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**TO: NCSJ Leadership and Interested Parties**

**FROM: Stephen M. Greenberg, Chairman;  
Alexander Smukler, NCSJ President;  
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**UKRAINE UPDATE #21**

On April 7, numerous Jewish monuments and institutions, historical buildings, and a Jewish cemetery were desecrated with swastikas and other anti-Semitic graffiti in Odessa, Ukraine. The graffiti also included symbols of the Right Sector nationalist party.

Chief Rabbi of Odessa and Southern Ukraine Avraham Wolf condemned these acts of vandalism, and stated "this was the provocation of the forces that arrived to Ukraine from outside aiming at creating disturbances in the city."

NCSJ spoke with the Jewish community leadership of Odessa, who said the police have started an investigation and that cleanup efforts are underway. They added that a representative of the Right Sector arrived in Odessa on April 8, met with Rabbi Wolf, and assured the Jewish community that the Right Sector is not responsible for the acts of vandalism. The Right Sector also offered assistance in providing security for Jewish sites.

Odessa community leadership also expressed their concern about the destabilizing role of Russia and pro-Russian groups in the city. They reported that a large pro-Russian rally is taking place today in the center of the city.

The community representatives characterized the pro-Russian groups as very aggressive. While participants in pro-Russian demonstrations do include older residents of Odessa, most active instigators of protests appear to be outsiders. In contrast, pro-Ukrainian demonstrations are attended by young people and educated professionals, and are mostly peaceful, they said.

The Jewish community representatives said that Odessa is not a political city, and that local authorities are doing what they can to prevent disturbances.

Since the beginning of the crisis, the Jewish community of Odessa has implemented

additional security measures, including video surveillance. Passover preparations are proceeding as scheduled, and the community plans to hold fourteen Seders across the city.

NCSJ will continue to monitor the situation and provide you with timely and critical updates.

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### 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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