

UKRAINE HOUSE DAVOS

Full House for President Zelenskyy in First Day of Events at Ukraine House Davos



MAY 23 2022, DAVOS, Switzerland – Ukraine House Davos was a full house on Monday with audiences eager to hear an interview with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and insights from historian Timothy Snyder.

The day started with emotional opening remarks from Ukraine House Davos Executive Director Alexa Chopivsky who introduced the all-female team made up of Jaroslawa Z. Johnson, President and CEO of WNISEF; Svitlana Grytsenko of the Victor Pinchuk Foundation; and Lenna Koszarny the Founding Partner and CEO of Horizon Capital, who all produced this year's programme of events alongside a team of Ukrainian volunteers.

Ms Chopivsky highlighted the importance of this year's event: *“Ukraine entered 2022 as a peaceful, democratic, freedom-loving European country with a 1,500-year-history. The country's peace and promise was shattered on February 24 when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This year's Ukraine House will amplify the country's voice on this global stage at this defining moment, hosting critical and timely dialogue aimed at further unifying and informing the response of the international community.”*

The first panel of the day “Defending Freedom on the Frontlines” was made up of speakers who joined the programme via video link directly from the frontlines including Malcolm Nance, the American TV-Pundit who joined the Ukrainian International Legion at the start of the Russia's invasion.

Hollywood actor, Liev Schreiber, who also Co-Founded the BlueCheck Ukraine organisation took part in the panel “Ukraine's Battle Against Tyranny: Why History Matters”. This was followed by the Ukraine House Davos Keynote speech, delivered by celebrated American author and Yale Historian, Timothy Snyder: *“All conversations we are having now which are hopeful are thanks to Ukrainians... the thing that has been most impressive from this war has been that Ukrainians have been doing anything they can do for the war effort. No matter who they are they have done something.”* He highlighted why this war must be won by Ukraine, *“We must be in a position to understand the past in order bring about a possible future. This war must end in the right way. If the war ends in the wrong way this would be a catastrophe for Ukraine and a catastrophe for Europe and the rest of the world.”*

The highlight of the day was an entirely packed room who came to watch the conversation between President Zelensky and Jonathan Swan from Axios. This is the third interview that Swan has done with Zelensky however it was his first since the Russia’s invasion began. Covering topics from his leadership to the international response to the war as well as the fatigue that the international community can feel about war, Zelenskyy said: *“I am a collective leader, I take my lead from the Ukrainian people... I used to think Freedom of expression, where I travelled, where I lived, that this was all my choice and I never thought I had to defend that choice, but you only stay free until the point someone tries to take that away from you, which is what has happened to us now. If you feel tired of this topic, Ukraine will disappear from the front pages of the world and will not get what we need to defend ourselves... What can I say to the people who think this is not in their backyard? Well, the world is much smaller than you think, the pandemic showed this. We did not expect this Russian aggression to start and we do not know where it will stop, whether in Germany, Lithuania or somewhere else. For the occupation there is no notion of distance.”*

Speaking of how the war will end, the President said that: *“Diplomacy is the way to Peace... Our war will end with victory, there is no other way out of this.”*

Tomorrow’s programme of events begins at 11.30 am with comments from the Ukrainian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Digital Transformation Mykhailo Fedorov followed by a conversation with the First Lady of Ukraine Olena Zelenska at 15.00 and a full programme of panels which can be found here: www.ukrainehousedavos.com

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For questions please contact Nikita Bernardi nb@ashbright.com and please register your attendance via the Ukraine House Davos website www.ukrainehousedavos.com