



**Good day, we are from Ukraine!  
With gratitude from Mykolaiv**

Photo by Svitlana Vovk

**It's more than a month since a full-scale war has been going on in Ukraine. A month of grief, bombings, deaths of our compatriots and an uncertain future.**

Due to the tense situation, local military clashes and constant air threats, there are significant difficulties with the uninterrupted supply of food to stores in some cities of Ukraine. Nikolaev faced this problem, there is an accumulation of enemy equipment and the military of the Russian Federation around it.

The main trading networks of the city have introduced a restriction for the sale of a social group of goods to one buyer. Products such as bread, cereals, sugar, butter are sold in quantities of no more than 2 units per person to prevent the creation of artificial shortages and hype due to the state of war. In addition, local experts predict interruptions in the supply of products to Nikolaev, a shortage of individual products in the near future. Household appliances, clothing stores have been closed since the day the war began. There are big queries near drugstores but after an hour on chill winds you have got to know about absence of medicine your need...

As we said in a previous publication, thanks to the MDEM Evacuation Team, more than 350 people - MDEM employees and their families - are safe.

However, more than 100 MDEM employees with their families decided to stay at home in Nikolaev. At the same time, every one of them without exception are so happy for relatives, friends, colleagues who could be evacuated. Everyone has their own reason for staying in a dangerous place - someone is in military reserve, others has elderly parents who are not transportable. These reasons are different, but everyone has a common threat - war and a big dream - to survive.

It is worth noting that in this difficult situation, there are positive aspects. As it turned out, nothing pisses people off like trouble. Since the beginning of the war, we have been observing how people behave in stores, in queues of pharmacies, at bus stops. People are frightened, confused, startle at every sound, but treat each other with great kindness and attention. Today there is no concept of "alien", we are all together, we have each other's backs to the end.

For MDEM employees and their families in Nikolaev humanitarian aid from colleagues from Damen has become such a powerful support: medicines, food,

hygiene products and household goods. The joint Ukrainian-Romanian group arrange the supply process, coordinated on the top level by Michel de Reus, Tom Lejte and Olena Zhukova. Nikolaev humanitarian aid Headquarter first was led by Oleksandr Levit, and then this role has shift to Oleksandr Zmiievskiy due to the regular rotations. This group also includes MDEM colleagues from Nikolaev - Oleksii Kudaktin, Halyna Horshkolieпова, Olga Shevchik, Viktoria Ryazantseva, Nataliia Abushyk, Viktoriia and Maksym Vzheshnevskiy, Olesia Mandra, Olena Arlamenko, Tetiana Druzhynina, and Nataliia Mamarina, Traian Iftenie, Dumitru Lazar from Romania.

Our city was divided into 7 districts according to a geographical basis. Each district has its own coordinators who form lists of requests by categories and organize deliveries. They provide generalization of all requests, processing of their logistics with the help Romanian colleagues, acceptance and inventory at a common warehouse and further distribution by districts. Humanitarian aid from Romania is brought into Ukraine on the transport used by MDEM employees or their relatives for evacuation from Ukraine. There were created 2 warehouses in Nikolaev:

a goods warehouse (goods for children, food, etc.) and a medicines warehouse. The bulk of medicine orders are vital drugs that cannot be obtained in Nikolaev. Their supply is the key to the lives of many employees and their families. It's hard to describe the emotions when you open a box of insulin, knowing that your colleague's children won't live without it for more than a week.. In addition, there are volunteers who provide targeted delivery of humanitarian aid in each district.

It should also be mentioned that the process of distribution and delivery is complicated by the frequent changes of employees' place of stay. This is due to the shelling of certain areas of the city, the need to care for parents and other reasons, but we are always in touch with each person and try to react at lightning speed. In addition, most of those who left the city asked to take care of their parents who remained in Nikolaev.

Currently, medical supplies continue to deliver to employees, and food is being stockpiled in order to create a two-month supply in connection with a possible blockade of Nikolaev, as well as for employees who take families to the border and return home. ■

