

Local politicians react to Westminster Hall speech by Ukrainian president

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky paid a visit to the UK today and visited the UK Parliament where hundreds of MPs listened to him speak in Westminster Hall. This included most of our local MPs who have offered their reactions to hearing him in person.

Before he left to meet with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and have an audience with His Majesty King Charles, the president dressed in his customary military attire told all the MPs that he thanked them in advance for powerful English planes.

The charismatic president said: ““Combat aircraft for Ukraine, wings for freedom.”

The UK and other countries in Europe have not agreed to send anything more than the weapons and humanitarian aid already sent to the country invaded by Russia almost a year ago.



President Volodymyr Zelensky visits the UK Parliament where he was met at Speaker's House by Commons Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle and the Lord Speaker Lord McFall of Alcluith PHOTO ©UK Parliament/Jessica Taylor

Some of our local MPs were in the audience listening intently to the president.

Ian Murray MP Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland said: "Westminster Hall has witnessed centuries of oratory from monarchs, heads of state and leaders. Today added another to that rich history. From the recognition of the "spirit and ideals of these great islands" to the defiance of "freedom will win – defiance will lose". But also a thank you to Britain for all we have collectively done for the people of Ukraine in their time of need. We do all stand together.

"I left Westminster Hall thinking of my time in Kyiv and

hoping that the Russian aggression that gave us this brutal war would soon be defeated and bloodshed stopped.”

Deidre Brock MP for Edinburgh North and Leith said: “It was a great privilege to be present along with many hundreds of others this afternoon to hear President Zelenskyy speak. The atmosphere was electric, and his words just reverberated throughout Westminster Hall.

“His speech served as an important reminder to maintain our resolute support for Ukraine at this critical point in this war. The President spoke passionately and from the heart, highlighting the importance of remaining principled in these dark days, and assuring us that “Freedom will win!”. He spoke too of his country’s gratitude for our sustained support and the importance of persistent economic sanctions so Putin can no longer afford to continue with his illegal invasion. We support the UK Government’s recent provision of tanks to Ukraine. Regarding today’s reports that the Prime Minister is speaking to the MOD about the possibility of sending aircraft, however, it is only right that any decision on future equipment provision – such as fighter jets – should be taken with the full agreement, consensus and coordination of NATO allies.”

Christine Jardine MP for Edinburgh West said: “It was immensely moving. It’s the second time Zelensky has spoken to us of course but the first time in person.

“The atmosphere in Westminster Hall was electric. So many historic moments here and this one matched any of them.

“It was clear he had come to talk about the need for fast jets, and while we want to do everything possible to help I will be guided by others better placed as to whether that is the best way. It was incredibly moving to hear how important the aid we have given so far has been and to know that we are helping to make a difference. Ukraine’s battle for freedom is

something that is vital for all of us. 'freedom will win' was a sentiment we all agreed with."

Edinburgh South West MP, Joanna Cherry, KC, said: "It was a privilege to hear President Zelensky speak today. I've never seen Westminster Hall so packed or such an enthusiastic reception for a visiting head of state which was a testament to the continued support and friendship we offer to Ukrainians in their time of desperate need."



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