



*Ukrainian Congress Committee of America Illinois Division*

*Український Конгресовий Комітет Америки - Відділ Ілліной*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\***

**U.S. SENATOR DICK DURBIN WILL HOLD A BRIEFING  
AT CHICAGO'S UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY ON POLITICAL UPHEAVAL  
AND REGIONAL SECURITY ISSUES  
FOLLOWING HIS TRIP TO UKRAINE**

**Sunday, March 16 at 1:30 PM  
Ukrainian Cultural Center  
2247 W. Chicago Ave.  
Chicago, Illinois**

The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America – Illinois Division will host U.S. Senator Dick Durbin in an important briefing on the current critical situation in Ukraine on Sunday, March 16 at the Ukrainian Cultural Center. Senator Durbin will be returning Sunday morning from leading a Congressional Delegation to Ukraine. The delegation, led by Senator Durbin and Senator John McCain (R-AZ), also includes Senators Murphy (D-CT), Flake (R-AZ), Whitehouse (D-RI), Barrasso (R-WY), Hoeven (R-ND) and Johnson (R-WI).

Senator Durbin will speak to the Ukrainian-American community of the Chicagoland area at a briefing on the response of the United States to the developing situation in Ukraine that has a direct impact on American and European security interests.

While in Ukraine, Senator Durbin's agenda includes meeting with the interim Ukrainian government, including Acting President Oleksandr Turchynov, Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Defense Minister Tenyukh, and other senior cabinet officials to discuss Ukraine's current political situation and regional security issues following the Russian occupation of Ukrainian territory in Crimea. He is also meeting with Ukrainian political party leaders, democracy activists, civil society groups, and U.S. embassy officials.

This week, a Durbin-authored bipartisan resolution supporting the Ukrainian democracy movement and condemning the Russian occupation of Crimea unanimously passed the Senate. Durbin has been a leading supporter of democracy movements in Ukraine. He visited the country in 2012 to support opposition groups and urge the release of former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

In addition to being the second-highest ranking member of the United States Senate, Durbin sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and is the Chairman of the Senate's Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. He is also a member of the Subcommittee on European Affairs which has jurisdiction over matters concerning the continent of Europe, including the Caucasus. Its responsibilities include the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The briefing and meeting with the community will be open to the media and Senator Durbin will hold a media-availability at its conclusion.

In violation of the Charter of the United Nations obliging each state to refrain from the use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of any member state, Russia invaded Ukraine in Crimea and several of its eastern cities. Furthermore, it has sent groups of Russian citizens to provoke confrontations in Ukraine that would provide an pretext to use direct military intervention.

On December 5, 1994, the United States, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the United Kingdom signed the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances to Ukraine, whereby Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons, and the signatories agreed to respect and defend Ukraine's territorial integrity and independence upon attack.

The Ukrainian-American community supports their brethren at this critical time. Many fear for the safety of their family members in Ukraine at this time of Russian military aggression on Ukrainian territory.

The community calls on all parties to seek a peaceful diplomatic resolution to the conflict and to adhere to international treaties that respect Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity. It supports the rights of the people of Ukraine of all ethnic or religious backgrounds, and denounces the Russian illegal military occupation of Crimea, and the upcoming "Russian referendum" in Crimea staged under military duress that will be used to provide Russia a pretext for a military takeover.

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**About UCCA IL:** Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) Illinois Division was established in 1974 to unite the Ukrainian community and represent its interests in Chicago and throughout the state while maintaining contact with its ancestral homeland. UCCA conducts initiatives that underscore and preserve the community's Ukrainian traditions while fulfilling its American civic responsibilities and strengthening ties between the United States and Ukraine. It supports cultural, educational, and humanitarian activities that emphasize the Ukrainian American heritage and provide support for Ukraine's newly developing democracy.