



GLOBAL STUDENT FORUM STATEMENT ON THE TREATMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN UKRAINE

In reaction to the events of segregation and racism toward international students in Ukraine, the Global Student Forum (GSF) expresses its deepest concern.

Since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, there have been persistent complaints by the international student community about ongoing discrimination against international students fleeing the conflict to neighbouring states. The Ukrainian authorities, per eyewitness accounts, were wilfully discriminating access to public utilities like trains and buses.

The All-Africa Students Union (AASU), one of the member organisations of the GSF, conducted its investigations through which students of African descent confirmed that they had to wait for untold hours until other western nationals were given paramount treatment, particularly in their attempt to catch trains leaving Ukraine to neighbouring countries where African countries have planned their evacuation. In extreme situations, the students trekked for hours before reaching the border to neighbouring states. Some students also reported that guns were pointed at them in an attempt to get on a train to flee Ukraine, while some were pulled off the trains they had boarded with no explanation.

This act of discrimination and selective prioritization contradicts the very tenets based on which all nations are showing solidarity to Ukraine. The campaign is still on, and until the last international student is treated fairly and accorded all their internationally recognized human rights, we continue unabated.

The Global Student Forum strongly encourages UNESCO to condemn the discriminatory action of Ukrainian officials and encourage the government of Ukraine to cease its discriminatory and racist activities and treat international students fleeing the war in a manner that upholds human rights and dignity. Reconciliation must grant full respect for human rights, individual freedoms, and democracy, forging and strengthening the needed institutional tools to avoid similar situations in the future. And we ask the international community to commit itself to the defence of these rights in Ukraine and the world.

As students from every part of the planet, we reaffirm our trust in and commitment to protecting international human rights, especially those of students.

The Steering Committee of the Global Student Forum.

The Global Student Forum was founded by the All-Africa Students Union (AASU), Commonwealth Students' Association (CSA), European Students Union (ESU) and Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU) and the Latin-American Student Organisation (OCLAE) as well as other national student organisations and movements. It represents the voice of 1999 Student Unions from 121 countries.