



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1447 Vienna, 19 October 2023

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

1. Mr. Chair, more than 600 days have passed since Russia unleashed an illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against a sovereign, peaceful neighbour, Ukraine. We welcome the recent visit by North Macedonia's OSCE CiO, Foreign Minister Osmani, to Kyiv earlier this week. We applaud the principled position taken by the CiO to keep Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine at the centre of OSCE's attention, and to stand by a fellow participating State, Ukraine that is being attacked by another one, Russia.
2. Each day since the beginning of this war has brought new evidence of Russia's gross violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, with Russia recurrently and deliberately targeting cities and civilian infrastructure across Ukraine in addition to its continued indiscriminate shelling near the frontlines. Russia's recent despicable attacks against Ukraine's Beryslav, Hroza and Kharkiv are just the latest examples of the Russian Federation's systematic disregard for human life.
3. Furthermore, since unilaterally withdrawing from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, Russia has increased its attacks on Ukrainian agricultural infrastructure, including grain storage facilities and ports, not only in the

Black Sea, but also on the Danube, close to the borders of EU Member States. These attacks are aimed at disrupting Ukraine's ability to export food, disrupting global food chains and further deteriorating global food security, and also cause significant damage to surrounding civilian infrastructure. On 6th October the border crossing point "Orlivka" between Ukraine and Romania was severely damaged, drastically impacting its functioning. This has had widespread negative consequences, as, apart from the obvious security risks for the local population, this was an important crossing point for Ukrainian refugees entering the territory of Romania, and also served as a transit point for Ukrainian exports.

4. Against this background, Russia shamelessly continues its false claims that its forces are only targeting military objects in Ukraine, despite the growing body of international independent reporting that testifies to ever-increasing numbers of deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in Ukraine. The latest thirty-sixth Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reveals that within a span of just six months, from the first of February to the thirty-first of July this year, at least 4,621 civilians fell victim to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, with 1,028 killed and 3,593 injured. From 24 February 2022, which marked the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, to 24 September 2023, OHCHR recorded 27,449 civilian casualties in the country, including 9,701 killed and 17,748 injured.

5. Russia's false claims and propaganda cannot annul the provision under international humanitarian law that intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population, or against civilian objects constitutes a war crime. By rejecting Russia's recent bid for a seat at the UN Human Rights Council the international community has issued a resounding condemnation of Russia's gross violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in Ukraine. The more Russia denies its criminal conduct,

the stronger our resolve grows for full accountability for all the crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. There must be no impunity, including for the crime of aggression.

6. On 1st October, Russia launched yet another illegal conscription campaign in the temporarily and illegally occupied territories of Ukraine. Russia is forcefully conscripting Ukrainian citizens into the Russian Armed Forces, thereby involving them in its war of aggression against their homeland. We condemn this reprehensible act and urge Russia to stop this blatant violation of international law. The EU does not and will not recognise the attempted illegal annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. All these territories are and will always be Ukraine.

7. As Russia continues its brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, it is important to address and alleviate its consequences which are felt far beyond Ukraine's borders. We welcome the fourth ministerial meeting of the Moldova Support Platform, held in Chişinău two days ago. The Platform remains essential in mobilising international support for the Republic of Moldova and its people to address current diverse challenges, including by the OSCE. The EU will continue to provide all relevant support to the Republic of Moldova, including to strengthen the country's resilience, security, stability, economy and energy supply in the face of destabilising activities by external actors, as well as support on its accession path to the European Union.

8. The EU's commitment to supporting Ukraine for as long as it takes remains as rock solid as ever before, as recently demonstrated by the EU Leaders' Granada Declaration. And our commitment has consistently been upheld by our deeds. The EU and its Member States are the first financial supporter of Ukraine, with their overall commitments reaching more than

82 billion euro. We will continue providing Ukraine with steadfast, long-term political, diplomatic, humanitarian, financial, economic, legal and military support against Russia's illegal war of aggression. The EU also remains dedicated to humanitarian demining activities in Ukraine and commends the International Donors' Conference on Humanitarian Demining in Ukraine that took place in Croatia on 11-12 October 2023.

9. Mr. Chair, the EU remains unwavering in its support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. No one desires peace more than the Ukrainians, and they are paying for their rightful self-defence with their lives. It is for Ukraine to determine the conditions allowing for negotiations in good faith. Any solution to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has to be based on Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity as protected by the UN Charter. President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula offers such a solution as it is fully premised on the UN Charter.

10. In conclusion, we once again call on Russia to immediately stop its war of aggression, and completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We also condemn the continued support for Russia's war of aggression provided by the Belarusian authorities and urge all countries not to provide material or other support for this aggression.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA*, the Potential Candidate Country GEORGIA, and 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.