



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1466 Vienna, 21 March 2024

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

1. As we enter three years into Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and ten years into Russia's aggression and illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula, in manifest violation of its obligations under international law, including the UN Charter, and the OSCE's core principles and commitments, Russia continues to bring relentless death and destruction upon Ukraine. Not a single day passes without Russian strikes claiming the lives of Ukrainian civilians. Russia's double missile attack on 15th March, targeting once again the Ukrainian port city of Odesa, which left at least 21 people dead and more than 75 wounded, underscores Russia's blatant disregard for human lives. This reprehensible Russian attack targeted the same location twice, resulting in casualties among both civilians and first aid responders. As we commemorate the hundreds of civilian victims of Russia's shelling of the Mariupol Drama Theatre, on 16th March two years ago, Russia continues to strike settlements throughout Ukraine, including in Odesa, Kherson, Sumy, Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk regions.
2. From 15th to 17th March, in the framework of its Presidential elections, Russia illegally held so-called "elections" in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol and in parts of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions of Ukraine that Russia has temporarily and illegally occupied. These illegitimate "elections", which we strongly condemn, represent yet another manifest violation by Russia of

international law, including the UN Charter, and of Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as the OSCE acquis. Referring to the two UNGA Resolutions of 12th October 2022 and 27th March 2014, we urge Russia to respect Ukraine's internationally recognised borders and sovereignty. The EU reiterates that it does not and will not recognise either the holding of these so-called elections in the territories of Ukraine or their results. All of the so-called polls, past and future, are null and void, have no validity under international law and cannot produce any legal effect whatsoever. Russia's political leadership and those involved in organising them will face consequences of these illegal actions.

3. Equally, the EU condemns the illegal opening of Russian presidential election polling stations in Georgia's regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as in the Republic of Moldova's region of Transnistria, without the consent of the respective legitimate Governments. The EU reiterates its unwavering support for, and commitment to, the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and the Republic of Moldova within their internationally recognised borders.
4. The concluding date of Russia's Presidential elections – 17th March, marked one year since the ICC issued arrest warrants against Russia's President Putin and Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights Maria Lvova-Belova over their alleged responsibility for the war crime of unlawful deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia, as well as for the forcible transfer of Ukrainian children within Ukrainian territories, illegally and temporarily occupied by Russia. International monitoring mechanisms, including the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and the UN Commission of Inquiry, which issued its latest report on 15th March, as well as the reports of ODIHR and of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism expert mission, have found evidence concerning this issue. The ICC arrest warrants have sent the clear message that there will be no escape for any perpetrators and accomplices of Russia's crimes in Ukraine. We reaffirm our full support for the work of the ICC and reiterate that the pursuit of

accountability and justice for all crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine will remain a key priority for the EU.

5. We firmly reject Russia's futile attempts to rewrite history, as most recently exemplified by the draft law submitted to the State Duma, aiming to reverse the decision of the Soviet authorities in 1954 to transfer Crimea to Ukraine. Let us be clear: Under international law, the Crimean peninsula is recognised as an integral part of Ukraine. In 1997, by signing the Friendship Agreement with Ukraine, Russia also acknowledged, in writing, that Crimea belongs to Ukraine.
6. We reaffirm our unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and we will continue to stand with Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes. The EU will continue to provide Ukraine with strong financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support. To this end, on 18th March, the 'Ukraine Assistance Fund' was formally approved, allocating EUR 5 billion for 2024.
7. We reiterate that any diplomatic solution to end Russia's war of aggression must be based on full respect for international law and its rules, norms and principles, including those enshrined in the UN Charter, and for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We will continue intensive global outreach efforts and cooperation with Ukraine and other partners from all regions of the world to ensure the widest possible international support for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace and the key principles and objectives of Ukraine's Peace Formula, based on the UN Charter, with a view to a future Global Peace Summit.
8. In conclusion, we once again demand that Russia immediately stop its illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine, and completely and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We also condemn the continued military support for

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine provided by Belarus, as well as Iran, and the DPRK. We urge all countries not to provide material or other support for Russia's war of aggression, which is a blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter, and the OSCE's core principles and commitments.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, 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.

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