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TO: NCSJ Leadership and Interested Parties

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UKRAINE UPDATE #24

We want to update you on two major developments about Ukraine from today: new U.S./EU sanctions on Russia, and the shooting of the mayor of Kharkiv (who is Jewish).

The White House announced a new round of sanctions against Russia today, in response to "Russia's continued illegal intervention in Ukraine and provocative acts that undermine Ukraine's democracy and threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity."

The sanctions target seven Russian government officials, including CEO of state-owned oil company Rosneft Igor Sechin, and 17 companies with close ties to Russian government. The U.S. also restricted technology exports that might contribute to Russia's military capabilities.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said that Russia will respond to the sanctions, promising that "this response will have a painful effect on Washington."

The EU also announced visa bans and asset freezes against 15 more Russian officials, and said it may add more names on Wednesday.

In Eastern Ukraine, unrest continues. Gennady Kernes, the Jewish mayor of Kharkiv has been shot by an unidentified gunman and is now in critical condition. A leading figure in the Party of Regions, the he has been accused by the interim government in Kyiv of inciting separatism. However, most recently Mr. Kernes has spoken in support of Ukraine's territorial integrity.

NCSJ has contacted the Kharkiv Jewish community. Community leaders there said that prior to the assassination attempt on the mayor, the situation in Kharkiv had been more stable, and that pro-Russian demonstrations have been small. A contributing factor to this was the mayor's support for Ukraine's territorial integrity. The Kharkiv Jewish community and other

city residents are now more concerned about potential provocations and destabilization.

The police are investigating the attack, but no suspect has been identified yet.

NCSJ also spoke today with Jewish community of Slavyansk representatives. While the city continues to be a stronghold of pro-Russian militants, the community reported more stability. Life in the city is back to normal, they said, and access to food and other necessities hasn't been affected. However, concerns about potential intensification of unrest in the city and the region remain.

An anti-Semitic television channel that had been broadcasting from Slavyansk is now off the air, after Slavyansk city residents expressed forceful criticism. The Jewish community is not being targeted.

The Donetsk Jewish community reported a stable situation in the city. Opposition to pro-Russian separatists is peaceful; the priority is to avoid violence and have fair and free presidential elections. There are no new reports about the anti-Semitic leaflet incident.

In Konstantinovka, in the Donetsk region, Ukrainian news sources are reporting that a group of 30 pro-Russian gunmen have seized a police station.

In Western Ukraine, the situation is stable. NCSJ spoke today with Jewish community leadership in Lviv. The Jewish community feels safe and community programs are being held as scheduled.

As always, NCSJ will continue to monitor the situation throughout Ukraine, and provide you with timely and critical updates.

About NCSJ

NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States & Eurasia, founded in 1971, represents the organized American Jewish community in monitoring and advocating on behalf of the estimated 1.5 million Jews living in the 15 successor states of the former Soviet Union.

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