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INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



LIBERAL DEMOCRATS SPRING CONFERENCE
ETHIOPIA, TIGRAY & ERITREA
UKRAINE & RUSSIA

EVENTS

11th-13th March - Liberal Democrats Spring Conference – Online

12th-13th March - ALDC Spring Conference – Live and concurrent with Liberal Democrats Online conference

31st March - LIBG Forum – What Next for the Horn of Africa – see page 3

30th June-3rd July – 63rd Congress of Liberal International, Sofia, Bulgaria.

17th-20th September - Liberal Democrats Autumn Conference at the Brighton Centre.

1st-12th November - UNFCCC Climate COP 27 Egypt (Sharm El Sheikh)

For bookings & other information please contact the Treasurer below.

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Photographs: Martin Plaut,

Cover Photograph – Odessa Steps from Sergie Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*, 1925

**We welcome reports from conference events,
deadline for the next issue is**

28th March 2022



Where next for the Horn of Africa?

March 31, 2022 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

A Zoom Event organised by Liberal International (British Group) in association with the Paddy Ashdown Forum.

Register Here

https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=yGsSWpvQ1kCVYZLQiqoTgoiVfq2RIVhlqMoQ_VOVpbNURUdVOUI0UzhLQVBXRdJJQjVGOFQyRjAyWC4u

Date: 31 March, 18.30 - 20.00 (London Time)

Ethiopia: atrocities on all sides of the conflict, plus drought and famine.

Eritrea: Africa's North Korea and its destabilising influence on its neighbours.

Sudan: the early promise of 2019's democratic revolution is in peril.

The Nile: will the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam provoke conflict?

The Horn: are the global powers' military bases a force for stability or disruption?

Join experts as they assess the future of this strategically vital African region.

Speakers:

Jan-Christoph Oetjen is a German Member of the European Parliament from the liberal Freie Demokratische Partei. He was elected in 2019. His main work focusses on Transport and Tourism, Migration and Human Rights in Africa. He has previously spearheaded a European Parliament urgency Resolution on Human Rights breaches in Ethiopia in 2020 and on the humanitarian situation in 2021. His most recent resolution was on the political crisis in Sudan.'

Maddy Crowther is Co-Executive Director of Waging Peace, a charity that has campaigned on Sudan since 2004. She is also a wider Horn of Africa expert, giving support to the UK All Party Parliamentary Group on Eritrea.

Rebecca Tinsley is a journalist and human rights activist. Her book on Darfur, *When The Stars Fall to Earth*, is available in English and Arabic. She founded the charity Network for Africa which provides mental health support in post-conflict communities.

ETHIOPIA, TIGRAY & ERITREA

Martin Plaut

Introduction

The war in northern Ethiopia is the least reported and – until the war in Ukraine erupted – the bloodiest in the world. Over 100,000 have died since the conflict broke out in the Tigray region in November 2020.

The fighting is rarely reported, but the humanitarian outcome is regularly reported by the United Nation's Office for Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).¹ The numbers involved are so large they are hard to grasp. Some 5.2 million people are in need of aid. Some are in neighbouring Amhara state, but the vast majority are Tigrayans.

The UN and aid agencies are ready and willing to provide the aid they need, but Tigray is blockaded. It is suffering the modern equivalent of a medieval siege. From the north and west the region is cut off by Eritrean forces. From the south and east by the Ethiopian military.

As a result, the aid – so badly needed – cannot get in. As UNOCHA says in its latest report²: “Since 12 July, only 8 per cent of the 16,000 trucks with the needed humanitarian supplies entered Tigray. As a result, humanitarian operations have been further impacted and humanitarian partners continue to reduce their operations. Two out of three partners halted their school feeding program this week due to lack of supplies and cash.”

Tiny quantities of medical supplies have been flown into the capital, Mekelle, but without the necessary fuel and trucks, it cannot be delivered very far from the city.

But what is the Tigray war all about?

The outbreak of the war

The evening of the 3rd and early morning of 4th November 2020 saw the start of the Tigray war. On that single fact most narratives agree; but on little else. The official Ethiopian government version was provided by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.³

In the early hours of November 4, 2020, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) attacked the Ethiopian National Defense Forces Base located in Tigray region and attempted to rob the northern command of artillery and military equipment. The last red line has been crossed with this morning's attacks and the Federal government is therefore forced into a military confrontation. The Ethiopian National Defense Forces, under the direction of a Command Post, have been ordered to carry out their mission to save the country and the region from spiraling [sic.] into instability.

The government statement went on to claim that the Tigrayan government had been following a policy of “provocation and incitement for violence” for months and that the events of the 3rd and 4th November were simply the last straw. A state of emergency was declared. In January 2021, the federal government went further, stripping the TPLF of its status as a legal party and in May labelling it a terrorist organization.⁴

¹ <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia/>

² <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia/>

³ https://www.pmo.gov.et/media/documents/November_4_Press_Release_.pdf

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/article/ethiopia-tigray-conflict-explained.html?>

A very different perspective was offered by Debretsion Gebremichael, President of Tigray's regional government. "We didn't initiate any attack," he told *Reuters* in a text message in December 2020, arguing that some soldiers "joined us by rejecting [the] federal treatment to Tigray."¹

The exact events of the night of the 3rd of 4th November are disputed but what is clear is that the conflict was not a bolt from the blue.

Tension had been building for months. The well-informed Horn of Africa analyst, Rashid Abdi, tweeted this warning on 31st October 2020.² "[Eritrean President] Afewerki & [Ethiopian Prime Minister] Abiy actively considering military action to settle dispute with Tigray. They are deaf to calls for dialogue, de-escalation. A war is coming. Eritrean troops making provocative manoeuvres on border. International community indulged Abiy. It bears full responsibility."

A war that was long in the planning

That Prime Minister Abiy is prepared to crush the Tigrayans is perhaps not difficult to understand. The Tigrayans controlled the Ethiopian government for 27 years (from the moment they captured Addis Ababa in 1991 until 2018 when they agreed to hand power to Prime Minister Abiy). They had exercised immense power over that time, through the ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, which they controlled via regional front organisations.³ The Tigrayans also held senior ranks in the government, military and security forces with their personnel, as well as having a powerful hand in business.

When Prime Minister Abiy became premier in 2018 he was determined to remove this influence as a precursor to re-centralising the Ethiopian state. This was an explicit rejection of the ethnic federalist model which the Tigrayans had used to run the country and had long been a source of discontent.⁴ Once in control of the Ethiopian state, the prime minister was able to dismantle this system and purge the upper echelons of the military and security services of Tigrayans.⁵ As an article in *African Intelligence* put it: 'As soon as he arrived in power in 2018, the Ethiopian prime minister announced that he planned to reform the Ethiopian army high command, which he saw as a Tigrayan leadership stronghold. The reform, which was carried out quietly over two years, enabled Abiy to remove officers who were too closely linked to the Tigray People's Liberation Front'.⁶

The attitude of Prime Minister Abiy does not, however, explain the involvement of Eritreans led by their autocratic president, Isaias Afwerki.

The Eritrean president's hatred of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is longstanding, complex and visceral.⁷ Isaias's loathing came about because of deep-seated differences over politics, strategy and – perhaps above all else – the question of which liberation movement was the region's 'top dog'.⁸

¹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-conflict-attack-idUSKBN28R1IE>

² <https://twitter.com/RAbdiAnalyst/status/1322440170516471808?s=20>

³ Tefera Negash Gebregziabher, Ideology and power in TPLF's Ethiopia: a historic reversal in the making? *African Affairs*, (Vol. 118 No. 472, July 2019), pp. 463–484

⁴ International Crisis Group, 'Ethiopia: Ethnic Federalism and Its Discontents', Africa Report No. 153, 4 September 2009; Lovise Aalen, 'Ethnic Federalism and Self-Determination for Nationalities in a Semi-Authoritarian State: The Case of Ethiopia', *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* (Vol. 13, No. 2, 2006), pp. 243–61.

⁵ Declan Walsh and Abdi Latif Dahir, 'Why Is Ethiopia at War with Itself?', *New York Times*, 5 November 2020.

⁶ *Africa Intelligence*, 'Abiy Purged His Military High Command to Prepare for His War Against the TPLF', 22 February 2021.

⁷ Medhane Tadesse and John Young, 'TPLF: Reform or Decline?', *Review of African Political Economy* (Vol. 30, No. 97, 2003), pp. 389–403.

⁸ John Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia: the Tigray People's Liberation Front, 1975–1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 156–57.

Since the Eritreans had been the first to revolt against Ethiopia (in 1961) while the Tigrayans did so in the mid-1970s, Isaias regarded his movement as *primus inter pares*. The Tigrayans at times worked with the Eritreans, but never trusted them. In the mid-1980s these divisions spilled over into an open dispute.¹ There was a complete suspension of communications between the EPLF and TPLF between 1985 and 1988.²

In time, relations between the EPLF and TPLF were mended, since neither could successfully confront the Ethiopian government – the Derg – alone. In 1988 the two movements met and agreed to put aside their differences, but a residue and suspicion and bitterness remained.³ The Tigrayans and Eritreans co-operated in ousting the previous regime in 1991, each movement seizing their respective capitals.

When Eritrea finally achieved internationally recognised independence in 1993 the Tigrayan leader, Meles Zenawi, went to Asmara to celebrate the achievement. In his speech to the crowds he made what at the time appeared to be a strange remark: he advised his Eritrean hosts that it was time for both movements to put the past behind them and not to “scratch the wounds” of the past.⁴

It was a warning that – unfortunately – neither side heeded.

The wounds festered, leading in time to the disastrous border war on 1998 – 2000. It is the issue that underlies President Isaias’s plots to destroy the Tigrayans. While the Tigrayans ran Ethiopia the Eritrean leader backed rebel movements attempting to overthrow the Ethiopian government. This took many forms, including, in January 2011, an attempt to attack an African Union summit being held in Addis Ababa.⁵ As the UN Monitoring Security Council Monitoring team reported:⁶

[T]he Government of Eritrea conceived, planned, organized and directed a failed plot to disrupt the African Union summit in Addis Ababa by bombing a variety of civilian and governmental targets... Moreover, since the Eritrean intelligence apparatus responsible for the African Union summit plot is also active in Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda, the level of threat it poses to these other countries must be re-evaluated.”

The 2011 plot failed, but Eritrea continued to host a variety of organisations that were bent on destroying the Tigrayan led Ethiopian government. It was only after the Tigrayans lost power in 2018 that the policy ended, with a number of rebel groups returning to Ethiopia from Eritrea.⁷

Abiy Ahmed becomes Prime Minister in 2018

With Abiy Ahmed installed as Prime Minister, President Isaias moved swiftly to win the Ethiopian leader’s confidence and to gain Abiy’s support for a complex scheme to destroy his Tigrayan enemies once and for all. None of this was undertaken in public, but just three months after Abiy assumed the premiership in April 2018 of Ethiopia he was in Asmara signing a peace deal with President Isaias.⁸

With the relationship between Isaias and Abiy cemented, the two men began a series of bilateral meetings and visits as they planned what to do next. Below are some of these meetings, but there were more. “Mr.

¹ Christopher Clapham, *The Horn of Africa: State formation and decay*, (London, Hurst & Company, 2017), p. 52. Dan Connell and Tom Killion. *Historical Dictionary of Eritrea, Second edition*, (Lanham, The Scarecrow Press, 2011), p. 505

² *Ibid.*, pp. 100–01.

³ John Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia: the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, 1975–1991*, op. cit. p. 158

⁴ Martin Plaut, in Dominique Jacquin-Berdal and Martin Plaut (eds.) *Unfinished Business: Ethiopia and Eritrea at War*, Red Sea Press, Trenton, 2004, p.13

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jul/28/eritrea-planned-ethiopia-bomb-attack>

⁶ <https://www.undocs.org/S/2011/433>, p. 13

⁷ <https://www.africanews.com/2018/09/03/ethiopia-s-ex-rebel-group-ginbot-7-returns-from-eritrea-base/>

⁸ <https://www.dw.com/en/ethiopia-eritrea-officially-end-war/a-44585296>

Abiy and Mr. Isaias met at least 14 times from the time they signed the peace deal until war broke out, public records and news reports show,” the *New York Times* reported.¹

A trilateral alliance

It is worth noting that what began as a peace deal, celebrated by the international community, morphed into preparations for war over the following two years, with the Eritrean and Ethiopian leaders visiting each other’s military bases.

Perhaps the most important development was the transformation of what had been a bilateral relationship between the two neighbours into a trilateral alliance, including Somalia. This was sealed at a summit meeting between the leaders of Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia on 27 January 2020 held in Asmara.² Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo joined Prime Minister Abiy at a tripartite meeting hosted by President Isaias Afwerki. The formal declaration, although bland, revealed a plan to co-operate across a wide range of sectors – including security.³

The three leaders adopted a Joint Plan of Action for 2020 and beyond focusing on the two main and intertwined objectives of consolidating peace, stability, and security as well as promoting economic and social development. On the security front, the three leaders formulated a comprehensive plan to combat and neutralize the common threats they face, including terrorism, arms and human trafficking and drug smuggling.

What was being outlined was an entirely novel re-organisation of the Horn of Africa, with the Somali leader being offered a junior partner role in re-shaping the region. They also provided a blueprint for the conflict that lay ahead, designed to re-shape the Horn of Africa.

In the weeks and months running up to the opening of the Tigray war in November 2020 these plans were refined and developed. Just prior to the conflict erupting in Tigray that President Isaias brought his closest political and military advisers together for an intense discussion on how to proceed.⁴

The president told them that the country had to accept that it has a small and not very viable economy and a lengthy Red Sea coast, which Eritrean cannot patrol on its own. He is reported to have suggested that some sort of “union” with Ethiopia might be possible, at least in terms of economic co-operation and maritime security. In so doing Isaias appears to be echoing Prime Minister Abiy’s grandiose dream of re-establishing the old empire-state of Ethiopia.

Eritrean observers believe that Isaias has a grand vision of uniting the region, envisioning himself at the Horn’s helm. And he also believes that the biggest obstacle to the realisation of this vision is TPLF. Hence, the irreconcilable enmity.

Conclusion

It is this vision that has been behind the tragic war in Tigray that began in November 2020. It explains why it has been so difficult to resolve.

The Biden administration has worked tirelessly to end the conflict, supported by the EU. They have worked with the African Union, which has been largely ineffective at resolving a conflict on its very doorstep.

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/world/africa/ethiopia-abiy-ahmed-nobel-war.html>

² <https://africa.cgtn.com/2020/01/27/somalia-ethiopia-and-eritrea-pledge-joint-anti-terror-war/>

³ <https://villasomalia.gov.so/en/heads-of-state-and-government-meeting-between-eritrea-ethiopia-and-somalia-joint-communique/>

⁴ Private correspondence with author

Prime Minister Abiy and President Isaias remain determined to defeat the Tigrayans, who continue to resist. Hence the siege of Tigray and the immense loss of life and tragic use of indiscriminate bombing, looting and rape and sexual violence as weapons of war.

Martin Plaut

Martin Plaut is Senior Researcher, Kings College, and Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London. Former Africa Editor, BBC World Service News



Eritrean President Isaias showing Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy a parade at Sawa the main Eritrean training base.

Conference Motion F.17 Tigray and the Ethiopian Civil War, will be moved by Layla Moran MP at 14.15 after the lunch break on Saturday 12th March (see interLib 2022-02).

Towards the Ukraine-Russia Debate.

There will be a substantial debate on Putin's invasion of Ukraine at the Liberal Democrats' Spring Conference. Motions are accepted up until 10th March, but we are aware of one such, as we go to press.

LibDems and the Liberal Party before have often demonstrated a fondness for working to resolve international disputes by international dialogue. It has been with regret that those of us who have been trying to get the party to debate support for the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons have been continually frustrated by the powers that be in our endeavours to achieve that. However, with the Ukrainian/Russian conflict, the need for the UN has seldom been higher. With that in mind, a number of us have submitted an emergency motion for consideration by the Federal Conference Committee with a view to placing it on the Spring Conference Agenda. The UN has, so far, been demonstrating a willingness to get this dangerous conflict resolved.

The World's peoples and the planet itself deserve better than direct or implied threats to use nuclear weapons. The LibDems also need to be demonstrating our credentials as internationalists and this motion does, we contend, provide an opportunity to do that. What is happening in Ukraine and the horrific loss of life so far must not continue. Please do everything you can to commit the party to UN initiatives. Thank you.

Motion reads: **Supporting the UN on Ukraine**

Conference deplors the implied threats by some state leaders to use nuclear weapons as a consequence of the Russia/Ukraine conflict.

Conference notes and agrees with the call by the UN Secretary-General for Russia to withdraw its forces from Ukraine.

It also notes and agrees with the views of his Deputy Izumi Nakamitsu that: Ukraine made the right decision in 1994 to completely denuclearize for its own & our collective security, and that arguments suggesting a nuclear Ukraine would be safer today are fallacies. He believes nuclear weapons do not make anyone safer. In fact, nuclear weapons pose an existential threat to all.

and that:

Nuclear weapons cannot prevent armed conflict among States. Nuclear weapons heighten the risk of miscalculation that could end life on earth. We must accelerate all our efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons and ensure full implementation of the UN Charter.

Kevin White

Liberal Democrats Against Trident.

Ukraine, Russia, and a destabilised neighbourhood.

Dr Carol Weaver

On the eve of war, Liberal International (British Group) arranged an event on Ukraine in association with the Paddy Ashdown Forum on the 21st February, just a day or two before the full-scale invasion of the country by the Russian Federation.

Our speakers Jamie Shea, Orysia Lutsevych, Bernard Guetta and Julie Smith gave us their insights into the various positions of NATO, Ukraine, the European Union and the Lib Dem Lords on the fast-developing situation.

The event was opened by LIBG's new chair, former MEP, Irina von Wiese followed by Robert Woodthorpe Browne, Chair of PAF, who reminded us that it would have been Paddy's birthday that week. Paddy contributed massively to conflict resolution and with dealing with corruption and incompetence. We still feel his loss.

Orysia Lutsevych, a Ukrainian national and the head of the Ukraine Forum at Chatham House as well as a research fellow in the Russia and Eurasia Programme was our first main speaker, starting with an overview of Ukraine, a large multi-ethnic country, nothing like the caricature being described by the Kremlin. It is like a dystopian reality listening to the disturbing rhetoric being used by Russian speakers in fora such as the UN.



It was clear from the intelligence that Putin was planning an operation. He is not a rational man any more and clearly wants to annex the east of Ukraine and to control all the policies of his neighbours. He gives false intelligence to his people and says NATO is the threat.

Ukraine needs the unity of the West and help with diplomacy, determination and deterrence including in the fields of cyber-security and disinformation. It needs economic assistance and financial support.

Ukrainians will defend Ukraine because they believe in a better life. Putin uses fear as a tool in his own country. Ukraine is the 'shield of Europe' and the West needs to give every support because of this. It is a necessity for us all.

Julie Smith, Baroness Smith of Newnham, and Cambridge Professor of European Politics spoke next. Looking at the history of eastern European countries' place in the West she recalled how there was a debate in the 1990s about whether the EU or NATO should enlarge. In the end both did. The countries aspired to our values as well as our markets. Even Putin, when he came to power, considered that Russia could join in a decade or two. So NATO was never expanding in an aggressive way. Putin is trying to rewrite history.

Ukraine was different at that time with regard to knowing its future and it became caught in the middle not just as a 'buffer zone' between the East and the West but also as a 'hostage'.

Now we need to know how to negotiate. Minsk won't work and we need to accept Ukrainian sovereignty. So, from a Liberal Democrat Lords perspective, we need to be looking at diplomacy but we can't turn a blind eye to what's happening. The West needs to demonstrate we can be tough or Putin will just carry on.



The Liberal Democrats largely agreed with what the government is doing. Ending the golden visa scheme is good but very strong sanctions are also needed.

Bernard Guetta MEP, a French member of the ALDE group and of the EP Foreign Affairs Committee, began by saying how much he misses UK MEPs in the European Parliament. He then informed us that Vladimir Putin had just stated he was going to be recognising the occupied parts of Luhansk and Donetsk as independent entities. This would mean the end of the Minsk process and was certainly ominous. But the EU was becoming far more united thanks to Trump than Putin. It is entering a new era and he hopes for strong sanctions.



Putin is not a president gaining strength but a weak president which makes him more dangerous and unpredictable. Although Putin and older Russians might be nostalgic and feel that Ukraine is part of Russia, young people see Ukraine as an independent country and a friendly neighbour. Putin has also turned young Belarusians against him because of his support for Lukashenko. President Putin is less and less popular at home and overseas he is destructive. How could he possibly run Ukraine?

Finally, Russia will need to depend on China more now as the EU will be purchasing far less gas and oil from them. The Russian people and the oligarchs would not like Russia being a vassal of China. They are European.

Dr Jamie Shea is former NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges and currently an Associate Fellow on the International Security Programme at Chatham House and President of the Center for War Studies at Southern Denmark University.

He gave us 4 clear points:

1. It didn't have to end like this after the fall of the Berlin Wall. NATO would never have acted in a hostile fashion against the USSR. Indeed, at one point, Russia discussed joining NATO and we were building up a co-operative model. Russia and NATO worked together in peace keeping operations.
2. Ukraine's sovereignty was recognised by Russia including in the Budapest memorandum. Also, although Ukraine was keen to join the EU, it wanted neutrality regarding security arrangements until Russia's attitude and behaviour changed. The scenario Putin now puts forward about what the West is doing is actually being done by himself. He is a firefighter who goes around lighting fires.
3. This is not just a crisis over Ukraine. Putin is trying to re-write the whole security system. Also, he seems to think borders should be fluid. He has been trying to roll back from the Budapest memorandum and wants to end NATO by creating situations.

4. There is no quick fix. NATO reversing its decision on allowing Ukraine to apply for membership would not bring peace. It would just allow Russia a veto on any other country joining.



So, we must stick to our principles and be steadfast. Western unity is key. Sanctions must be massive and made to work. Ukraine must be helped to defend itself. We must also build up our own defences, stop the dirty money and diversify our energy supplies. There is also the hope that at some point in the future the Russians will choose a democratic way forward.

The above is just a brief summary. The whole event including questions and answers can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/fRRpNJYPNX4>

The event was well attended with many questions asked, one of which was from a member of the Yabloko Party in Russia, an ALDE member, which has courageously launched a petition against the war in Russian cities and encouraged protests. We also have ALDE parties in Ukraine, now including President Zelensky's party Sluga Narodu, 'Servant of the People'.

Slava Ukraini!

Donations to <https://www.dec.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

Dr Carol Weaver

Dr Carol Weaver is an academic author and independent political researcher specialising in the Black Sea Region, the European Union and European Security. She contested Rutland & Melton in the 2019 general election.

Lib Dem Friends of Palestine at Conference, Sunday 13th March

We want to see as many of you as can make it at the LDFP fringe meeting at 4.35pm on Sunday 13 March, guest speaker Danielle Bett of YACHAD, especially those who don't normally come to conference, and who won't get this easy-access option again.

YACHAD <https://yachad.org.uk/> as many of you will know, is a Jewish organisation based in the UK working for a political resolution to the Israel Palestine conflict, and Danielle will be in conversation with our new committee member Dr Ruvy Ziegler, Associate Professor in International Refugee Law at the University of Reading. There will be a Q&A session in the second half of the meeting, and we will fit in as many questions from the audience as we can.

We believe better links with liberal Jews will be key to achieving peace and justice for everyone in Israel and the Occupied Territories, and will welcome all visitors whatever their views, to what we hope will be a lively debate.

You might also want to attend the Federal International Relations Committee fringe on Human Rights in the Middle East at 1pm on Saturday 12 March. Chris Doyle, Director of the Council for Arab British Understanding (CAABU) is the speaker, and the session will be chaired by Alistair Carmichael MP. The session will undoubtedly cover Israel, as well as other countries in the region with poor human rights records.

We always welcome ideas and suggestions or articles for inclusion in our website.

Our Facebook site <https://www.facebook.com/LDFoP/> receives regular posts of materials of interest to those who share our concern for Palestinians. Our Twitter account is [http://twitter @LDFPalestine](http://twitter/@LDFPalestine)

Liberal Democrats Spring Conference International Fringe

Fringe Saturday 12th March 13.00–14.15

The Federal International Relations Committee **Human Rights under constant threat in the Middle East, and Iran** Chris Doyle, Director of Council for Arab British Understanding, will review human rights abuses across the region. How can liberal democracies keep human rights in the spotlight, and how can they avoid complicity in their abuse. Chair: Alistair Carmichael MP.

Liberal Democrat European Group – LDEG **Enter the Dragon. Europe’s relationship with China** Don’t miss the opportunity to join the debate as leading politicians from across Europe discuss a relationship of strategic importance to the future of our world – that between Europe and China. Getting it right could spell peace and prosperity for us all in 21st Century. Getting it wrong ... Let’s hope we don’t. @LibDemEurope www.Ldeg.org

Social Liberal Forum **Global Britain or Little England?** Sarah Green MP in conversation with Søs Haugaard (member of the Danish Social Liberal Democrats, Radikale Venstre) will give both an internal UK Liberal view and an external European view of nationalism in today’s world. Chair: Louise Harris (SLF).

Fringe Sunday 13th March 13.00–14.15

The Federal International Relations Committee **Containing Russian Revanchism; What Must We Do?** Chair: Phil Bennion, Chair of FIRC. Speakers: Nathalie Loiseau MEP, Chair of European Parliament Subcommittee on Security and Defence, Petras Auštrevičius MEP, Member of European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Green Liberal Democrats **Local Government ACTION for COP27** Join Green Lib Dems and Pippa Heylings as we follow up on the successful motion at COP26 empowering Local Authorities and recognising their importance in delivering REAL actions to tackle Climate Change. With LD LGA guests relating their successes. @GreenLibDems <https://greenlibdems.org.uk/>

FRINGE Sunday 13th March 4.35 pm to 5.40 pm

Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine **Will Amnesty’s Report End Oppression in Palestine?** Guest speaker Danielle Bett, from YACHAD, a liberal, UK-based Jewish organisation, will describe the role YACHAD can play here in the UK and in Israel to help end the conflict in Israel/Palestine. Followed by a Q&A.

Olga Stefanishyna, Ukraine Deputy Prime Minister addresses LI Bureau with a message for the world

On the afternoon of 25th February 2022, the president of Liberal International, Dr Hakima El Haité, had the honour of welcoming Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Olga Stefanishyna, to address a meeting of the LI Bureau. In an emotional testimony from Kyiv, with Russian tanks looming on the city borders, Ms Stefanishyna expressed her gratitude to world leaders for what they are doing. But more is needed.

‘Sanctions are really strong...but sanctions are not the instrument to stop the military aggression against Ukraine. I don’t know, in 24 hours, if we will be in a position to have this discussion.’ – Ms Stefanishyna

WATCH VIDEO

<https://www.facebook.com/LiberalInternational/videos/3185560298356774/>

In this short video the deputy prime minister urged liberal democratic nations to assist in helping Ukrainian forces repel Putin’s siege.

Today, people are dying and Vladimir Putin is terrifyingly close to draping a new Iron Curtain across the borders of Europe. The Rubicon is crossed and our world order has changed irrevocably.

President El Haité, thanked the LI Membership for all they have done so far and urged them to pledge more support – standing shoulder to shoulder – with the brave Ukrainians fighting for their freedom across their country.

In a statement published on 24th February 2022, the Bureau of Liberal International stated their outrage, condemning in the strongest possible terms Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine earlier that morning. “Ukraine is totemic: only by uniting and proving that our resolve to support Ukraine remains unshakable will Putin know that his bullying aggression will not win.”

25/02/2022

LI Bureau statement on Vladimir Putin’s unconscionable invasion of Ukraine

The bureau of Liberal International is outraged and condemns in the strongest possible terms Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine earlier this morning.

While liberal democracies across the Euro-Atlantic space have strived for peace in recent months, Putin has relentlessly prepared for war. We are distraught that Russia’s illegal assault on Ukraine earlier this morning has revealed that peace could be preserved no longer and the relationship between Russia and Europe is now inescapably redefined.

Driven by delusion we know that Putin has worked tirelessly, over numerous terms as the President of Russia, to destabilise liberal democracies and countries that would choose autonomy over clientelism. Ukraine is totemic: only by uniting and proving that our resolve to support Ukraine remains unshakable will Putin know that his bullying aggression will not win.

To the people of Ukraine we insist you are not alone. We reiterate our demand for a coordinated response of financial, military, and political assistance to Ukraine and remain gravely concerned about the safety of civilians throughout the country. We demand Russia’s unequivocal cessation of hostilities to avoid further devastating consequences for the continent on which Liberal International was founded, 75 years ago.

24/02/2022

On emergency measures to prevent war

Decision by the Federal Political Committee of Yabloko No 149 of 25.02.2022, published on 27.01.2022

The life, health, safety and well-being of millions of people in Russia and Ukraine are under threat. A military clash between the two neighbouring states is becoming more and more likely, fraught with huge casualties. This is a conflict of a pan-European scale, which can develop into a global one.

The consequences of the war with Ukraine are predictable for Russia: in any case, whatever the outcome, this will be the beginning of the destruction of Russia's statehood, a harbinger of its economic collapse and territorial disintegration.

The primary task of a responsible government is to extinguish the danger of war. The authorities must do everything necessary to prevent escalation of tension, using all possible political and diplomatic means.

The duty and responsibility of the society is to provide all possible assistance to the authorities in solving this vital task. Ensuring the peace and security of people is the highest priority.

In the current emergency situation, the Yabloko party presents to the Russian society and the President of Russia a plan of specific actions to prevent war and save the country.

The main thing that needs to be done is an immediate de-escalation, that is, the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Ukrainian border. This is today a necessary condition for any successful negotiations between Russia and Ukraine, the US and NATO. This is what protecting the interests and security of Russia means now.

The conflict around Ukraine is a part and a consequence of the aggravated global confrontation between Russia, on the one hand, and the US and NATO, on the other. What is necessary and possible to do right now to normalise global international relations? Such a programme developed by Russian experts and highly qualified specialists does exist, and the Yabloko party proposes it to the President.

In February 2021, Russia and the United States have already extended the Strategic Offensive Arms Treaty (START-3). This is important, but completely insufficient. For Russia the way out of the current situation could be negotiations with the US and NATO on a wide range of issues. Such negotiations can evolve on the following issues:

— the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which was denounced more than two years ago, in August 2019, should be resumed. Russia is concerned that the US could deploy medium-range missiles in Eastern Europe, including Ukraine, that could reach Moscow in minutes. Meanwhile, Russian cruise missiles in Kaliningrad could reach Berlin just as quickly. A deal that bans these missiles from Europe but leaves the US the option of deploying them in Asia against China—essentially a revived regional INF Treaty—would be objectively beneficial to both sides;

— Moscow's demand to refrain from deploying ground-based medium-range missiles outside the national territories of Russia and the United States can become the basis for negotiations to update the 1987 INF Treaty, which fell apart in 2018, as it is believed, after violations by Russia;

— Russia and NATO could explore new mechanisms for monitoring the deployment of conventional forces and holding military exercises, as well as agree to increase transparency and expand communications;

— it is possible to discuss the revision of the deployment of NATO troops in the countries bordering on Russia, subject to a radical improvement in relations between Moscow and Kiyv and the coordination of restrictions on the deployment of Russian forces and weapons in Belarus and Kaliningrad;

— it is necessary to agree on open, equal, and mutual arms control. This applies to both conventional and nuclear forces. It is well known in practice that arms control reduces tension;

— productive negotiations are also possible on a whole range of military issues: on confidence-building measures, limitation of military activities, the scale of military exercises, and transparency, i.e. on those issues that are of interest both to the United States, NATO, and Russia. All this can become the basis for continuing a broad dialogue on strategic stability;

— discussing, developing and concluding agreements on cybersecurity can become truly promising.

In our opinion, the start of specific negotiations in these areas is a real way out of the difficult situation that has now developed in relations between Russia and the West and, at the same time, a way to maintain peace between Russia and Ukraine. What is needed is political will and an understanding of the enormous responsibility.

Sometimes modern leaders find it humiliating to resort to the services of qualified mediation, preferring to solve problems with the help of force.

We consider such a path categorically unacceptable for our country.

The recent events once again confirm the need for practical implementation of the Plan for a Peaceful Settlement in Donbass (<https://2018.yavlinsky.ru/donbass/>).

In particular, the Yabloko party considers it necessary as a first step to implement the following:

1. Withdraw all units of the Russian armed forces from Donbass, no matter under what cover they operate there. Stop military, financial, diplomatic and other support for separatist forces and movements operating on the territory of Ukraine.
2. To contribute in every possible way to the international peacekeeping forces in terms of ensuring the security of the population of Donbass.
3. Conduct an exchange of prisoners on the principle of “all for all” and declare an amnesty.
4. To offer the Normandy Four countries and the United States a form of international guardianship over the “territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions with a special procedure for local self-government” based on the institution of international guardianship provided for in Chapter 12 of the UN Charter, using the experience of the 1995 Dayton Accords and the 1954 Saar Agreements.
5. Conclude a special multilateral (Ukraine, Russia, Germany, France, the US and the EU) agreement on the interim status of “the territories of Donetsk and Lugansk regions with a special procedure for local self-government” under the auspices of the UN Security Council, according to which all powers in these territories are transferred to international governing bodies for the period until the final settlement of the conflict, and legal proceedings, law enforcement, and control abroad are carried out by representatives of the countries participating in the agreement.

6. Develop and introduce a “special economic zone” regime based on a combination of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU and the renewal of the CIS Free Trade Area Agreement. Form special funds for economic assistance to restore the economy and social sphere of the region.
7. Only after the recognition by all parties to the agreement that all the necessary conditions have been created to ensure the security and normal life of the population, and the entire territory of Donbass will be transferred under the full control of Ukraine.

The Yabloko party is ready to organise and responsibly participate in the civil international negotiation process aimed at implementing these proposals.

We consider it important to conduct direct negotiations on the principles of people’s diplomacy with all interested parties. We will do our best to attract to public diplomacy people who are respected, courageous and honest, and who understand the essence of the situation and cultural traditions from all sides. Perhaps the negotiations will take a long time, but this is much better than a “good” war. The guns fall silent during negotiations.

We propose organising an open and equal public dialogue between representatives of the civil society of Russia and Ukraine in order to prepare direct negotiations between Presidents Putin and Zelensky. We consider such a dialogue vital to prevent bloodshed and war, and we are ready to contribute in every possible way to its early start.

Russia and Ukraine will always be neighbours. Sooner or later a direct dialogue will take place. Better sooner than later. Better instead than after war. There is still time for such negotiations. The price of these negotiations is saved human lives, and the free and secure future of millions of people.

The Yabloko party is waiting for President Putin’s response to the proposals to prevent war.

Grigory Yavlinsky,
Chairman of the Yabloko Federal Political Committee

<https://eng.yabloko.ru/on-emergency-measures-to-prevent-war/>

We had hoped for more information from Yabloko, but understand why this has not been possible. Their courage in this situation cannot be underestimated.

On 3 March, the police in Rostov-on-Don detained Vladimir Beradze, a member of the Yabloko party. He is one of the applicants for the action “For Peace and Friendship Between Peoples”.

The police approached Beradze in the street and checked his documents, and then took away his passport and phone. The police accused the activist of swearing and molesting passers-by, as well as resisting arrest, which was not true.

Follow Yabloko’s website <https://eng.yabloko.ru/> for on-going news

International Abstracts

Journal of Liberal History, Issue 113 Winter 2021-22

Lloyd George, and the Versailles Treaty, by Tory peer, Alistair Lexden, is the primary international article, whilst Neil Stockley reports on the group's Liberalism in the United States meeting. Rosenblatt probably wasn't the speaker they needed; someone with a liberty bodice rather than an academic corset. We know that Liberalism per se comes out of the French Revolution, but the American Constitution is certainly a Liberal document and many of the revolutionary leaders were at least proto-Liberals, if not in all ways. Traub, whose focus was on Hubert Humphrey was probably more what they were looking for. Simon Banks' review of Rosenblatt's *Lost History* appears in this issue. Otherwise, there is a memorial of Sir Peter Ustinov, lifelong Liberal internationalist. Ian Cawood writes on The Black Book – the journalism that led up to the Great Reform Act of 1832, and David Dutton commences the biography of Percy Molteno, focusing on the Boer War amongst foreign affairs

Ukraine obviously dominates the media...

Forget partisan scorekeeping. Our Ukraine policy isn't about instant results, by Jennifer Rubin. Washington Post 27th February 2022.

A change from the usual hypocritical hand-wringing from the press.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/02/27/media-narrative-ukraine/>

The UK's Kleptocracy Problem, how servicing post-Soviet elites weakens the rule of law. Chatham House, 8.12.2021 isbn 9781784135102

The Augean Stables of Westminster need serious reform... but would Torkeys vote for Christmas? As Katy-Jayne101 tweeted More than 700 Russian millionaires were fast-tracked for British residency via the government's "golden visa" scheme. Only 50 visas have been given to Ukrainians fleeing war. This tells you everything you need to know about the government's "solidarity" with Ukraine. Use this in your local campaigning.

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/12/uks-kleptocracy-problem/05-reputation-laundering-and-political-influencing>

Former MI6 Chief on the Ukraine & Russia Conflict | Oxford Union. 2nd March 2022

Sir John Sawwers thoughts – a long haul.

<https://youtu.be/Yw5lzKVn3sc>

reviews

The Lost History of Liberalism, from Ancient Rome to the Twenty-First Century by Helena Rosenblatt
Princeton University Press 2018 £28.00
isbn 9780691170701

American academic Rosenblatt's 'linguistic history' of Liberalism lucidly describes what people meant when they said they were Liberal. Ideas not then named liberal are often omitted: her UK political Liberalism starts around 1820, not with Magna Carta, the Civil War, Levellers, 1689 or Charles James Fox. A historian of political thought, not a social historian, she concentrates on writers, academics, preachers and political leaders.

She features four countries – France, Germany, Britain and America. Some outside events feature such as Belgium's liberal constitution and the shockwaves of Liberalism in Latin America and India (just). But Spain, appearing when 'Liberal' first took on a political meaning there from 1808, soon disappears. The revolts against Spanish rule in Latin America are not mentioned. More surprisingly, she explores the long hostility between the Catholic Church (not all Catholics) and French liberalism, but not that conflict's climatic, liberal-defining event - the Dreyfus affair.

Liberalism never meant unrestrained individualism and capitalism (an unhistorical late 19th century gloss). 'Classical liberalism' as currently understood is a myth. Liberalism does not define itself by the size of the state.

So what is it? To Cicero, 'liberalitas' was what characterised a model citizen of the Roman Republic - public-spirited, generous, an active citizen, not seeking selfish advantage. It did not imply unease about slavery: Cicero defended privilege – provided the privileged were dutiful citizens. We may recognise as Liberal the focus on active citizenship, citizens rather than subjects or consumers.

Christianity adopted this. St Ambrose said any true community rested upon justice and goodwill. Puritan John Winthrop exhorted Massachusetts settlers to liberality – "bear one another's burdens". Only a few - Winthrop and John Donne - thought liberality was for all. However, by 1772, the Oxford English Dictionary defined it as "free from bias, prejudice or bigotry; open-minded, tolerant". Liberal active citizens supported a free constitution. Adam Smith wrote: "He is not a citizen who does not wish to promote... the welfare of the whole society of his fellow-citizens."

the
LOST HISTORY
of
LIBERALISM



FROM ANCIENT ROME
TO THE
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY
HELENA ROSENBLATT

Liberal' was politicised with the French Revolution, resistance to Napoleon and reactionary monarchist clampdowns across Europe. Liberals stressed duties and morality as much as rights. Rosenblatt may exaggerate this: the French Revolutionary document, The Declaration of the Rights of Man, set out familiar Liberal rights, like the Preamble to the American Declaration of Independence.

She highlights travails and divisions of French Liberals under Louis Philippe and Napoleon III: the latter, mixing brutal repression with plebiscitary populism, resembled modern illiberal figures like Turkey's Erdoğan. German Liberals, seeing unification as a precondition of a liberal state, made peace with Prussian authoritarianism. Was Liberalism really not achievable in a multi-state Germany?

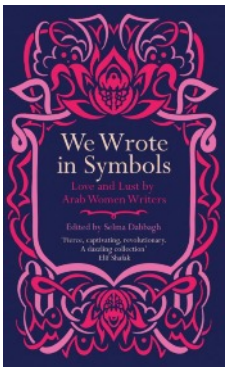
In the 19th century Liberals disagreed on the 'social question'. Some wanted minimum government intervention in the economy; others, a strong, liberal state combating poverty. French and German Liberals

worried about poverty, but, unlike socialists, did not reach out to the workers. They worried, rightly, that rapid enfranchisement of the masses might bring Caesarism: Louis Napoleon became French president through universal manhood suffrage. In Britain, where there were no 1848 revolutions, socialism was theoretical and a strong Liberal party existed since 1859, Liberals built support in the urban and rural working classes.

Apart from Beveridge and T.H. Green, she omits British political Liberalism after Gladstone, focusing on modern America. Roosevelt's Universal Declaration of Human Rights gained urgency from experience of fascism, total war and the final solution. It could give Liberals moral high ground against communism. But soon intellectual refugees in Britain spoke. Berlin proposed anything more than limiting state powers (negative liberty) meant a slippery slope to totalitarianism. Hayek argued the state – however caring it seemed – was a con trick. Thus, a split Liberalism, one based on rights, entitlements and welfare; the other, on a minimal state and people calculating personal interests producing the best outcome for society. That muddled British Liberalism has differences from the former, and opposes the latter, I celebrate.

So – a brilliant exposition of Liberalism's intellectual history, which stresses the Liberal antecedents of active citizenship and community co-operation while undermining the 'economic liberal' back story and challenging us to rethink nervousness about moral teachings.

Simon Banks



We Wrote in Symbols, Love and Lust by Arab Women Writers,
edited by Selma Dabbagh.
Saqi 2021 £14.99
isbn 9780863564956
e-Book £9.99

Read this book slowly, with a lover to hand.

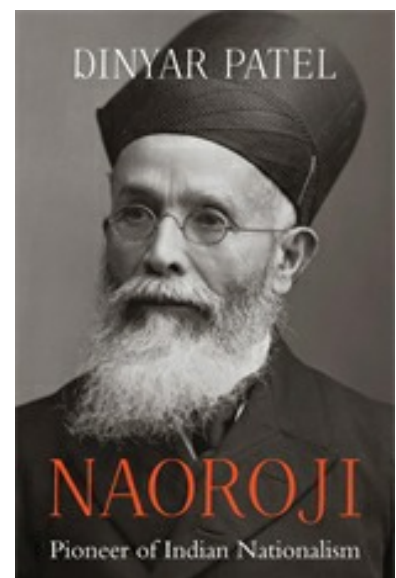
Leïla Khan

Naoroji, pioneer of Indian Nationalism, by Dinyar Patel.
Harvard University Press 2020 £28.95
isbn 9780674238206

I was always rather pleased that the first Indian elected to the House of Commons was a Liberal. Dadabhai Naoroji is no longer regarded as the first ethnic minority MP but lacking a connection with Finsbury had not pursued the matter. James Townsend, elected as early as 1767 as Whig MP for West Looe in Cornwall is currently the first known, and it is likely that other West Indian slave owning planter offspring will be added to those already identified.

Naoroji was elected to Finsbury Central in 1892. What will shock you is the level of racism that he encountered on his path to Parliament, not least within his own party, though it was the prejudice of Lord Salisbury that helped him finally break through as the Member for India. Patel shows Naoroji to be a shrewd operator, in and out of House, but this Part of his career was short-lived with Gladstone's demise. Gandhi, who called him the Father of Nation, would pick up the reins and the focus of Indian nationalism would move out Parliament. Naoroji Dedicated his whole life to the cause. Beyond biography, Patel gives us an insight into the workings of grassroots politics in the late 19th Century. You can enjoy this book from many approaches..

Stewart Rayment



LD4SOS NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022

FEDERAL CONFERENCE FRINGE:

What Safe Routes? What's happening with the Nationality and Borders Bill?

Sunday 13th March, 5.40p.m.- 6.45p.m.

An informed discussion with Zoe Gardner, Policy and Advocacy Manager from the Joint Council for the Welfare of immigrants (JCWI), Baroness Sally Hamwee, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Immigration, and Dr Ruvi Ziegler (Associate Professor in International Refugee Law, University of Reading).

There will of course be plenty of time for you to put your questions to our panel.

EU ACTIVATES ITS TEMPORARY PROTECTION DIRECTIVE TO ADDRESS DISPLACEMENT UKRAINE

- On 4th March, EU home office/interior ministers unanimously agreed to activate the EU Temporary Protection Directive ([2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001](#)) for the first time since its adoption over 20 years ago, in the aftermath of the mass displacement from the Balkans.
- The EU Council (ie MS home affairs ministers), acting by a qualified majority voted on a [proposal](#) from the Commission, agreed that there is a mass influx of displaced persons, defined as the arrival in the EU of a large number of displaced persons, who come from a specific country or geographical area, whether their arrival in the EU. was spontaneous or aided. The Directive sets “minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between the Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof.”
Full analysis: <https://eulawanalysis.blogspot.com/2022/02/temporary-protection-for-ukrainians-in.html>).
- **Critically, the Directive applies not just to Ukrainian nationals residing in Ukraine who are displaced as of 24/2/2022 following the military invasion by Russian armed forces, but also to Third-country nationals (TCNs) or stateless persons legally residing in Ukraine who are unable to return to their country or region of origin in safe and durable conditions because of the situation prevailing in that country. This could include persons enjoying refugee status or equivalent protection, or who were asylum seekers in Ukraine at the time of the events leading to the mass influx.** Hence, an asylum-seeker from Afghanistan who has resided in Ukraine prior to the Russian invasion will also be covered - a stark difference from the treatment of such asylum-seekers at the Polish-Belarus border a mere few months ago.
- **Family members of Ukrainians, TCNs, and stateless persons meeting the above definition are also covered.**

- The Directive establishes a common set of rights across all EU member states (Analysis: <https://odysseus-network.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/2001-55-Temporary-Protection-Synthesis.pdf>).
- For applicants, temporary protection ‘shall not prejudice’ refugee recognition under the Refugee Convention, so it will be possible to apply for asylum at any time, although member states may delay consideration of an application for Convention refugee status until the temporary protection has ended. *Any asylum application not processed by the end of the temporary protection period has to be processed afterwards.*
- Member States *may exclude* a person from the benefit of temporary protection on grounds identical to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS VOTED THROUGH TWO SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENTS TO THE INHUMANE NATIONALITY AND BORDERS BILL LAST WEEK.

On 28th February peers voted to remove clause 11, which seeks to treat refugees differently based on how they arrive here, rather than their need for protection.

The Party’s Home Affairs Spokesperson in the Lords, Brian Paddick, co-sponsored an amendment to remove Clause 11 from the Bill.

The clause would have put refugees into “Group 2” if they come to the UK through other countries, giving them only a temporary right to stay in the UK and restricting their ability to sponsor close family members to join them.

The amendment, which had cross-party support, was voted through in the House of Lords by 204 votes to 126. **Speaking after the vote, Lord Paddick said:** “Priti Patel’s Anti-Refugee Bill would criminalise people simply for seeking asylum in the UK. That would include the Ukrainian families who are fleeing Putin’s war at this very moment.

“The horrifying images from Ukraine must surely force Ministers to think again. I am glad we have defeated the Government over its plans to create a second class of refugees, in violation of the UN Refugee Convention, but the Home Secretary should now withdraw the Bill altogether. The UK has a proud history of providing sanctuary to those fleeing war and persecution. Liberal Democrats will resist every attempt by the Conservative Government to undermine that proud British tradition.”

Liberal Democrat Home Affairs Spokesperson, Alistair Carmichael MP said: “Priti Patel’s anti-refugee bill has been dealt another major blow, with measures to make it illegal for people to come to the UK in search of refuge being defeated. “This cruel bill is deeply flawed, particularly given the growing humanitarian crisis caused by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. We should be offering sanctuary to those in need, not criminalising them for seeking safety.

“Liberal Democrats will continue to oppose these draconian measures and push the Government to offer quick and legal routes for Ukrainian’s fleeing Putin’s war machine.”

Then on 2nd March, peers supported a conservative-led amendment, which would commit the government to resettling 10,000 refugees a year.

Take action

Please try to make sure MPs support these two amendments, as the Bill reaches its final stages in parliament. You can:

Share the [change.org](#) petition to the PM

You could share the [change.org](#) petition launched by Together With Refugees' member, Freedom From Torture. It's calling on the government to provide humanitarian support to the people of Ukraine and asks for urgent concessions on the bill, by supporting our two amendments. It has over 160,000 signatures. Can we get it to 200,000?

Contact your MP

Please escalate pressure on your local MP to support the two amendments, especially now in the light of events in Ukraine.

Local landmark campaign, National Day of Action - 21 March 2022

Together with Refugees Coalition members all around the UK are planning their actions for a big reveal of orange hearts on landmarks on a National Day of Action, on 21 March. We want to send a clear message to Government that the bill does not represent #WhoWeAre, as a nation and as local communities. You can find more details about the [local landmark action here](#).

OFFSHORE DETENTION

On 2nd March, the House of Lords voted to scrap plans for offshore detention in the Anti-Refugee Bill, by 208 votes to 155. Baroness Stroud, a Conservative peer, said: "(Offshore detention is) ill-defined but far-reaching, expensive yet ineffective, exposing people to further trauma rather than offering protection."

Thanks to your support for Detention Action's campaign, the Anti-Refugee Bill will return to the House of Commons where MPs will have one more chance to reject plans for offshore detention camps. That gives just a few weeks to gain the support of enough MPs to scrap these cruel and costly plans for good.

Will you join more than 2,000 of Detention Action's supporters and sign our letter to PM Boris Johnson and Priti Patel, calling on them to abandon building offshore detention camps?

Sign the letter [here](#)

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

City of Sanctuary have put together eight ways we can stand in solidarity with Ukraine and make a difference to those who have had to leave everything behind. From making a donation to lobbying your MP, we all have a part to play. Find out more [here](#)

LIFT THE BAN

On 2nd March, during the report stage in the House of Lords, peers debated and passed

[Baroness Stroud's amendment](#) to the Nationality and Borders Bill that would give **people seeking asylum the right to work after six months**, unrestricted by the Shortage Occupation List. The cross-party amendment was supported by peers from across the house, with a [split of 112 to 89](#) votes in favour, including 10 Conservative peers who rebelled against the Government.

While the vote in the Lords was highly significant, the Bill must of course return to the House of Commons before it becomes law.

Lift the Ban coalition members have also shared some highlights from the debate on their social media [here](#) and [here](#), while Baroness Bennett shared her [own speech](#) in which she quoted Lift the Ban campaigner Mamoud: “It would make our lives meaningful and useful at the same time if we could work”.

TAKE ACTION: The Lift the Ban coalition has just launched a [Tweet Your MP action](#) that asks MPs to give their support to #LiftTheBan. As part of this, there are two new animations available based on the many stories Lift the Ban ambassadors have shared over the years (you can download the animations [here](#))

ALDE Member Parties in Ukraine



Party Leader: Olena Oleksiivna Shuliak

The ALDE Party leaders - at their meeting on 28 February 2022 - proposed to grant temporary affiliate status to Sluga Narodu (Servant of the People), the party founded by Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Oleksandrovykh Zelenskyy**. The ALDE Party Bureau subsequently adopted the proposal. The matter of full membership will be discussed by the ALDE Party Council at their meeting in Dublin in June 2022.

SLUGA NARODU The Servant of the People party is a political party created for those who are ready to change Ukraine. The party's priorities are: updating the political system, improving the quality of politics and politicians, establishing the values and principles demanded by society today.



Party Leader: Yuriy Bova

The “People’s Force” is a Ukrainian party, which is built upon transparency and liberal values formed in 2013 before becoming an official political party in August 2014.

SYLA LYUDEY



Party Leader: Kira Rudik

<https://goloszmin.org>

GOLOS