



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council 1390 Vienna, 22 September 2022

EU Statement on the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

1. Mr Chair, the European Union strongly condemns the preparations for illegal “referenda” announced by illegitimate so-called “authorities” in territories of Ukraine which are temporarily under Russian military control. This is a blatant violation of the UN Charter, OSCE principles, as well as Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The results of such actions will be considered null and void, and will not be recognised by the EU and its Member States. Russia, its political leadership, and all those involved in these sham “referenda” and other violations of international law in Ukraine will be held accountable, and additional restrictive measures against Russia will be considered.
2. We also strongly condemn the sentencing of the two national SMM staff members, Maxim Petrov and Dmytro Shabanov, to 13-year imprisonments. The ongoing detention and the show trials against OSCE staff members are totally unacceptable. The SMM and its staff were operating on a mandate agreed by all 57 participating States. We call on Russia to assume its responsibility as an OSCE participating State and to immediately and unconditionally release all OSCE staff members.
3. Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine has caused immense suffering in Ukraine. Civilians have been killed tortured, harassed, sexually assaulted or kidnapped. We are profoundly shocked by the abhorrent reports of a mass grave found in Izyum last week, containing over 440 persons, including women, children and elderly persons, many of them with their arms tied behind their backs. Russia’s crimes, be it in Bucha, Irpin, Mariupol or elsewhere, seem to be part of the Kremlin’s

script for Ukraine. This is a new all-time low of Russia's reprehensible behaviour. The total disrespect by Russia for human rights, international humanitarian law and normal human decency is frankly abhorrent. We condemn these horrendous acts in the strongest possible terms and remind Russia that the European Union will support all efforts to hold those responsible to account.

4. Moreover, we continue to receive frequent reports of how Russia attempts to change the demographic composition of Ukrainian territories by forcefully transferring Ukrainians to territories under Russian military control, or deporting them to the Russian Federation itself. We are particularly concerned about the reports by the United Nations Human Rights Office among others of allegations of forced transfers of unaccompanied minors. Let me be clear: all forms of forcible transfers of civilians are prohibited under international humanitarian law, notably the fourth Geneva Convention, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. All cases of enforced disappearances, as well as of mistreatment of prisoners of war, including any arbitrary killings, must be duly investigated and those responsible for any war crime must be held accountable.
5. Furthermore, the continuing attacks of the Russian Armed Forces at and near Ukraine's nuclear facilities have significantly increased the risk of a nuclear incident or accident, with potentially severe adverse consequences for human health and the environment. We therefore urge Russia to immediately stop all such military hostilities.
6. We reiterate our strong condemnation of Russia's illegal annexation of the Ukrainian Autonomous Republic of Crimea and city of Sevastopol and of the repression of human rights for local residents, notably the Crimean Tatars. The EU strongly condemns yesterday's verdict of 15 years imprisonment for the Crimean Tatars' leader, Nariman Dzhelyal. In addition, attempts to change borders by force are a clear violation of the UN Charter, the principles laid down in the Helsinki Final Act and has no place in the 21st century. This is why we do not recognise the regional and local Russian "elections" that were held on the Crimean peninsula on 9-11 September. No one claiming to "represent" the populations of Crimea and Sevastopol as a result of

these so-called “elections” has any legitimacy, and they will never be recognised as representatives of those territories. The European Union unequivocally supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. Crimea is Ukraine.

7. Mr Chair, it was clear in the State of the Union Address delivered last week by the EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, that the European Union places the utmost importance on continuing our support to our candidate country Ukraine in its heroic fight against the aggressor, Russia. Since 24 February, the European Union and its Member States have risen in solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, determined to contribute to stop this illegal, unjustified and unprovoked war waged by Russia against Ukraine. But it is just as much a war on our common European values and principles that are fundamental to our security and our free and peaceful future.
8. The scale of the EU's efforts to support Ukraine are unprecedented. Since the beginning of the year, the EU has provided over EUR 19 billion in financial assistance and EUR 2.6 billion in military support via the European Peace Facility, bringing our total assistance to Ukraine to EUR 21.6 billion. The EU resolutely supports Ukraine's inherent right of self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter. In addition, we have adopted the largest sanctions packages in our Union's history against Russia and Belarus, for its involvement in Russia's aggression, and recently the EU fully suspended the EU's Visa Facilitation Agreement with Russia. The EU and its Member States are also working to support Ukraine and countries around the world to get Ukrainian grain to global markets through support to the agreements brokered in Istanbul by the UN and the host country on the Black Sea routes, and on the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes, as well as bilaterally. Russia will not be allowed to use hunger as a weapon.
9. Regardless of Russia's intention to terrorise Ukrainians and to weaken the resolve of Ukraine's partners, we already see that such actions have the opposite effect: The Ukrainians' support for a bright, prosperous and free democratic State and its European perspective has only grown stronger.

10. Regardless of the Kremlin's condemnable choice to escalate its war of aggression against a sovereign and peaceful neighbouring State by decreeing a partial mobilisation of the Russian Armed Forces, we have only one message to send to Russia: the EU will stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine in solidarity for as long as it takes. To cite once more the European Commission President von der Leyen: "Putin will fail and Europe will prevail".

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE and REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, the Potential Candidate Countries BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA* and GEORGIA, the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.