

Paris, March 2nd 2022

*Open letter to the
President of the Russian Federation
Mr. Vladimir Putin*

Honourable President,

I write you on behalf of thousands cancer care professionals participating in the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes "OEI", the biggest worldwide cancer network involving more than 110 of the most prestigious European Comprehensive Cancer Centres.

The OEI was founded in 1979 thanks to the vision of several cancer centre directors, including those of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences of Moscow and the N.N. Petrov National Medical Research Centre of Oncology of Saint Petersburg.

Despite significant economic and linguistic differences existing in Europe, OEI was founded to overcome political and cultural barriers in order to promote integration of knowledge, and to give space to freedom in the fight against cancer.

Diversity is an asset to the OEI Members, and not a cause for discrimination or fragmentation: it is our responsibility to find the best ways to share our expertise in order to contribute to the provision of equitable access to treatments and guarantee the better quality of care, and life, to all cancer patients.

Several Russian cancer centres are still contributing to promote the OEI values maintaining the basic philosophy on which it was created. To demonstrate how OEI is linked to the Russian colleagues, and how we need to improve the collaboration to take advantage from a reciprocal exchange of knowledge, we are the only existing scientific organisation in cancer offering a full website version in Russian, a linguistic bridge where everyone may better recognize their own interests.

Mr. President, it is unbelievable for the hundreds of thousands of cancer professionals spending all their energies for the benefit of the patients, to think that the slow and tiring collaborative process can be nullified due to the continuation of the current conflict, and that the difficult economic conditions that have arisen may cause serious repercussions on the population and on all cancer patients.

On behalf of all cancer patients and all sick people, who are already fighting a war with their own diseases, I pray You, Mr. President, to listen to our sincere voice, demonstrating to the world that you are open to discuss and find the best solutions that should respect all human rights.

This war concerns every European. In this time of human suffering, our Organisation is close to all Ukrainian Cancer Centres – some of which are also valuable OEI Members - to all Ukrainian cancer patients, who are now losing hope, and to all the brave people of Ukraine, who are now witnessing their homes destroyed.

A war cannot cancel the fraternal relationship linking all the OEI members but it is not the way we imagine to create the world we have promised to the future generations.

We believe that you will give attention to whole world which is asking to recreate together the conditions of peace that we all hope for.

Best regards,

Thierry Philip
OEI President

