

Press release

Vehicle donation for Ukraine: Albert Berner Foundation supports care for needy villagers

Künzelsau, 12 July 2022 - The Berner Group continues its broad-based support for the people in Ukraine. The charitable Albert Berner Foundation has now co-financed the purchase of a Fiat "Ducato" as the main sponsor. The multi-functional van will be used directly in the crisis area to supply the suffering population far away from larger cities with essential goods such as food, clothing or medicine. A cash donation was earmarked for the "Arbeitskreis Ukraine - aktiv helfen" (Ukraine working group - active help), which is coordinating the project together with the Evangelisches Jugendwerk Öhringen (Öhringen Protestant Youth Organisation) and is also responsible for arranging the vehicle.

The used car, which Klaiber Automobile (Öhringen) made available at a special discounted price, was officially handed over to the priest Yevgenii Zhabkovskiy this week after expert maintenance and general overhaul. The Orthodox clergyman had personally come to Öhringen for the occasion and will now transfer the Fiat "Ducato" to his home region of Kirovohrad in central Ukraine. Within the framework of a charity programme of the local organisation "YMCA Kr. (YMCA)", the van will enable a better distribution of humanitarian goods, especially in villages and rural areas.

"We are infinitely grateful for this generous donation," emphasises Yevgenii Zhabkovskiy. "The vehicle really helps us a lot to fulfil our mission and distribute essential goods to men, women and children." The priest is no stranger to Öhringen. He visited the town once before, a good three years ago, as his son Vlad did a European voluntary service in the Evangelical Youth Service and is currently training to be an educator in Schwäbisch-Hall. "We have great confidence in him and the people involved. That's why we are happy to provide support," says Marcel Plückthun, co-initiator of "Arbeitskreis Ukraine - aktiv helfen". The volunteers in the working group have already organised two trips to the Polish-Ukrainian border. "This enabled us to deliver some donations in kind to crisis areas and bring around 80 war refugees to Germany, all of whom we then distributed independently in private accommodation," reports Plückthun. In addition, a Ukraine festival was organised for networking with more than 130 participants.

BERNER has been helping in many ways since the beginning of the war

"We are happy to support the project because it helps the people in Ukraine practically and quickly in this difficult situation," says Ursula Berner, Chairperson of the Albert Berner Foundation Board. "Donations in kind can be handed over

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directly to families who are not supplied by the large humanitarian packages for the urban centres with the financed van. The van also offers the possibility to take sick, elderly, young or other people in particular need of protection who are on the run and bring them to safety."

BERNER has been supporting the civilian population suffering from the war in a variety of ways since the fighting began. In addition to symbolic expressions of solidarity, such as changing the company logo to the Ukrainian national colours on its own online channels or calling for joint prayers for peace, as in Portugal, the B2B wholesaler is providing very concrete help throughout the group. Already in the first week of the war, a cash donation of 200,000 euros was made. "We decided to go with large relief organisations in order to be able to guarantee that everything gets to the right places quickly in this unclear situation," emphasises CEO Christian Berner.

The commitment takes place both in Germany and on site in Ukraine. For example, employees of the subsidiary Caramba are helping to set up and renovate refugee accommodation. Together with Berner Poland, BTI and Berner Germany, the chemical specialist also brought two truckloads with 75 pallets of disinfectants worth more than 100,000 euros to Ukraine for children's hospitals and other social institutions such as schools, animal shelters, health centres or doctors' practices. In addition, a total of 20 first aid kits and 150 first aid bags were delivered to the country.

Further aid delivery planned

In the next few days, BERNER will bring another 85 pallets with almost 42,000 products (including plasters, soap, hydroalcoholic gel, surface disinfectants) worth more than 115,000 euros to Poland from the French site in Saint-Julien-du-Sault, where they will be distributed to refugees from Ukraine.