

Ottawa

Room 1070, The Valour Building
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Tel: 613.996.1783
Fax: 613.995.1415

Constituency

Box 4458
5124 50 Street
Barrhead, AB T7N 1A3
Tel: 780.305.0340
Fax: 780.305.0343
Toll Free: 1.800.667.8450



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Arnold Viersen, MP

Peace River—Westlock



June 21st, 2022

Dear Minister Joly,

I write to you today to follow up on the questions I have asked recently in the House of Commons in regard to Ukraine and the increase in sex trafficking of women and girls. I have pointed out that during the war and conflict, women and youth are often at increased risk of exploitation.

On June 6th, the UN special envoy for sexual violence in conflict Pramila Patten said Ukraine is turning into “a human trafficking crisis.”

In recent years, Ukraine has become one of the top five countries in Europe with the most victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. And since Russia’s invasion, there has been an enormous increase in the demand for Ukrainian women for sexual purposes. A recent article in *Le Devoir* stated, “If Ukrainian women have always been popular in the global sex market, the game of supply and demand has literally exploded in recent months.”

As *Le Devoir* further pointed out, this demand also transcends borders through online pornographic content: “a quick search on Google Trend confirms the dizzying increase in the use of the words *Ukrainian porn* in the first weeks of the conflict, both in Canada and in all countries.”

Respectfully Minister, I have yet to receive a clear answer as to what specific steps Canada has been taking to ensure that Ukrainian women and youth seeking refuge in Canada are not being trafficked or exploited, as well as your Government’s commitment to tackle the demand-side of the trafficking of Ukrainian refugees within Canada. This influx in demand is startling, disgusting and even racist as *Le Devoir* noted; yet no steps have been taken to protect them as they arrive in Canada.

As I asked the Parliamentary Secretary during adjournment proceedings:

- Do Ukrainian refugees to Canada receive any sort of information warning them about sex trafficking or exploitation in prostitution when they arrive?
- Is it in their own language?
- Where do they go if they know they need help?
- Have CBSA employees been trained with the latest information to recognize potential cases?

Further, European countries like Sweden, have put women’s equality first and tackled the demand side of this issue head on. However, the Liberal Government has shown little interest in tackling the demand from sex buyers for Ukrainian women and children.



Arnold.Viersen@parl.gc.ca
www.mparnold.ca

Minister Joly, I urge you to take action on this front to ensure that Ukrainian women and girls seeking refuge in Canada are protected from exploitation and sex trafficking. So long as men can purchase women and girls' bodies for their own sexual gratification without consequence within our borders, Ukrainian refugee women and girls are at risk of being trafficked into prostitution and sexual exploitation in Canada.

Minister, I appreciate your genuine concern for this important issue and look forward to working with you to ensure that Ukrainian people coming to Canada are remain free from sexual exploitation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "AL Viersen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Arnold Viersen, MP
Peace River – Westlock

