



Embassy of Antigua and Barbuda, Washington, DC

MEDIA RELEASE

Ukraine presents Order of Merit to Sir Ronald Sanders for defense of sovereignty and international law

WASHINGTON, DC, 19 October 2026: Sir Ronald Sanders, Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States (OAS), was today presented with Ukraine's Order of Merit at a ceremony at the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington, DC.

The award, conferred by decree of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on 24 August 2025, recognises Sir Ronald's contribution to strengthening interstate cooperation and supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.



Presenting the decoration on behalf of President Zelenskyy, Ukraine's Chargé d'affaires, Denys Sienik, described Sir Ronald as "an outstanding diplomat, a principled statesman, and a true friend of Ukraine".

Mr. Sienik credited the Mission of Antigua and Barbuda, under Sir Ronald's leadership, with serving as a principal driving force behind the OAS's consideration of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. He highlighted Sir Ronald's work in initiating diplomatic action, negotiating texts and mobilising support for resolutions and declarations defending Ukraine.

These included the February 2022 declaration condemning the invasion, the March 2022 resolution calling for Russia's immediate military withdrawal, and the April 2022 resolution suspending Russia's status as a Permanent Observer at the OAS. Mr. Sienik also recognised Sir Ronald's subsequent advocacy at OAS General Assemblies and his sustained public support through widely published commentaries.



Accepting the honor, Sir Ronald said he shared it with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, whose support for Ukraine rested on principles essential to the country's own existence: sovereignty, territorial integrity and every nation's right to determine its future.

"For Antigua and Barbuda, and for smaller nations everywhere, sovereignty is the freedom to govern ourselves, preserve our identity and decide how our people will live. International law protects that freedom. When it is violated with impunity in one country, its protection is weakened for all."

He added: "Ukraine's people bear the suffering of this war. But the principle they are defending belongs to every nation: our unequal power does not diminish our equal rights."

Expressing solidarity with Ukrainian families who had lost loved ones or been displaced, Sir Ronald called for a just and lasting peace that respected Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"They also deserve the support of every nation that believes in justice, international law, democracy and the right of all peoples to live free from threats and coercion," he said.

(ENDS)