



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1373 Vienna, 12 May 2022

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

1. This week we marked Europe Day on 9 May, a day on which we remember the importance of peace and unity. We are devastated to see yet again the ravages of war on European soil, in Ukraine. We are now in the eleventh week of Russia's brutal invasion. Eleven weeks during which Russia's soldiers have committed atrocities that the world cannot and will not forget. The European Union condemns Russia's premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. We call on Russia to immediately and unconditionally cease its military actions and withdraw all its troops and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, including the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula. We also reiterate our call on Belarus to stop enabling the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations.
2. During the last week, the Russian Armed Forces have intensified missile strikes on civilian and military infrastructure throughout Ukraine and tried to advance their invasion in the Donetsk and Luhansk areas, where the destruction of residential houses, transport infrastructure, medical, educational and industrial facilities continued. Local authorities have reported that civilian residents were injured and killed. We received reports on Sunday evening that Russia had bombed a school in Bilohorivka in the Luhansk region, where almost the entire village had taken shelter, and as a result over 60 civilians tragically lost their lives. Civilian objects and infrastructure also came under attack in the Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa, Poltava and Mykolaiv regions. Mariupol remains a bleeding wound on Ukraine's soil. Despite some successful evacuations of civilians from the city

and the “Azovstal” plant, the humanitarian situation is disastrous due to Russia’s never-ending attacks and the fact that Russia has refused to allow any humanitarian relief to enter the city and to evacuate injured from “Azovstal”.

3. We deplore the targeting of Ukraine’s cultural and historical artefacts, such as the destruction of the museum of Ukraine’s prominent 18th century philosopher Skovoroda in the Kharkiv region or Sviatohirsk Lavra in the Donetsk region, as well as the destruction of Jewish cemeteries and other sacred places. In addition, we also deplore the theft of Ukrainian farm equipment and grain as well as the targeting of food storage sites with artillery. The importance of food security was underlined during European Council President Charles Michel’s visit to Odesa on Europe Day.
4. There seems to be no limit to the atrocities that Russian Armed Forces commit in Ukraine. The European Union supports all measures to ensure accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including violations and abuses that may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. All perpetrators must be held to account.
5. We also reiterate our strong condemnation of Russia’s undertakings to set up illegitimate alternative administrative structures in Kherson, Mariupol and in other towns in Ukraine. Any attempts by Russia to conduct so-called “referenda” at the barrel of a gun in areas under Russian military control in order to proclaim new “people’s republics”, or to integrate with Russia, are illegal and will not be recognized. We condemn the reported forced deportations of Ukrainian citizens to Russia, also to so-called “filtration camps”. We also deplore the introduction of the Russian ruble as currency, the use of Russian educational curricula, the reported changes in names of towns and villages and their road signs, as well as any distribution of Russian passports in a simplified and selective way to Ukrainian citizens. In addition, we are concerned that a Russian imperial symbol has been brought back to use by the Russian puppet “administration” in the Kherson region and that mobile operators in the non-government controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk are using Russian country codes. We call on Russia to fully respect Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity

within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters and to immediately release all democratically elected Ukrainian officials who remain in Russian detention.

6. At the same time, Russian authorities continue with an unprecedented wave of repression against their own citizens, accompanied by a widespread systematic state-led manipulation and disinformation campaign about the war. Freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and association – all of these human rights constitute the essential foundations of democratic societies. Despite Russia's commitments and obligations under international law to respect these freedoms, they are systematically undermined by Russia's authorities to the detriment of its own citizens. Recently, for example, Zakhar Tatuyko, Aikhal Ammosov and Vladimir Saltevskiy were detained after participating in peaceful rallies in St Petersburg, Yakutsk and Novosibirsk. Also, members of the "Vesna" movement", Yevgeniy Zateev and Valentin Khoroshenin were detained following a house search. Local politicians and officials in various parts of Russia have faced either detention or legal repercussions due to expressing dissenting views and speaking out about Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including Nina Belyaeva, Elena Kotenochkina, Aleksey Gorinov, and Svetlana Kaverzina. We call on Russia to release all those who have been arbitrarily detained and to uphold its international human rights obligations and OSCE commitments.
7. We commend the Ukrainian people and its Armed Forces for their strength and perseverance in defending their country. Nothing can match the bravery you have shown or the sacrifices you have made. The European Union is standing up for you. We have so far imposed five unprecedentedly hard-hitting waves of sanctions, and a sixth package of sanctions is under discussion. Simultaneously, since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion, we have mobilised considerable financial support to Ukraine through various instruments.
8. We have also shown our support by allocating military equipment through the European Peace Facility in order to enhance the capabilities and resilience of the Ukrainian Armed Forces to defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country and to protect the civilian population against Russia's military aggression. Three

tranches have already been disbursed for a total of €1.5 billion and individual EU Member States have provided additional direct military support.

9. The EU is also working hard to support the refugees fleeing Russia's war and arriving to EU Member States and elsewhere, including to the Republic of Moldova. Poland has for example undertaken a massive solidarity operation hosting more than 3 million Ukrainian refugees and is acting as a hub to support Ukrainians within Ukraine. The EU and its Member States are providing shelter, humanitarian, medical and financial aid, as well as granting the refugees access to education and labour market. The EU will also increase its political and economic support to Moldova, including with non-lethal equipment for the National Army, as announced by the European Council President Charles Michel at a joint conference with the President Maia Sandu last week. So far, the EU has allocated over € 13 million in humanitarian aid to Moldova and will open its energy procurement platform to Moldova in order to strengthen unity and resilience.
10. Finally, we would like to quote the European Council's President, Charles Michel, at the High-level international donors' conference for Ukraine on 5 May and his personal message of hope and encouragement to all Ukrainians, to the soldiers on the ground, and to the millions who have fled the war and long for their homes: We will help to rebuild your country and your economy. Your homes, schools, hospitals, and businesses. Together we will rebuild a modern, prosperous, and democratic Ukraine, a country full of confidence and ready to embrace its European future and its place in our common European family. That reconstruction starts today.

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

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