Dear Server,

I write to you from Poland, where Ukrainian flags hang in front of many shops and restaurants, and where millions of ordinary people have taken Ukrainian refugees into their homes. In recent months I have been to Washington, DC, where many embassies fly the Ukrainian flag alongside those of their own country; to Berlin, where the colors of the Ukrainian flag lit up the Brandenburg Gate in the evening; and to Taipei, where government ministers wear the Ukrainian flag in their lapels. All of this support for Ukraine is also support for you, and for so many others like you. Millions of people around the world know that the war between Russia and Ukraine is a struggle between tyranny and liberty, between a vicious, brutal kleptocracy and a free, sovereign nation, filled with people who demand the right to speak and to write the truth.

You are one of those who has spoken and written with great eloquence, even under Russian occupation. Your letter to fellow Crimean journalists, and your call for a "non-violent, peaceful struggle against injustice" was read and heard. Don't lose heart or give up, because your ideas and your vision of the future is shared by millions of people, inside and outside of Ukraine.

We know that the Crimean Tatars are victims of profound discrimination, that they have been unwillingly conscripted to serve in a war they don't want to fight. We know that the Crimean Peninsula has been brutally pacified, that Ukrainians and Tatars have been persecuted, that their languages and history have been suppressed.

We also know that the charges against you are nonsense. We know that the judicial system that condemned you is illegitimate. We know that the Russian regime itself is illegitimate – chosen by no one, it stays in power only thanks to theft and violence. When it ends, you will be free.

Thank you for your work. Remember that we are waiting for your return home.

Yours in solidarity,

Anne Applebaum

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author