1. **Introduction**

1.

Since Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, there have been many reports of potential violations of international humanitarian law and crimes under international law. In the face of these events, more than 14 million Ukrainians have left their homeland to seek shelter in neighbouring countries. More than 8 million Ukrainians have been registered by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as seeking temporary protection. Many of these displaced people have witnessed some of the cruelest crimes imaginable in the modern world, and the scale of their suffering is striking. The number of potential witnesses to the crimes committed in Ukraine is enormous, as is the number of people harmed by these crimes. No justice system can cope with such a huge amount of information available to these people. Past experience of international and national prosecutions of international crimes indicates that only a few witnesses to armed conflicts and few victims of such crimes will testify before investigators and even fewer will testify before the courts. However, it is important to gather as much information as possible about the evidence of these crimes and the victims. The Project Sunflowers is intended to complement the activities of national authorities and international tribunals established to prosecute and adjudicate war crimes, crimes against humanity, crimes of genocide, crimes of aggression or other serious human rights violations related to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

**II. Mission of the Sunflowers Project: *Enabling Information, Enabling Justice***

2.

The mission of the Project Sunflowers is to support international and national bodies established to investigate and adjudicate international crimes and authorities involved in reparation projects for victims of the war in Ukraine.

3.

This mission is accomplished by making available to these authorities’ information on evidence of international crimes and other serious human rights violations, and the damage suffered as a result. This information is collected in a secure database specially created for this purpose, based on voluntary testimonies from potential witnesses and victims.

4.

By supporting in this way competent international and national law enforcement authorities, tribunals established to prosecute perpetrators of international crimes, and authorities involved in reparation projects, the Project Sunflowers contributes to bringing justice to the victims of the war in Ukraine and reinforcing the belief that the perpetrators of these crimes will not avoid accountability.

5.

The Project also raises awareness about international war crimes, crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and crimes of aggression, as well as humanitarian law, migration law, human rights and reparations for victims of armed conflict.

**III. The Project Sunflowers Team**

6.

The initiators of the Project are internationally and nationally recognized experts in the field of international criminal law, humanitarian law, migration law, human rights protection and reparations in armed conflicts. The Project team is made up of lawyers whose knowledge and professional experience have influenced the final shape of the Project. The initiators of the Project Sunflowers are at the same time individuals known for their charitable activities. Everything that has been implemented by the Team since the Project's creation has been based on *pro bono* work.

7.

The initiators of the Project Sunflowers are (in alphabetical order):

- **Anna Adamska-Gallant, Pd.D.** - former judge in Kosovo and now the head of the EU's largest Pravo Justice Project supporting justice reform in Ukraine;

- **Matthew Gillett, Ph.D.** - senior lecturer at Essex University in the UK; carries out a special mandate on behalf of the UN on the protection of human rights; former investigator at the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague;

- **Ewa Hofmańska, Ph. D.** - former legal expert at the Trust Fund for Victims at the International Criminal Court in The Hague;

- **Witold Klaus, Professor** - specialist in migration law; founder of the Legal Intervention Association; human rights activist;

- **Natalia Klima-Piotrowska** - attorney-at-law; chairwoman of the Human Rights Committee of the Polish Bar Association;

- **Marina Lostal, Ph.D.** - Senior Lecturer at Essex University, UK; Director of the Human Rights Clinic Centre at the University; expert on reparations for victims of armed conflict with experience of working at the Trust Fund for Victims at the International Criminal Court in The Hague;

- **Mikołaj Pietrzak** - attorney-at-law; the dean of the Warsaw Bar Association; the only Polish lawyer registered as an advocate at the International Criminal Court in The Hague;

- **Oksana Senatorova, Ph.D.** - advisor to Volodymyr Zelensky, the President of Ukraine, on criminal law reform; Council of Europe expert on internally displaced persons in Ukraine; expert on humanitarian law;

- **Mykhaylo Shepitko, Ph.D.** - member of the Ukrainian criminal law codification commission; expert on international criminal law;

- **Paweł Wiliński, Professor** - judge of the Polish Supreme Court; former ad hoc judge at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg; the only Polish lawyer to have appeared before the International Criminal Court in The Hague as an *amicus curie*.

8.

The Project team has established a Foundation to implement the Project. The Foundation Sunflowers was registered by the registration court in Warsaw, Poland, on 24 February 2023 (KRS 0001019393).

9.

The Foundation Sunflowers is headed by the Foundation Council, which is the controlling and opinion-forming body. The Foundation Sunflowers’ Council is chaired by Professor Paweł Wiliński. The Foundation is represented externally and performs its tasks by the three-member Foundation Executive Board, whose President is Dr. Ewa Hofmańska (email: [ewa.hofmanska@projectsunflowers.org](mailto:ewa.hofmanska@projectsunflowers.org) )

**IV. Uniqueness of the Project Sunflowers**

10.

The unquestionable value of this Project is already its Team, which includes internationally and nationally recognised experts. This Team has made every effort to make the Project Sunflowers unique. The effort to complete the evidence to hold the perpetrators of the crimes accountable is combined by the Project Team with respect for the integrity of the victims of these crimes and potential witnesses in such a way that:

- information is provided voluntarily by potential witnesses and victims of the war in Ukraine by filling in an online form, prepared for this purpose by the Project Team,

- the information creates a database of evidence of international crimes and the damage caused as a result,

- personal and contact details of potential witnesses and victims of crimes committed in Ukraine are also collected in order to make it easier for the competent authorities to contact those who have information relevant to their investigation,

- at any stage of the collection of information, the person providing the information may complete his/her form or even withdraw it, of which he/she will be informed in advance,

- the information will not be processed for any other purpose or by any other entity than the authorised law enforcement authorities, tribunals or authorities involved in reparation projects,

- potential witnesses and victims of the war in Ukraine may, if necessary, be assisted in submitting information to the database by volunteers,

- the volunteers assisting in filling in the form will be trained to contact people who have experienced the trauma of war in order not to traumatise them again,

- thanks to the already established network of volunteers in Ukraine and the countries of potential witnesses and victims of the war in Ukraine, the Project Team will create a unique database, incomparably larger than those created locally in the framework of ongoing investigations in individual countries.

**V. Project Sunflowers as a *Know-How* project**

11.

The initiators of the Project are convinced of the applicability of the solutions adopted in the Project Sunflowers in the context of other armed conflicts. For this reason, the Project should be seen as a *know-how* project.

**VI. Achievements of the Project Sunflowers Team**

12.

Although the Project Sunflowers was created spontaneously as an international initiative of lawyers just a few days after the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, its Team has since:

- launched (in March 2022) the Project's website, which is now available in 8 languages (Ukrainian, English, Polish, Slovak, Italian, Spanish, Greek and German): <https://projectsunflowers.org/pl/home>

- established (in July 2022) the Foundation Sunflowers, which oversees the implementation of the Project Sunflowers

- launched (in October 2022) social media to provide updates on the Project: <https://linkedin.com/company/projectsunflowers> and

<https://facebook.com/theprojectsunflowers>

- built a network of volunteers in Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland, the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Estonia, the United States, Lithuania and Hungary

- sent (in November 2022 and January 2023) several thousand leaflets about the Project to the eastern part of Ukraine, which were distributed to local communities there

- systematically organises trainings on psychological support for first responders who have experienced the war in Ukraine

- systematically organises open and free of charge webinars on international criminal law, humanitarian law, human rights, migration law, reparations to victims of armed conflict with the participation of recognised international and national experts in these fields

- has launched of an application to collect information and obtained a secure server to store it

- launched (in December 2022) an online collection on the recognised crowdfunding platform pomagam.pl to raise funds to pay for the information collection software and to ensure the security of the server on which the information will be stored

- actively promotes the Project in international and national media, giving interviews on the radio, television and in the press

- presents the Project at international and national conferences

- established cooperation with the Supreme Bar Council, Ukrainian Bar Association, The Peace and Justice Initiative, Association for Legal Intervention, Wolters Kluwer, Pravo-Justice Project, Centre for International Humanitarian Law and Transitional Justice, Association Internationale De Droit Penal, Platform for Peace and Humanity, ua. support, Intellectum, Feminoteka, Lazarski University Student Legal Clinic, Tech to The Rescue, Meritum, The Law Society of England and Wales, Polish Centre for Torture Victims, Coalition for the International Criminal Court, School of Law University of Chapman, Irish Bar Association, Loyola Law School, Trust Fund for Victims of the International Criminal Court, Orphans Feeding Foundation, International Association of Lawyers UIA-IROL, welcomerefugees. it, Hungarian Helsinki Committee, Hungarian Bar Association, and many law firms from the UK, Germany, Greece, Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine.

**VII. Needs of the Project/Foundation Sunflowers**

13.

The needs of the Project/Foundation Sunflowers are of two types:

(a) **promotion of the Project**, through which the Project Team:

- reach those for whom the Project was created with information about the Project,

- attract new volunteers.

(b) **financial support** of the Project, thanks to which its Team will be able to cover:

- costs of the Project, which are mainly IT costs (maintenance of the website, applications, secure server),

- costs of organising the webinars, including simultaneous translations,

- costs for training of volunteers,

- costs of Project promotion,

- costs of administrative and accounting services,

- salaries of persons working on the Project.

**VIII. Possible benefits for business thanks to cooperation with the Foundation Sunflowers**

14.

Cooperation with the Foundation Sunflowers is a unique opportunity:

- to build social and market prestige by demonstrating community involvement,

- demonstrate empathy with the victims of the war in Ukraine,

- to experience a sense of empowerment by making the Project Sunflowers possible,

- achieve satisfaction through money well spent,

- to meet world-class experts on international criminal law, humanitarian law, human rights, migration law or reparations to victims of armed conflict,

- a sense of purpose through the creation of a good business environment.