



## A MESSAGE REGARDING THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

March 12, 2022

Rissho Kosei-kai strongly opposes the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which is trying to change the status quo through violence. In order to save precious human lives, we urge Russian diplomats to engage in talks that will bring an immediate ceasefire and lead to a peaceful resolution.

When the founder of Rissho Kosei-kai, Rev. Nikkyo Niwano, addressed the First Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly, he said that the use of military force is futile, as it only brings about the destruction of our world, and appealed to all human beings to unite their minds in devoting themselves to peace. Founder Niwano dedicated the second half of his life to interreligious dialogue and cooperation for the sake of realizing world peace. Since then, we at Rissho Kosei-kai have been working with people around the world who are also seeking peace and for half a century, we have together made steadfast progress in a resolutely antiwar spirit of “no more war” and never relying on military force to try to solve international issues. And yet now, in an instant, a military invasion has deprived Ukrainians of their lives lived in peace, while a single word from one head of state could make the threat of nuclear war become a reality. We are shocked and deeply concerned about this state of affairs.

Since this war has embroiled the whole world, no one can be a bystander. At the same time, though, we do not think that isolating Russia will improve matters. Isolation pushes one party into a corner, hardens their attitude, and worsens the overall situation. Therefore, we strongly urge the leaders of the nations of the world to continue earnestly calling on Russia for an immediate ceasefire, never close any avenue of dialogue, constantly seek dialogue through all available channels, and tenaciously search for a path leading to a peaceful resolution.

Just as the Lotus Sutra teaches us that “the root cause of all suffering is greed,” there lies within each of us a mind of greedy desire—the mind of doing whatever it wants to—that is the source of the outbreak of war. As we reflect upon the mind of greed within ourselves and feel profound regret that the current situation has come about, at the same time, we believe that human beings also possess the mind that desires peace for all humanity and therefore, we make an even stronger appeal for “no more war.” To that end, Rissho Kosei-kai is using various domestic and international networks to find a way toward a peaceful resolution, while also partnering with the United Nations and other international agencies to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees.

The use of military force only sets in motion a cycle of hatred and therefore, it can never be a real solution. Neither Ukrainians nor Russians want war and the growing chorus of antiwar voices, transcending national borders to speak out in solidarity with the suffering Ukrainian people, gives us hope. We believe that a peaceful solution through dialogue is the way that brightens the future of this world. We mourn the precious lives of all victims of this war and pray, from the bottom of our hearts, that peace will be restored as soon as possible. Hereafter, we will continue to work together with people everywhere in the world who also seek peace.