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THE WAR IN UKRAINE FROM A SOCIAL QUALITY PERSPECTIVE

First and foremost, I want to join with the millions of others globally that have expressed both their shock and outrage at the unprovoked and unlawful invasion of Ukraine, and their solidarity with the people of that now beleaguered country. It is barely conceivable that this outrage is taking place in the heart of Europe. Armed warfare by an oppressive despot not only offends humanity and democracy but, also, the fundamental normative principles upon which the social quality ideal is founded: social justice, equal value, solidarity and human dignity. In this context it is impossible to establish any basis for social quality. Of course, the ruthless invader is not interested in social quality, and the oppressed citizens of Ukraine have much more urgent matters to contend with in the defence of their liberty and their lives. Yet social quality might provide one of the tiny beacons of hope that are essential to help to sustain courage in the midst of darkness. Social quality is a concept that was born and bred in Europe, and, before the present illegal war, discussions had taken place about its application to Ukraine. Now, our hope must be for the swift end to the conflict and the repulsion of Putin's invading army, with as few lives lost as possible, and for an equally rapid re-building of Ukrainian society and infrastructure. This should be followed as quickly as possible by Ukraine's accession to the EU. In that new, deeply hoped for, context we look forward to re-engaging with our Ukrainian colleagues about how a social quality approach might assist policy makers and citizens to re-imagine and re-construct society based on socio-economic security, social cohesion, social inclusion and social empowerment. If the Russia people were to choose a different path, based on a fundamental respect for human rights, social justice, equal value, solidarity and human dignity, we would of course extend the same hand of friendship.

In friendship and solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and those in Russia who bravely oppose this unlawful invasion.

Alan Walker

Chair

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