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Sent via email to [drtedros@who.int](mailto:drtedros@who.int)  
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Dear Director General,

Over the last month, we, as professional medical organisations remain deeply disturbed by the speed of progression and scale of the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. Childbirth does not stop for war.

In a normal month around 30,000 babies are born in Ukraine. We recognise migration to bordering countries, however we are acutely aware that many pregnant women could not leave their home, towns and cities, nor could babies receiving intensive care be moved due to the conflict. A number of perinatal centres are experiencing increased demands due to mass internal displacement of people, without the necessary resources to provide care.

Healthcare is being provided to mothers and babies as best as possible, with limited resources and by dedicated healthcare teams, however the reality is that this care is provided in dire circumstances whilst air raid sirens rage overhead and maternity hospitals are shelled. 'Babies will die' we are told by colleagues in tears. Others say 'we urgently need equipment', 'when the sirens start, we run up and down the stairs moving babies from our intensive care to the cold basement'. Mothers are delivering in basements without basic equipment.

Poor perinatal care increases the risk of deaths in both mothers and babies. Babies who receive poor care are at higher risk of brain damage and other lifelong illnesses which places profound burdens on families, communities and healthcare with huge long term financial implications. Our healthcare colleagues and their patients require urgent support.

Humanitarian corridors must be facilitated as a matter of urgency to address this escalating humanitarian crisis to allow appropriate aid to be provided, healthcare teams to be supported and medical evacuations to be facilitated.

The United Nations General Assembly [have adopted a resolution](#) demanding aid access and civilian protection in Ukraine, criticising Russia for creating a 'dire' humanitarian situation and have demanded that civilians are fully protected, that all parties ensure respect for, and protection of, all medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in their medical duties, that they respect international law in connection with objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, and allow safe and unhindered passage to destinations outside of Ukraine.

We call on you to act on implementing this latest UN resolution (A/ES/11/L.2) by placing the facilitation of effectively protected humanitarian work in Ukraine as the highest priority to ensure that essential humanitarian actions are achieved as a matter of extreme urgency.

We refer you to an [article in the Lancet](#) which makes it clear that words are insufficient and that countries wanting to support Ukraine must provide protection forces on the ground as soon as possible to protect humanitarian aid and medical care.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr Helen Mactier**, President, British Association of Perinatal Medicine  
**Prof. Charles C Roehr**, President, European Society for Paediatric Research  
**Dr Edward Morris**, President, Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists  
**Dr Susan Broster**, Officer – Global, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

CC: Boris Johnson, Prime Minister, UK; Micheál Martin, Taoiseach, Ireland; Ambassador Sergly Kyslytsya Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations.