



## MEDIA RELEASE

### HELIJET DONATES MEDICALLY EQUIPPED HELICOPTER TO THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE TO TRANSPORT VICTIMS INJURED IN WAR WITH RUSSIA

***Designed by Ukrainian-born Igor Sikorsky's renowned helicopter company, the Sikorsky Aircraft S-76A helicopter is the first private donation of an aircraft of this magnitude from Canada to Ukraine, organized by the joint efforts of Canadian business and the Ukrainian diaspora.***

**Richmond, B.C. (February 10, 2025):** Helijet International is donating a fully operational, medically equipped helicopter from its fleet to be used for missions of mercy in Ukraine. Helijet has signed an agreement with a consortium of Canadian and Ukrainian non-governmental organizations Maple Hope Foundation, the Ukrainian World Congress, and Initiative E+ to accept the delivery and title of a Sikorsky S-76A air ambulance helicopter. Together, the three organizations have been working with Helijet over the span of eight months to arrange the shipment of the aircraft to Ukraine.

The Sikorsky S-76A is a fully equipped air medical helicopter that Helijet had previously provided under contract to the Ministry of Health for patient transport in B.C. The aircraft has now been recently removed from that service but still has years of flight capability remaining. The gift is made on condition that the helicopter is used solely for non-commercial, humanitarian, and medical evacuation missions to airlift individuals in need of urgent medical care to hospitals in Ukraine.

In November, Helijet and the Vancouver-based Maple Hope Foundation hosted two pilots and two engineers from Ukraine who came here to receive flight, maintenance and deployment training for the helicopter at Helijet's Richmond, B.C. base of operations. To assist in the shipment of the helicopter, the Maple Hope Foundation also launched a national online crowdfunding campaign that allowed Ukrainians from across Canada join the mission of delivering this life-saving helicopter. The campaign raised \$101,530 in three weeks from more than 730 donors.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, that began in February 2022, Helijet has also been providing relief assistance on other fronts including facilitating the staging of medical supply shipments coordinated and secured by Maple Hope Foundation bound for Ukraine at its Richmond hangar. Helijet president Danny Sitnam and his family opened their home in April of 2022 and supported a family of three, fleeing from the Ukraine until they could find a home of their own in Vancouver.

"We've since become great friends with this family," said Sitnam. Supporting them was just the start of a commitment we made at Helijet to help Maple Hope Foundation as the unrelenting struggle with Russia continues for the people of Ukraine."

“This project represents the culmination of a deeply meaningful partnership between Helijet and our organization, one that began during a time of crisis. When Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and displaced Ukrainians began arriving in Canada in unprecedented numbers, Danny Sitnam and his family were among the first to extend a helping hand. Since that moment, Danny and the entire Helijet team have been unwavering in their support of Maple Hope’s relief efforts for Ukraine. Helijet’s donation of the Sikorsky S-76 medevac helicopter is not only extraordinarily generous, but also historically significant, demonstrating the resolve of Canadians united in support for Ukraine during the third year of the full-scale invasion — not through words, but bold, transformative actions that will directly save lives”.

-Svitlana Kominko, CEO, Maple Hope Foundation

“The incredible donation of the Sikorsky S-76A medevac helicopter by Helijet is a powerful testament to the unbreakable bond and unwavering support from Ukraine's allies in Canada. This life-saving air ambulance will be a game-changer, delivering critical medical aid to those suffering in the war-torn regions of Ukraine. On behalf of the Ukrainian World Congress, I extend my deepest gratitude to Danny Sitnam and the entire Helijet team for their heroic commitment to aiding the people of Ukraine during these challenging times. We also owe immense thanks to the Maple Hope Foundation for their relentless dedication to making this collaboration possible. Together, we are not just saving lives; we are igniting hope and making a monumental impact.”

- Paul Grod, President, Ukrainian World Congress.

### **COMING FULL CIRCLE: A MEDEVAC HELICOPTER WITH UKRAINIAN ROOTS**

Appropriately enough, the Sikorsky S-76A donated is a product of U.S. based Sikorsky Aircraft founded a century ago by Kyiv-born helicopter inventor Igor Sikorsky shortly after he emigrated to the United States.

His son Sergei Sikorsky also worked for the company during his long career in aviation and today carries on the family's aviation legacy. “When my father and his company developed this aircraft, I’m sure he never would have predicted that the people of Ukraine, who now find life very difficult, would benefit decades later from his genius and expertise. The Sikorsky name has been synonymous with helicopter innovation for 100 years and now will be part of this generous effort that comes full circle to help today’s generation in his very own homeland.”

#### **About Helijet**

Helijet International is a privately held Canadian-owned company based at the Vancouver International Airport, British Columbia, Canada, and is recognized as North America’s largest helicopter airline, carrying well over 2.5 million guests in the past 38 years. In addition to its scheduled helicopter services, Helijet is the Province of British Columbia's longest standing and largest air service provider of dedicated medically equipped helicopters.

Helijet provides exclusive-use helicopter and fixed-wing services to world-renowned sport fishing resorts, public service and energy companies throughout the west coast of British Columbia and North America.

Helijet's wholly owned subsidiary, Pacific Heliport Services, Ltd., is Canada's largest privately managed Heliport operator, overseeing the downtown Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo's Transport Canada-certified heliports. Helijet has been recognized by communities and aviation associations alike as a socially responsible and forward-thinking air operator that deeply engages with the communities it serves.

Helijet is committed to introducing and integrating zero-emission vertical lift technologies and related ground/building infrastructure into the communities that it serves; in conjunction with transforming its current Heliport infrastructure to meet future urban air mobility Vertiport standards.”

### **About Maple Hope Foundation**

**Maple Hope Foundation** is a Canadian non-profit organization dedicated to providing essential medical, humanitarian, and social support to Ukraine and war-displaced Ukrainians in Canada. Founded in 2014 by a group of Ukrainian-Canadians in Vancouver, to date, Maple Hope has delivered over \$32 million in aid, including medical supplies to civilian and military hospitals, support for mobile evacuation centers, aid for defenders and their families, veterans, displaced persons, and children of war. Since the full-scale invasion, the organization has also focused on providing settlement assistance to displaced Ukrainians in British Columbia and pioneered the first Canada-wide mental health support program for displaced Ukrainian women and youth.

**Initiative E+** is a Ukrainian NGO founded by doctors who were assisting civilians during the Euromaidan demonstrations in the winter of 2013-2014 in Kyiv. Since 2014, the organization has focused on providing medical support to military and civilian medics, delivering 500 emergency medical vehicles, including more than 150 ambulances and 75 large buses most of which were transformed into mobile hospitals. They've also supported wounded soldiers and civilians with essential care. In addition to their medical work, Initiative E+ runs social projects for children, including rehabilitation camps for children from frontline areas and families of fallen defenders.

### **About Ukrainian World Congress**

The **Ukrainian World Congress** represents the interests of over 20 million Ukrainians residing in more than 80 countries.

**"Unite With Ukraine"** is the global fundraising initiative of the **Ukrainian World Congress** focused on procuring and delivering essential tactical medical supplies, armored vehicles, UAV complexes, FPV drones, and other vital equipment to systematically support Ukraine's defenders.

Since February 2022, the initiative has raised over \$60 million from donors in over 70 countries to support Brigades of the Territorial Defense Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Special Operations Forces, National Guard, Main Directorate of Intelligence, National Police, Brigades of the Ground Forces, State Emergency Service, State Border Guard Service, Yavoriv International Training Center for Peacekeeping and Security, and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

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