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## **Statement Ahead of the Milano-Cortina 2026 Paralympic Games**

As the Milano-Cortina 2026 Winter Paralympic Games begin, the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB) reiterates its condemnation of the International Paralympic Committee's decision to permit athletes from the Russian Federation and Belarus to compete under their national flags and with their national anthems.

Russia continues to wage a brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, with Belarus acting as a key enabler of that invasion. In this context, restoring national representation to the aggressor states at the Paralympic Games is indefensible and inconsistent with the values of dignity, justice and humanity that the Paralympic Movement seeks to uphold.

In recent weeks the AUGB has written separately to the International Paralympic Committee and to the British Paralympic Association setting out our objections to this decision and urging careful consideration of the profound symbolic implications of allowing the flags and symbols of the aggressor states to be displayed at the Opening Ceremony.

For Ukrainians, those symbols are not abstract. They represent the continuing invasion of Ukraine and the very real immeasurable human suffering that it has caused, including life-changing injuries to civilians and members of Ukraine's sporting community.

This is underlined by the countries who, as a result of the IPC's decision, will not be taking part in the Opening Ceremony. We are grateful that these countries understand that the IPC's decision is fundamentally wrong and continue to support the Ukrainian people against an illegal invasion.

We stand firmly in solidarity with Ukraine and with all those who believe that international sport must not provide a platform for the normalisation of aggression.

**AUGB Board of Directors  
London, 5 March 2026**