and delivering tens of thousands of pounds worth of vehicles, equipment and PPE for the 10th Rescue Squad in Donetsk, near the front line, members of mining union NGPU (see link above).

When was USC set up?

In 2014, at the time of Russia's initial military intervention in eastern Ukraine. Since 2022 we have significantly expanded our activity.

Who supports the campaign?

We have [affiliation](#) from six national UK unions – UNISON, PCS, ASLEF, UCU, GMB and NUM – as well as many branches, regions, etc. That now includes FBU Region 7. Our work has also been recognised by TUC Congress (as part of the motion in support of Ukraine passed overwhelmingly

in September 2023), and the TUC has supported and promoted several demonstrations and aid appeals we have organised. This in addition to many other unions that have taken stands in support of Ukraine – most recently NEU conference, in April 2025.

We work closely with a number of MPs, mainly on the left of the Labour Party ([John McDonnell](#) was one of the campaign's founders), but also in other progressive parties. We also recently established [individual membership](#), and now have over 300 members.

Who does USC work with in Ukraine?

We work closely with both union federations, KVPU (Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine) and FPU (Federation of Unions of Ukraine); individual unions within them; independent unions; groups of workers; left-wing and left-leaning parties and organisations of various kinds; and other progressive social organisations (feminist, environmental, etc). We support them in their resistance to the Russian invasion and occupation, but also the neoliberal and anti-worker policies of the Ukrainian government. We also work with a variety of progressive Ukrainian organisations and groups in the UK.

Does USC support the Zelensky government?

No. While there are many Russia-promoted myths about the Ukrainian government, it is certainly capitalist, neoliberal and anti-union. As explained above, we work with trade unionists, socialists, etc, in Ukraine who are fighting Zelensky et al's policies, while also fighting to defeat the Russian invasion.

Do you support the Russian anti-war movement?

Our focus is on support for Ukraine, but we do highlight anti-war protests and activism in Russia and particular the struggle of brave Russian internationalists who support Ukraine.

What's the USC position on NATO?

USC, like the broader labour movement, embraces diverse perspectives. As a campaign, we do not support NATO. We do advocate for Ukrainians to receive the aid they need, but to rely on their own efforts and the global labour movement, not on the big powers

We oppose all imperialisms. We say Neither Washington nor Moscow, but a Free, Democratic, and United Ukraine. We have appealed for the labour movement to rally Europe in providing the necessary support to ensure Ukraine can negotiate freely, without coercion from Trump or Putin.

Then what's USC's position on arms for Ukraine?

Our [constitution](#), adopted in September 2024, affirms our support for Ukrainians' right to resist occupation and annexation, including their right to obtain arms from wherever necessary to liberate the country.

History shows oppressed peoples receiving arms from self-interested powers. A few of many examples: Imperial Germany aided Irish rebels against Britain; in World War Two anti-fascist resistance movements received aid from big powers; Vietnam was armed by the USSR and China against US aggression; and India's support was crucial for Bangladesh's independence.

Backing Ukraine's access to weapons does not mean endorsing the policies of those supplying them. Disarming Ukraine would not lead to sustainable peace but rather increased oppression and a longer war.

While the FBU may prioritise practical solidarity with Ukraine's fire and rescue workers – an effort USC is keen to assist with – it is important to recognise why Ukraine's labour movement is also engaged in the country's defence. Occupation is not peace!

Why advocate higher military spending when our public services are being starved?

That way of posing it actually plays into the hands of the right. It's not the case there is a lack of money or resources in society; and we should not shade towards a nationalist stance of counterposing funding public services to foreign aid. If the government wanted it could fund everything by measures taxing and taking wealth from the rich and big business – which is exactly what the labour movement should fight for.

But in addition to this, it is *not* the case military spending is being increased in order to support Ukraine. Military aid to Ukraine is a very small percentage of UK military spending. They are two separate issues: which is why many unions that oppose higher military spending also vocally support Ukraine. The Starmer government is in fact far more enthusiastic about increasing military spending than it is about providing the support necessary for Ukraine to defeat the Russian invasion.

--

Resolution 65

Ukraine Solidarity

Conference sends solidarity to Ukraine's firefighters and emergency service workers, working in incredibly difficult and dangerous conditions.

Conference condemns Russia's murderous war on Ukraine and supports Ukraine's right to self-determination and self-defence, and condemns the Trump regime's attempts to force Ukraine to capitulate to Russia's demands.

Conference believes that this is not about supporting the big powers that have, for their own reasons, provided aid to help Ukraine defend itself, aid that Trump and co are now seeking to undermine. It is about supporting, for our own democratic working class reasons, a people resisting invasion and occupation.

Conference welcomes recent work to strengthen our practical solidarity with Ukrainian fire and rescue workers, including through national, regional and local Fire Brigades Union support for the UK labour movement appeal launched by the Ukraine Solidarity Campaign to provide vehicles, equipment and PPE for the 10th Rescue Squad, in Donetsk region.

Conference supports Ukraine's trade unions, left organisations and social movements, resisting the invasion while fighting the Ukrainian government's neoliberal policies.

Conference further supports their struggles to defend workers' rights, for a just and democratic reconstruction, and for cancellation of Ukraine's foreign debt.

The UK Tory government actively promoted attacks on workers' and trade union rights in Ukraine. The Labour government should be promoting workers' rights and a just reconstruction.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to strengthen links with Ukraine's trade union movement, firefighters, fire and rescue workers and emergency service workers within it, to organise political and practical solidarity. As part of this Conference agrees to affiliate to the Ukraine Solidarity Campaign.

Staffordshire

Amendment:

5th paragraph, delete 'left' replace with 'left-leaning'

Hereford & Worcester