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PRESS RELEASE

**THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES
UNDER THE PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE ATTEMPTS TO MARGINALIZE
THE UKRAINIAN WORLD CONGRESS**

On the official web site of the National Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Ukraine, the main scientific research agency which prepares analytical forecasts to guide the activity of the President of Ukraine, a recommendation is made to describe the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC), not as an international coordinating body representing the interests of the Ukrainian diaspora, but rather, [unofficial translation] “*at best, as a representative of only a specific segment, or more accurately, certain circles of the Ukrainian diaspora.*”

In an analysis entitled [unofficial translation] “*The technology of securing Ukraine’s informational competitiveness in today’s world: conclusions for Ukraine,*” it is stated that: [unofficial translation] “*In the current situation, the UWC ought to be described, at best, as a representative of only a specific segment, or more accurately, certain circles of the Ukrainian diaspora. From a strategic perspective, most effective is the policy of expanding the Ukrainian state’s influence on Ukrainian communities through existing associations and organizations. The leader in furthering this policy has traditionally been the Ukrainian World Coordinating Council (Ukrayins’ka Vsesvitnya Koordinatsiyna Rada - UVKR).*”

With respect to the so-called “*current situation,*” the following explanation is given:

[unofficial translation] *Since the beginning of the current year the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC), which positions itself as the “highest community coordinating body representing all organized Ukrainians who emigrated to or have been born in the diaspora” [...], chaired by its President Eugene Czolij, systematically makes public statements (including during a meeting of the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee), the contents of which clearly discredit the activities of the current Ukrainian government authorities in the eyes of the European and international communities. Specifically, the following public statements were made:*

[...] It is widely recognized that Ukraine’s opposition politicians have been targeted and are being persecuted by Ukraine’s current leadership; [...] this persecution persists; [...] It has been widely reported that Ukraine’s independent media outlets and universities have been targeted by Ukrainian state authorities [...];

[...] the destructive course of Ukrainian government bodies on Ukrainian language education in the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts [...];

The Ukrainian World Congress calls upon the international community [...] to denounce the deplorable and undemocratic pressure exerted on political opponents in Ukraine (from an appeal to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay, OSCE Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Janez Lenarcic, Chair of the European Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights Heidi Hautala, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Thomas Hammarberg) [...].

[...] *The main issue is that the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC) has, throughout the current year, issued a series of official statements and appeals to high ranking officials of the UN, EU and OSCE, the content of which clearly overstepped the bounds of constructive criticism with respect to the activities of the current Ukrainian government authorities, clearly discrediting them in the eyes of the European and international communities [...].*

The entire analysis is available at: <http://www.niss.gov.ua/articles/466/> .

“The Ukrainian World Congress calls upon Ukrainian government authorities to heed its appeals which are consistent with the position of the international community. Instead of attempting to marginalize the Ukrainian World Congress, which has represented the interests of the multi-million Ukrainian diaspora for 45 years, Ukrainian government authorities should change their current course and work actively toward making Ukraine a truly democratic European State”, asserted Ukrainian World Congress President Eugene Czolij.

The Ukrainian World Congress is an international coordinating body for Ukrainian communities in the diaspora representing the interests of over twenty (20) million Ukrainians. The Ukrainian World Congress has member organizations in thirty-two (32) countries and ties with Ukrainians in thirteen (13) additional countries. Founded in 1967 as a non-profit corporation, the Ukrainian World Congress was recognized in 2003 as a non-governmental organization (NGO) by the United Nations Economic and Social Council with special consultative status.

UKRAINIAN WORLD CONGRESS

145 Evans Ave., Suite 207

Toronto, ON

M8Z 5X8 Canada

Tel. (416) 323-3020

Fax (416) 323-3250

e-mail: congress@look.ca

website: www.ukrainianworldcongress.org