



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1381 Vienna, 7 July 2022

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

1. Mr Chair, two days ago, a Special PC meeting focused on Russia's increasing number of attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. These attacks are indiscriminate and violate international humanitarian law. Russia's actions, with the Belarusian regime's complicity, must stop now and those responsible must be held accountable. We are committed to supporting the investigation of all crimes committed during the Russian aggression against Ukraine. There must be no impunity for war crimes and other atrocity crimes.
2. The European Union continues to condemn Russia's premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. We call on Russia to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders and 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 will never recognise any illegal entities nor annexation of Ukraine's territory. We also reiterate our call on Belarus to stop enabling the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations. The recent announcement by Lukashenka of his unwavering support to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as the Belarusian military build-up and activities at its border with Ukraine, are deplorable.
3. The European Union condemns in the strongest terms any attempts by Russia to illegally seize Ukrainian territory. Russia's attack against the sovereignty of Ukraine started with the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula and continued with Russia's recognition

of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine as independent entities. There are now attempts by Russia to prepare for illegal fake “referenda” on joining the Russian Federation in areas currently under Russian military control, such as the Kherson region. Such attempts by the Kremlin and its proxies represent a blatant violation of international law, the Ukrainian constitution and Ukrainian sovereignty. The result of such an orchestrated illegitimate vote will not be recognised by the international community. All those involved in the ongoing violations of international law in Ukraine will be held accountable. We commend the courageous people of Ukraine, who – despite huge risks for their personal safety and security – refuse to participate in these illegal acts.

4. We also deeply condemn Russia’s attempts to replace democratically elected leaders with its own puppet structures. The European Union condemns the kidnapping by the invading Russian forces of the democratically elected Mayor of Kherson, Ihor Kolykhayev, as well as seven other Ukrainian mayors from Kherson, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv regions and calls for their immediate and unconditional release. We demand an immediate end to these illegal intimidation tactics and the unconditional release of all detained and abducted Ukrainian civilians, as well as the fair treatment of prisoners of war in compliance with international humanitarian law. Moreover, Ukrainians, especially children, who have been forcibly removed to Russia must be immediately allowed to return safely.
5. Furthermore, Russia-backed armed formations are keeping SMM Mission members in detention in the non-government controlled areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, despite their functional protection as OSCE staff. This is completely unacceptable; we condemn it in the strongest terms and call for their immediate release and for the harassment, intimidation and media campaign against the SMM to stop.
6. The EU categorically denounces Russia’s disinformation campaign, including the unsubstantiated claims and false allegations that Ukraine would have been preparing to use chemical weapons or developing biological weapons. Ukraine is in full compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, as was further explained in a transparent manner during a side event of last week’s Annual Security Review Conference. Russia, in contrast, has

repeatedly used chemical weapons in recent years in violation of its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are also seriously concerned about the announcement by Russia that it could transfer missiles with nuclear capabilities to Belarus. The EU reminds Russia of the utmost importance of respecting its obligations under the relevant international Treaties.

7. Russia, by weaponising food in its war against Ukraine, is solely responsible for the global food security crisis it has provoked. Russia has imposed a blockade on Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea and is targeting Ukrainian infrastructure. The EU urges Russia to immediately stop targeting agricultural facilities and removing cereals, and to unblock the Black Sea, in particular the port of Odesa, to allow the export of grain and commercial shipping operations. The EU supports the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General to this end. We denounce Russia's propaganda campaign that attempts to blame the looming food crisis on EU sanctions introduced in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. We repeat that the EU sanctions on Russia allow the free flow of agricultural and food products and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
8. The EU deeply regrets that due to Russia's decision to block the extension of the mandate of the Project Coordinator in Ukraine this office was forced to terminate its activities last week. The PCU has for the last 23 years contributed to Ukraine's comprehensive reform agenda, which greatly benefits the Ukrainian population. We encourage the efforts of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office, the OSCE executive structures and autonomous institutions in finding ways to ensure a continuation of the programmes and projects undertaken and we welcome that the host nation, Ukraine, intends to preserve these achievements in the years to come.
9. We remain strongly committed to helping Ukraine to uphold its sovereignty and territorial integrity, to defend itself, and to choose and build its own peaceful, democratic and prosperous future within the European family. The European Council's decision to grant the status of candidate country to Ukraine and Moldova was a clear sign of our commitment in this regard. As the European Commission President Von der Leyen reaffirmed during the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano this week, we will continue to provide strong support for Ukraine's overall economic, military, social and

financial resilience, including humanitarian aid. We will also support Ukraine's reconstruction in the long term.

We stand with Ukraine.

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, 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.