

# ON THE 33rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE DAY OF UKRAINE

*From the speech of the President of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine at the meeting of the Presidium of NAES of Ukraine, dedicated to the 33rd anniversary of the Independence of Ukraine on August 22, 2024*

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## *Dear Researchers and Educators!*

Ukraine is 33 years old! At this age, Jesus Christ sacrificed himself for the sake of people. At the same age, Ukraine is making unheard-of sacrifices for its own and other nations' salvation, for the preservation of European civilisation and its values, for free development and human freedom.

Ukraine's 33-year journey has not been easy. At the beginning, Ukrainian society had not yet come to a consensus on what kind of state and how it should grow. And so it was torn apart at every election and in the period between them. Through populism, or even outright deception or self-deception, it was pushed off the righteous path and onto the destructive sidelines of a civilisation that that the history of the past had already denied.

In addition, the former metropolis, the Russian Federation, pro-

vided all possible support for this "direction of development" of Ukraine, and often its practical implementation through unceremonious interference in internal affairs. Its deceptive ideas and projects, like the "russian world", pursued one goal — to keep Ukraine in the imperial chain, which would open the way to preserving the empire and reintegrating other post-Soviet states. This would have meant the enslavement of a person as an individual in an outdated semi-serfdom system of social relations. Ultimately, this would slow down human progress, not only on the "sixth part" of the planet but also more widely, given the appetites and aggressiveness of the carrier of regression.

This is what Ukrainian soldiers defend and die for! This is what the Ukrainian people suffer and endure all kinds of misery and human grief for!

We are certainly grateful to the world for its ever-growing support. Without this support, it would be extremely difficult for us. But at the same time, I have to admit that not only the world as a whole, but even the countries of the North Atlantic Alliance have not yet fully realised the threats posed by russian aggression. Hence, the indecision, lethargy and unjustified half-heartedness in helping Ukraine, and in fact, in their self-defence.

Unfortunately, strengthening 'deterrence and defence' as the main principle of NATO does not always work, and defence is often seen as avoiding a clash with Russia, but this does not mean 'defending' or 'winning', and is perceived by many as a hidden surrender.

Our mission is to convince the world of the need for a joint response to the enemy. I would like to emphasise that we are talking not only about Ukraine but also about civilisation, at least the European one.

### ***Dear Researchers and Educators!***

On behalf of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine and personally, I sincerely congratulate everyone on the Independence Day of Ukraine!

Ukraine's independence today, in the context of Russia's large-scale aggression, means much more than Ukraine's statehood. It means the right to self-determination and freedom of expression of the will of the Ukrainian nation. It means protection of the right to exist as a nation with a European identity, and ultimately the right to be called Ukrainians.

The heroic resistance to the enemy shows that we are a nation of victorious warriors, intellectuals-inventors, creative figures of education and science, culture and arts, and hard workers.

I sincerely wish all of you steadfastness in the struggle for Ukraine's independence, unity in our aspirations and actions, strong faith and indomitable spirit of true Ukrainians!

### ***Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the heroes!***

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