



Warsaw Statement 2022

The war in Ukraine has brought the attention of the world to Central and Eastern Europe. The biggest and most brutal armed conflict on the continent in three decades, the war remains a major threat to global peace.

Given the scale of the conflict, it is only natural to see political leaders from around the world engage in the situation. We see efforts made to adjust national policies and introduce systemic solutions to improve the lives of war refugees. These efforts are undoubtedly essential in long-term management strategies.

However, the first response to the humanitarian crisis remains one of the crucial points in any war-related emergency reaction plan. In the case of the unjustified and cruel aggression of Russia on Ukraine, the essential needs of those who fled Ukraine have been mostly addressed by non-governmental organisations of the region. In most countries, it was us who became responsible for providing shelter, clothing, food, and essential utilities. Thanks to the international support the region received so far, we managed to get through the first period of the crisis. The war, however, is still ravaging through Ukraine, and our work is far from done.

What also seems to be overlooked is the fact that while the biggest, the war in Ukraine is not the first armed conflict started in our region in recent years. Our colleagues from Georgia were fighting Russian invasion back in 2008. In 2020, Nagorno-Karabakh war took lives of thousands on the sides of both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Russia and Russian influences have always been a threat to the region – despite that previous conflicts were largely overlooked by the global community.

We call for the international stakeholders to identify volunteers, social workers, and NGO-employed experts as key players in facilitating the crisis response. For Russian aggression to be stopped, Central and Eastern European NGOs need to be supported and protected.