

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND  
INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, AND  
INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022

Start: 10:37 A. M.

Recess: 10:44 A. M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 4)

B E F O R E: CHI A. OSSÉ, CHAIR

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ERIC DINOWITZ  
AMANDA FARÍAS  
SHAHANA K. HANIF  
CRYSTAL HUDSON  
RITA C. JOSEPH  
FARAH N. LOUIS  
FRANCISCO P. MOYA  
SANDRA UNG

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND  
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

[N/A]

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND  
INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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JOHANNA CASTRO: We are live.

SERGEANT PEREZ: Let me confirm the stream first.

Good morning, welcome to New York City Council's  
remote Committee Hearing on Cultural Affairs,  
Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations.

Everyone, please turn on your videos at this time  
and silence all electronic devices.

All written testimony can submitted to  
[testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov), thank you.

Chair Person Ossé, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON OSSÉ: Wonderful, wonderful.

Good morning, everyone. I am Council...

[GAVELING IN] [GAVEL SOUND]

Good morning everyone, I am Council Member Chi  
Ossé, Chair of The Committee on Cultural Affairs,  
Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations.  
Today the committee will vote on two pieces of  
legislation related to the mounting humanitarian  
crisis in Ukraine.

First, a Preconsidered Resolution, sponsored by  
Council Member Hudson, in relation to condemning  
Russia's invasion of Ukraine and calling upon  
Congress and President Joseph R. Biden to increase

1  
2 and expand the severity of sanctions imposed on  
3 Russia.

4 And, second, Preconsidered Resolution, sponsored  
5 by Council Member Vernikov, in relation to expressing  
6 support for Ukraine.

7 And, Council Member Vernikov, I do want to  
8 acknowledge, I was born in the country of Ukraine,  
9 and this is resolution is dear to her heart.

10 It has been nearly two weeks since Russia invaded  
11 Ukraine, and the world has watched as Russian  
12 President Putin continues to do so. Since, then he  
13 has escalated his invasion and is attacking on all  
14 fronts. More than 1.5 million refugees have left  
15 Ukraine, but not everyone can leave, and the toll on  
16 civilians is increasing.

17 As Chair of the Committee on International  
18 Intergroup Relations, I thank my colleagues, Council  
19 Members Hudson and Vernikov for bringing these issues  
20 to our collective awareness, and combatting the idea  
21 that there is nothing we can do.

22 Inna, I know that you were born and raised in  
23 Ukraine, and my heart and best wishes go out to you  
24 and your family especially.

1 COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND  
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3 Before we move to the vote, I would like to thank  
4 my staff, including Naomi Hopkins, my Chief of Staff;  
5 and [INAUDIBLE 00:02:38] my Legislative Director.  
6 Additionally, thank you to the committee staff for  
7 their work in preparing this hearing and working on  
8 the legislation, including Brenda McKinney, our  
9 Legislative Counsel; Cristy Dwyer our Legislative  
10 Policy Analyst; and Aliya Ali, Principal Financial  
11 Analyst.

12 Finally, I also want to acknowledge committee  
13 members who are present, Council Member Hudson,  
14 Council Member Joseph, Council Member Hanif, Council  
15 Member Fariás, Council Member Louis, Council Member  
16 Ung, and Council Member Dinowitz, as well as Council  
17 Member Moya. Thank you all for being here.

18 And, I think we are ready for the vote.

19 Billy, please take it away.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you, good morning,  
21 everybody, William Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call  
22 vote for Committee on Cultural Affairs; two  
23 Preconsidered Resolutions, items are coupled.

24 Chair Ossé?

25 CHAIRPERSON OSSÉ: Thank you, uh, so I do want to  
explain my vote before we move on. Uh, the invasion

1 of Ukraine is a cruel and unjustified act of  
2 aggression. It is characterized by countless crimes  
3 against humanity perpetrated by Russia and its  
4 soldiers against the Ukrainian people, and it has  
5 increased and caused a grave human rights crisis. No  
6 human being deserves to be displaced from their homes  
7 or be casualties of war. Refugees fleeing from these  
8 Russian atrocities must be offered asylum. At the  
9 same time, the United States and its allies must  
10 extend the same generosity in good will that they  
11 offer Ukrainians to refugees from across the world.  
12 Yes, we need to open our doors to Ukrainians fleeing  
13 the war and their homeland, so too must we welcome  
14 Haitian refugees who are instead met with ICE agents  
15 on horseback brutalizing them at the border; and  
16 Syrian refugees, who like the Ukrainians, seek  
17 sanctuary from war. We also need to ensure that  
18 African students who are fleeing Ukraine are able to  
19 find refuge. The approach we are taking to Ukraine  
20 refugees is noble, and I am warmed to see the nations  
21 of the world extend this welcome to the victims of  
22 Russia's bloodthirsty war. We must take the same  
23 approach to Black and Brown people fleeing identical  
24 circumstances. I condemn Vladimir Putin's ruthless  
25

1 aggression, and call on our state and federal leaders  
2 to take stronger action to weaken his army and his  
3 hand. I stand steadfastly in solidarity with the  
4 proud Ukrainian people. I vote aye on all.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you.

6 Moya?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

9 Louis?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: I vote aye, and I would  
11 like to thank both of those sponsors for carrying  
12 this out, and I would like to be added to both  
13 resolutions. Thank you.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You got, thank you.

15 Dinowitz?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Uhm, I want to thank  
17 Council Members Hudson and Vernikov for these very  
18 important resolutions, and I proudly vote aye.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

20 Farías?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: I vote aye, and I would  
22 like to thank my colleagues Council Members Hudson  
23 and Vernikov for putting these in, and I would like  
24 to be added to them as well as, uh, just reiterating  
25

1 all of the words that Chairperson Ossé expressed.

2 Thank you.

3 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you.

4 Hanif?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: I vote aye on all, and  
6 thank you, Chair Ossé for your powerful remarks on  
7 both resolutions, and thank you Council Member Hudson  
8 and Council Member Vernikov for your work on this.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you.

10 Hudson?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Aye, and thanks to  
12 everyone for your support, and especially to Chair  
13 Ossé for your remarks. You took the words right out  
14 of my mouth, so I will not say anything further, but  
15 I appreciate you sharing your sentiments. Thank you.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you.

17 Joseph?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: Good morning, all, good  
19 morning colleagues, thank you, Chair Ossé, for your  
20 powerful words. Like Crystal said, I was about to  
21 say all of that, but I can't, but I support that.  
22 Thank you Council Member Hudson and Council Member  
23 Vernikov for standing tall with the people of Ukraine  
24



and all of the immigrants that needed a voice today.

Thank you, Chair Ossé.

I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you, Council.

Council Member Ung?

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you.

By a vote of nine in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no abstentions, both items have been adopted by the committee.

And, Mr. Chair, that is a full committee.

CHAIRPERSON OSSÉ: Do I gavel out now, or?

Well, thank you all for all for coming this morning, and I will gavel out now to end our committee meeting.

[GAVELING OUT] [GAVEL SOUND]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date April 1, 2022