



The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

20 May 2022

RE: Call for Russian ships to be blocked from entering Australian ports

Dear Minister,

As you are aware, Russia continues to escalate its brutal attack on Ukraine, indiscriminately shelling and bombing Ukrainian cities. Ukrainian ports have been closed. Odesa is being bombed, Kherson has been occupied, Mariupol, the strategic port city of Ukraine, has been completely destroyed by the Russian army. Since the beginning of the war, Russia has scaled back some of its military ambition because of strong Ukrainian defence, but the war continues.

It is evident that the sanctions imposed on Russia are not working as effectively and promptly as necessary. We are grateful for Australian assistance to Ukraine. But Australia may, and must, take further steps to curtail Russia's revenue, deprive them of strategic advantage, and prevent President Vladimir Putin's ability to finance this unjustified war against Ukraine.

Last year, Australia imported goods from Russia worth \$453.3m AUD, from which 96% arrived by sea. Australia mainly imports manufactured goods (cork and wood manufacturers and iron and steel), fertilisers and inorganic chemicals, as well as petroleum products.

The companies that are selling these goods in Russia are owned either by the government itself, or by the oligarchs, who amassed their wealth as a result of their personal connections to the Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Even though the impact of banning the import of these goods into Australia may not seem that significant in relation to the scale of the Russian economy, it will nevertheless have a direct impact on funding the Russian war in Ukraine.

Other governments, such as the **United Kingdom, Gibraltar, Germany, Canada, Belgium, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain, France, Italy, Georgia** have already restricted Russian vessels from entering their ports. Other European countries indicated they will impose the restrictions, following the decision adopted by the Council of the EU.

Dock workers in the Netherlands, Sweden, American States of Virginia and New York in the US have organised ad-hoc measures and industrial actions asking their governments to refuse entry to Russian ships.

Swedish Dockworker Union's national chairman Martin Berg expressed the Union's position as follows:

'Business as usual' is no longer possible. We have waited for effective sanctions from the state or the EU blocking Swedish ports for Russian interests at this point, but time has run out. Our members want to do what little we can to contribute to an end to the Russian invasion and a reopening of Ukrainian ports.'

Docking of Russian vessels and transporting goods to and from Russia is of economic and strategic significance to Russia. For the purposes of protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and pursuant to the provisions of the *Autonomous Sanctions Regulations 2011* made under the *Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011*, and the *Autonomous Sanctions Amendment (Russia) 2022*, the Minister of Foreign Affairs may by legislative instrument sanction Russian vessels.



AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF UKRAINIAN ORGANISATIONS
СОЮЗ УКРАЇНСЬКИХ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙ АВСТРАЛІЇ

Representing 22 Peak Ukrainian Organisations in Australia
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Accordingly, we ask you, to:

Extend sanctions to ban Russian ships from docking in Australia, and to refuse to provide access to Australian ports, or any services, supplies or facilities provided by or from its ports, to any ship which there is reason to believe is:

- owned, controlled, chartered or operated by any person connected with Russia;
- owned, controlled, chartered or operated by Designated Persons;
- registered in Russia; or
- carrying any load or cargo which is in the ownership of or destined to be delivered to any persons connected with Russia or Designated Persons.

We look forward to discussing our request at your earliest opportunity. Our contact details are – Kateryna Argyrou 04 2320 4988, Stefan Romaniw 0419 531 255.

Yours faithfully,

Kateryna Argyrou
Co-Chair

Stefan Romaniw
Co-Chair