

Resolution on Damage and Destruction of Libraries, Schools, and Other Cultural Institutions in Ukraine

Whereas the American Library Association (ALA) “deplores the destruction of libraries, library collections, and property, and the disruption of educational process by that act, whether it be done by individuals or groups of individuals, and whether it be done in the name of honest dissent, the desire to control or limit thought or ideas, or for any other purpose,” (ALA Policy B.2.8);¹ and

Whereas, in the past ALA Council passed a resolution deploring the destruction of libraries and cultural resources in a time of war, and calling “upon the government of the United States, as well as other governments, intergovernmental organizations and nongovernmental organizations ... to provide material assistance for the reconstruction and restoration of these resources” (CD#18.8 of 2001-2002);² and

Whereas, the Russian invasion in February 2022 and the subsequent occupation of Ukraine have caused—aside from thousands of human casualties—enormous damage to and destruction of Ukrainian cultural resources, and

Whereas, according to UNESCO, as of May 30, 2022, seven libraries have been damaged since the Russian invasion, including the building of the regional children's library (former Vasyl Tarnovsky Museum of Ukrainian Antiquities) - (Chernihiv region); the Chernihiv Regional Universal Scientific Library V.G. Korolenko - (Chernihiv); the Central City Library M. Kotsiubynsky - (Chernihiv); the Central City Library in Irpin – (Kyiv region); the Makarivska Public Library - (Kyiv region); the Kharkiv State Scientific Library (Korolenko State Scientific Library) - (Kharkiv); and the Central City Library V.G. Korolenko in Mariupol - (Donesk Region),³ and

Whereas, according to UNESCO, as of May 29, 2022, 1,888 education institutions have suffered bombing and shelling and 180 have been destroyed completely,⁴ and

Whereas, according to UNESCO, as of May 30, 2022, 62 religious sites, 12 museums, 26 historic buildings, 17 buildings dedicated to cultural activities, and 15 monuments have been damaged;⁵ therefore be it

Resolved, that the American library Association (ALA)

1. Deplores the continuing and massive damage and destruction of Ukrainian libraries, schools, and other cultural institutions;
2. Urges the government of the United States, as well as other governments, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations to provide material assistance for the reconstruction and restoration of Ukrainian libraries, schools, and cultural institutions as soon as that is practicable; and
3. Encourages libraries and librarians everywhere to provide assistance to Ukrainian libraries, including by contributing to the [Ukrainian Library Relief Fund](#).⁶

Mover: Mark Hudson
Seconder: Tom Twiss

¹ ALA, B.2.8 Destruction of Libraries, ALA Policy Manual, <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section2/53intellfreedom#B.2.8>.

² ALA, Resolution on the Destruction of Palestinian Libraries, Archives, and Other Cultural Institutions, <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/iro/awardsactivities/resolutiondestruction>.

³ UNESCO, “Damaged cultural sites in Ukraine verified by UNESCO,” May 31, 2022, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/damaged-cultural-sites-ukraine-verified-unesco>.

⁴ UNESCO, “Ensuring teaching and learning continues in Ukraine,” Last update June 8, 2022, <https://www.unesco.org/en/education/emergencies/ukraine#:~:text=As%20of%2029%20May%2C%20a,Ukraine%20prior%20to%20the%20war>.

⁵ UNESCO, “Damaged cultural sites in Ukraine verified by UNESCO,” May 31, 2022, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/damaged-cultural-sites-ukraine-verified-unesco>.

⁶ ALA, Ukrainian Library Relief Fund, <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/ukraine-library-relief-fund>.