



PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

April 22-27, 2012

Greetings from the Prime Minister

I am pleased to welcome leaders of the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) to Canada at the invitation of the Ukrainian-Jewish Encounter (UJE) Initiative. I greatly admire the efforts of the UJE to promote mutual understanding between the Ukrainian and Jewish peoples.

This historic visit is a wonderful opportunity to honour the millennium-long relationship between the Ukrainian and Jewish peoples. A dialogue between distinguished leaders from the two communities encourages thoughtful consideration of the historical challenges each group has surmounted. By developing this understanding, you are fostering new relationships, addressing prevailing stereotypes and honouring the memory of the victims of past crimes.

It is especially significant that you are honouring the legacy of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. As a prominent religious leader, he spoke out against murder and acted to shelter Jews. His compassion and courage made him a role model and an exemplar of the values that the Ukrainian and Jewish people aspire to uphold to this day.

I understand the importance of learning from the past. "Never again" must be more than words – it must be defined by actions. In 2013, Canada will chair the Taskforce for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF). The goals of the UJE are a wonderful complement to our efforts to press for global action through the ITF. I commend everyone involved in organizing the UJE initiative.

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I offer my best wishes to UJE and UCCRO. I hope members of both the Ukrainian and Jewish communities will participate in this visit and extend their support to the work of UJE.

Sincerely,

The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada



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