



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council 1397 Vienna, 3 November 2022

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

1. Mr Chair, week after week, we witness how Russia's brutal war of aggression is causing death, tremendous suffering and destruction in Ukraine. Over the last weekend, at least 23 civilians were reportedly killed by Russia's continued shelling of civilian infrastructure and on the morning of 31 October, a massive Russian missile strike was launched in several waves from the Caspian Sea and the Rostov region with devastating outcomes. We also deeply regret that Russia is also increasing tensions in the whole region by violating the airspace of the Republic of Moldova while conducting airstrikes against Ukraine and a few days ago a debris from a Russian missile landed in the Moldovan village of Naslavcea. Also Kyiv was hit again, resulting in power blackouts and the disruption of water supply to 80% of the city's inhabitants. Terrorising the civilian population by destroying and damaging critical infrastructure such as energy systems and water supply in the lead up to winter is despicable behaviour beyond human decency.
2. We are equally appalled by reports from the newly liberated territories. In Iziium, one of the largest mass burial sites containing the bodies of about 1,000 civilians and military personnel has been found. In Lyman, the bodies of four civilians have been found as well as a mass grave in which the bodies of 17 people were buried. According to international humanitarian law, civilians shall enjoy general protection against dangers arising from military operations and shall not be the object of attack. Intentionally directing attacks against civilians constitute war crimes. The EU will do its utmost to ensure that there is no impunity for any war crimes, crimes against humanity and other atrocity crimes committed during Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine.

3. We unequivocally condemn and will never recognise the attempted illegal annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, nor the illegal so-called 'referenda' that Russia orchestrated at gunpoint just as we never will recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, in blatant violation of international law. In addition, the reported deportations and adoptions of Ukrainian children from these areas to Russia may amount to gross violations of international law, notably international humanitarian law and human rights law. We also call once again on Russia to immediately and unconditionally release the SMM staff members who are illegally detained, to treat prisoners of war in full compliance with international humanitarian law and to allow the ICRC to visit the prisoners of war, including those held in Olevnika.
4. We condemn the conscription of residents of the Ukrainian territories temporarily under Russian military control to the Russian Armed Forces. This includes the illegally annexed Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol, as well as Crimean Tatars living there, who are reportedly being deliberately and disproportionately targeted and reportedly forcibly involved in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. This conscription campaign may amount to gross violation of international humanitarian law under which an occupying power is prohibited from forcing protected persons to serve in its armed or auxiliary forces.
5. What is more, Russia's instrumentalisation of global food security is totally unacceptable. Russia is solely responsible for the global food security crisis it has caused by its unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine and its blockade of Ukrainian seaports. We urge Russia to implement the UN Black Sea Grain Initiative in good faith. We also strongly support the United Nations Secretary-General's call for the extension of the initiative beyond its current period in November. The EU and its Member States will continue to support timely and stable delivery of Ukrainian agricultural products to global markets, including with the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes Initiative.
6. Mr Chair, let me state this clearly: there is no evidence or no reason to believe that Ukraine would use any so-called "dirty bomb" in its own territory, against its own people.

We therefore reject all these false allegations by Russia. Ukraine is a non-nuclear weapon state and a committed NPT member. It fully implements the highest IAEA verification standards, the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol and it continues to work with the IAEA regarding the safeguarding of civil nuclear material. IAEA has not found any indication that would give rise to a proliferation concern. Instead, it is Russia that has a history of making false claims to provide a pretext or cover for its own actions. It is Russia that has demonstrated its disregard for global nuclear security through its reckless military attacks and actions in and around nuclear facilities and by taking over the Ukrainian Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. And it is Russia that has during the course of its illegal invasion repeatedly used irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and orchestrated an disinformation campaigns. We urge Russia to immediately stop all hostilities and withdraw all its armed forces and military equipment, including from the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, to fully adhere to the seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security and to immediately hand back full and exclusive control of the Zaporizhzhia power plant to the Ukrainian authorities.

7. The EU remains unwavering in its support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and demands that Russia immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraws all of its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, including the illegally annexed Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. We condemn Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms and urge Russia to immediately stop its illegal aggression. We urge the Belarusian authorities to refrain from any further involvement in Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine as well as to immediately stop providing military support and allowing its territory to serve as a launchpad for attacks against Ukraine. We reiterate that any further actions and, in particular, any direct involvement of the Belarusian military in Russia's war of aggression will be met by new and strong restrictive measures.

We stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes. *Slava Ukrainii.*

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.