*Unofficial translation from Ukrainian into English*

**The President of Ukraine**

31st of January 2023

**Dear Mr. President!**

On my own behalf and on behalf of Ukrainian athletes, I express my sincere gratitude to you personally and to the leadership of the International Canoe Federation for supporting the Olympic movement of Ukraine.

Thanks, in particular, to this support, Ukrainian Olympians, as members of the great Olympic family, train and perform in international sports arenas despite the war.

At the same time, I have to address you regarding the resolution "On solidarity with Ukraine, sanctions against Russia and Belarus and the status of athletes from these countries" approved by the Executive Committee of the International Olympic Committee on January 25, 2023. We appreciate the support of the Ukrainian Olympic family and solidarity expressed in the document. At the same time, Ukrainian society was outraged by the position of the Executive Committee regarding the possibility of admitting Russian and Belarusian athletes to international sports competitions.

Today, Ukraine is heroically resisting Russia's brutal aggression, Ukrainians, including our sportsmen, are dying every day from military actions and shelling.

It was on the day the Executive Committee of the IOC adopted the mentioned resolution that the Ukrainian track and field athlete, decathlete, member of the national team Volodymyr Androshchuk, who will no longer be able to defend Ukraine at international competitions, died in the war with Russia.

Criminal aggression is actively supported by Russian and Belarusian athletes. A significant part of Russian athletes are officers of Russia's security forces, so they share responsibility for the terrible crimes committed today against the Ukrainian people, destroyed enterprises, schools, hospitals, stadiums and other sports infrastructure. And most importantly - for the lost human lives and ruined fates of Ukrainians.

The silence of these athletes is a de facto consent to the killing of Ukrainians and the destruction of our state by Russia.

The Russian Federation has already three times violated the resolutions on the Olympic truce, which were adopted by the UN General Assembly.

In 2008, during the official opening ceremony of the XXIX Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, Russia carried out military aggression against Georgia. During the Winter Paralympic Games in Sochi in 2014, it captured the Ukrainian Crimea and part of Donbas. During the Paralympics in Beijing on February 24, 2022, with the active support of Belarus, it launched a large-scale invasion into the territory of our Motherland and is still waging a war to destroy the Ukrainian people.

In view of the above-mentioned, Ukraine insists on the need to ban the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes in international competitions in any status, including neutral, until the end of this criminal war and the complete withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine.

I ask the International Canoe Federation headed by you to condemn publicly the mentioned statement of the IOC Executive Committee and convey this position to the leadership of the International Olympic Committee.

This will be an example of efforts aimed at reigning in the spirit of fair play without aggression, violence and hatred of other peoples.

I wish you, Mr. President, good health, strength and success in all your endeavors.

Respectfully,

<signed> **Volodymyr Zelenskyy**