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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**COOPERATION WITH EMBASSY OF CANADA TO UKRAINE WITHIN  
“HELPING HAND TO UKRAINE” PROGRAM TO PROVIDE  
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE TO CHILDREN IN THE “RED” ZONE OF  
WAR CONFLICT IN EASTERN UKRAINE ESTABLISHED**

**Kyiv, January 26, 2017** – “HOPE *worldwide* Ukraine” Charity Foundation has launched the “Psychological Assistance to Children Living in the “Red” Zone of War Conflict Through Trainings for Psychologists and Volunteers and Therapy Sessions for Children and Parents” project. The Project is implemented with support of Canada Fund for Local Initiatives within the frames of partnership between the Foundation and the Embassy of Canada to Ukraine. The contribution agreement has been signed on January 15, 2018.

The goal of the Project is to equip a team of psychologists and volunteers working in Eastern Ukraine with skills of dealing with war trauma through innovative recovery techniques and empower children from “grey” and “red” zone of war conflict with skills and capacities to deal with their traumatic experience and stress using the techniques of psychological self-assistance, relaxation and recovery techniques. The project envisages one “Children and War: Teaching Recovery Techniques” training in Mariupol (February 2018) and two therapy courses – one for children in Maryinka and Krasnohorivka, and the other one in Pokrovsk (January-February 2018). It should be noted that therapy sessions in Maryinka district have already started – they are held since January 22 for the group of 15 children.

According to Ira Sukhova, the chief psychologist of the Project, *“it is a common fact that war events are injuring the human psyche. Yet, they cause the most devastating harm to children who are still formed and who do not have necessary resilience to resist negative external circumstances. Direct assistance to people living in a conflict zone – In the cities of the so-called “grey” and “red” zones, today is extremely important”*. It is certainly not known when exactly the conflict in Eastern Ukraine will end. Therefore the “Children and War: Teaching Recovery Techniques” therapy sessions are useful not only as the first aid. *Equipping people with knowledge and practical skills of dealing with stress disorders on spot will have a long-lasting result, - says the psychologist. - In addition, training for trainers who live in the same cities, and therefore better know the specifics of the region and the peculiarities of the mentality of its inhabitants, will increase positive developments and will foster continuous transfer of acquired theoretical and practical knowledge”*.

The “Helping Hand for Ukraine” project has lasted in Ukraine for 4 years. The team of project psychologists has gained unique knowledge and experience of working with war trauma. Thus, within its 5 stages the project has covered with trainings and therapy sessions (in terms of geography) the entire territory of Ukraine – from the west (Lviv, Drohobych, Ivano-Frankivsk) and the center (Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Cherkasy) to the south (Odesa, Mykolayiv) and east (Dnipro, the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk regions). Over 350 psychologists-volunteers have already

been trained to work with “Children and War: Teaching Recovery Techniques” program. Nearly 800 children and adults – internally displaced persons and those who live in the "grey" and "red" zones of conflict – received psychological assistance skills and techniques of coping with traumatic experiences and stressful situations.

*"This year, with support of Canada Fund for Local Initiatives we have started another stage of the project, focusing on working with people living close to the war conflict zone. Cooperation with the Embassy of Canada to Ukraine opens up new opportunities for wider and more profound assistance to the IDPs and children of war – those who today need immediate psychological rehabilitation",* states Volodymyr Ermakov, president of “HOPE worldwide Ukraine” Charity Foundation.

### **About the “Helping Hand for Ukraine” Project**

The “Helping Hand for Ukraine” project includes “Children and War: Teaching Recovery Techniques” trainings for psychologists, social workers, volunteers who work with traumatized children, therapy sessions for children and parents to acquire skills, techniques and ability to deal with their traumatic experience, rehabilitation and recreational camps for children and retreats for psychologists working with IDPs and children in war conflict zone.

The “Children and War: Teaching Recovery Techniques” program was developed by the Centre for Crisis Psychology (Bergen, Norway) and the Institute of Psychiatry (London, Great Britain). In Ukraine, the manual was translated and adapted by the experts from the Ukrainian Institute of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (Lviv, Ukraine). Among project partners are Embassy of Canada to Ukraine, “HOPE worldwide Canada” and “HOPE worldwide” (USA) charity organizations, Ukrainian Institute of Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy, and “HOPE worldwide Zurich” (Switzerland) charity organization.

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### **“HOPE worldwide Ukraine” (<http://hopeww.org.ua/en>)**

“HOPE worldwide Ukraine” is a non-governmental charitable organization, performing its activities in Ukraine since 1998, which aims to improve the quality of life for children and adults who live in difficult socio-economic conditions. The main activities of the Foundation include providing humanitarian aid to the IDPs and psychological assistance to children traumatized by war in the Eastern Ukraine; fostering social adaptation of orphans with disabilities who live in orphanages and boarding schools in the city of Kyiv and within the Kyiv oblast; assisting state elderly care institutions in sustaining physical and emotional needs of the elderly; promoting healthy lifestyles among adolescents and youth; and promoting voluntary blood donation and recruiting blood donors.

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### **HOPE worldwide, Ltd (<http://hopeww.org>), “HOPE worldwide Canada” (<http://hopewwc.org>)**

HOPE worldwide, Ltd is a registered non-profit 501 (3) c) charity, headquartered in Philadelphia (USA). HOPE worldwide Canada is a registered charity, headquartered in Toronto, Ontario (Canada). The mission of both organizations is as simple as its name: “to bring hope to a hurting world”. HOPE worldwide was founded in 1991 with three programs of humanitarian service. Now it serves the poor in 75 nations on all six inhabited continents. With over 100,000 committed volunteers, HOPE worldwide annually serves more than 2 million needy people worldwide. HOPE worldwide is a recognized NGO with special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. HOPE worldwide Canada has been recognized by municipal, provincial and federal governments for its programs and committed volunteer base.

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