



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1045 Vienna, 17 May 2023

EU Statement on Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

1. Madam Chair, the European Union and its Member States reiterate today, as every other day, their **unequivocal condemnation of Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine**. This act of war by Russia constitutes a blatant breach of international law, in particular the UN Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of any State. Russia's aggressive expansionism threatens global peace and security and is the primary cause for the fundamental loss of trust towards Russia within our Organisation.
2. **The clarity regarding aggressor and victim in this brutal, illegal and unprovoked war is irrefutable**. All efforts by Russian representatives, both here and elsewhere, to defend the Kremlin's reckless actions have been fruitless. Neither Ukraine nor any other state has posed a threat to Russia, and the Kremlin's ever-changing narratives reflect its failure to justify brutal actions and its strategic mistake to the international community and its own citizens. We staunchly support **Ukraine's inherent right to self-defence**, as well as the efforts of the Ukrainian Armed Forces to preserve Ukraine's territorial integrity and the safety of its people, in line with Article 51 of the UN Charter. We reaffirm our unwavering solidarity with the Ukrainian people, and pay tribute to those who have sacrificed their lives in defending their homeland, and welcome that President Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian people were awarded the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen last Sunday in recognition of their defence of Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence.

3. **Our support for Ukraine and its people remains steadfast and enduring.** In reaction to Russia's war of aggression, the EU and its Member States have so far provided over 70 billion EUR in support and assistance to Ukraine and its people. On 5 May, the Council of the EU reached another significant agreement on the supply of artillery ammunition and, if requested, missiles for Ukrainian Armed Forces. This 1 billion EUR support package, financed by the European Peace Facility, will further fortify Ukraine's capabilities and resilience in defending its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and in safeguarding its civilian population from continued Russian attacks.
4. **We vehemently denounce Russia's ongoing, systematic, and deliberate assaults on Ukrainian cities and residential areas, civilians, and critical infrastructure.** The cruel treatment of prisoners of war, their arbitrary killings, forced transfers of civilians, and child deportations, along with the constant threats to the safety and security of Ukrainians, **are abhorrent and must not be tolerated.** We urge Russia to comply with international humanitarian law and grant the ICRC full and unhindered access to all prisoners of war.
5. Yesterday, in the early morning hours, Russia conducted its 8th attack on Kyiv since the beginning of May. All 18 missiles of various types, including six "Kinzhals", were reportedly intercepted by effective Ukrainian air defence, thus saving many lives.
6. Building on our discussions about security in the **Black Sea region** two weeks ago, we express **our grave concern over recent instances of reckless behaviour by Russia** in this area. The most recent incident, on 5 May, occurred roughly 60 km east of Romania's airspace, where a Russian SU-35 fighter plane irresponsibly approached a Polish Border Guard civilian aircraft, conducting a Frontex mission, causing major difficulties in controlling the aircraft. Such dangerous and reckless actions are unacceptable and further evidence of Russia's dismissive and destructive attitude to security in the region.

7. We also renew our demand for **Russia to immediately and unconditionally release the three unlawfully detained OSCE SMM staff members** and return the stolen OSCE SMM vehicles to their rightful owners, all OSCE participating States.
8. The EU and its Member States **remain resolute in their support** for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and demand that Russia **immediately stop its war of aggression** and completely and unconditionally withdraw all its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We also urge the Belarusian authorities to cease their support for, and refrain from any further involvement in or facilitation of Russia's illegal war of aggression.
9. Madam Chair, we remain determined to work with Ukraine and our international partners **to find a just, lasting and comprehensive peace based on full respect for international law**. The EU supports President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula and is ready to work with Ukraine on the 10-point peace plan. We will continue to support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in their fight for freedom, sovereignty, and their European future.

Thank you!

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

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