

EASTERN EUROPE & CIS SAMARITAN MINISTRIES

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Powder Keg Eastern Ukraine

Since the beginning of 2017, fighting in eastern Ukraine has been resumed. The entire demarcation line is under fire. There are many injured and dead. Tanks are employed – in violation of the Minsk Protocol.

The agreed-upon truce in eastern Ukraine is being broken every day. On one weekend alone, fifteen people were killed in numerous fights, seven of them at night. Heavy artillery and multiple rocket launchers are used in these skirmishes. Western newspapers barely report these dramatic conditions.

Both sides are now negotiating for a new truce agreement. But these attempts will remain fragile as long as the underlying causes of the conflict are not addressed. One can stop the hatred only when one has found peace himself and can empathize with the unspeakable suffering of others.

Our team of volunteers on the frontline provides the elderly and families with many children with warm soup and fireplace fuel. The Stop Hunger Project is in full swing. Well over 1,000 aid packages have been distributed to those in need, with many more on the way. The packages contain flour, pasta, rice, oil, tea and preserves, to name just a few staples. In one of our transports in 2017, we delivered almost 20 tons of relief supplies, including 6.5 tons of food such as sauerkraut, cucumbers, flour and 565 packets of good coffee. Samaritan Ministries thanks everyone for the generous donations and for not forgetting the plight of others!

Tears and Hope

Even frontline volunteers risk life and limb. These hardworking helpers deserve our respect and admiration.

Sergei and Julia T. returned from a rescue operation in Zaitsevo when they came under sniper attack. Both are injured, but thankfully, they survived this attack.

Things were completely different for Dimitri T., the team leader of the soup kitchens in Avdiivka. After supplying hungry, elderly people with soup, a bullet hit him in the stomach. He was badly injured, and only by a miracle did he survive this attack.

Help for War-Traumatized Families

One of the many desperate families from the Donbas area is Anja and Vitalik with their two children (picture right). Our assistant coordinator Eva reports:

Vitalik was working not far from Donetsk in a coal mine that had to be closed due to the war. He cannot find another job in his village, thus forcing him to sell household items on the market.

Vitalik's wife regularly went to the forest to collect berries, apples and mushrooms. But one evening she did not come home. Vitalik and the village residents searched feverishly for her. In the woods, they then made a gruesome discovery: Anja had stepped on a mine and died at the scene of the accident. Of course, we support Vitalik and his children with food through our Stop Hunger Project, and the local aid team provides the necessary counseling (e.g., for PTSD), prayer and pastoral care.

Igor and Tamara G. along with their nine children were expelled from their home in Alchevsk. Artillery shells and nightly explosions traumatized the children in particular. Despite the great difficulties of finding a new home, Igor and Tamara try to help others in their misery. After a long search, we were able to find a four-room apartment for the family and provide them with food, clothes and furniture.

Ludmilla S. (pictured right) lives with her daughter in the city of Popasna. Ludmilla is in a wheelchair and has been lame on her left side for over half a year. She is overjoyed with the aid packages from our Stop Hunger Project and expresses her heartfelt appreciation for all the help she has received.



Urgent Appeal to Stop Hunger

We ask you not to forget Eastern Ukraine. According to a UN report from June 2017, the number of civilian casualties in eastern Ukraine has increased by 48 percent over the past four months compared to the previous year.

Pensioners struggling to survive. Mothers crying for their lost children. Fathers looking for their wives. Later this year we will send two big 40-ton containers to the war front. We need your help for that. (For donation information, see below.)

Job 29:16: "I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger."

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