



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1024 Vienna, 5 October 2022

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#### **EU Statement on Russia's ongoing military aggression against Ukraine**

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Mr. Chair, the European Union and its Member States are united in their condemnation in the strongest possible terms of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its continued violations of Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. The Kremlin's initial objective to subjugate Ukraine and destroy its statehood, blatantly failed. It failed because the Kremlin overestimated its military capabilities. And it failed because the Kremlin underestimated the unfaltering determination of the Ukrainian people to defend their homeland and the resolve of Ukraine's international partners to support them in their heroic resistance against the egregious attempt at a land-grab.

While waging this war, President Putin must have known that his decision would inevitably bring immense human suffering. And it did. Every day we are seeing this on the ground. The horrifying atrocities committed by the invader, be it in Bucha, Irpin, Izyum or elsewhere continue to be professionally documented and investigated. We fear that more of this may come to light when more territories will be liberated by the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Mr. Chair, civilians have been killed, tortured, harassed, sexually assaulted and kidnapped in this war of Russia's making. We will refrain from displaying in this room abhorrent pictures or videos, be it from Dnipro on 29 September, where a family of four, refugees from Crimea, including a 12-year-old girl and 8-year-old boy were buried under the ruins of their house, be it from Zaporizhzhia where on Friday, 30 September, in another callous attack, Russia shelled a convoy of civilian cars, killing at least 31 people, including two children and injuring almost 100. Those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity, for violations of international humanitarian law

and international human rights law must and will be held to account. The European Union will continue to support efforts to ensure accountability, including actions taken within the OSCE, the UN and the International Criminal Court.

We do not forget either the human toll among the Ukrainian military sacrificing their lives in the defence of their country. Nor do we forget that Mr. Putin's decision has also caused human suffering for thousands of Russian families over the course of this senseless war driven by some outdated goals.

In the past two weeks, amidst the setbacks suffered by the aggressing forces on the battlefield, we have witnessed further escalatory steps by the Kremlin. While Russian troops were being forced out of Lyman in the Donetsk region of Ukraine, in a parallel reality an "illegal annexation" was announced in the Kremlin.

Mr Chair, the European Union and its Member States firmly reject and unequivocally condemn the unlawful annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. We will never recognise this illegal annexation. We do not and will never recognise this farce orchestrated by Russia as a pretext for yet another breach of international law, nor the falsified results of such illegal "referenda". These decisions are null and void and cannot have any legal standing whatsoever. The same remains valid for the Crimean peninsula illegally annexed by Russia back in 2014. Crimea, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk are Ukraine.

Mr. Chair, history must not be abused by justifying the unjustifiable. By now, it should be clear to all that the use of force and coercion to change internationally recognised borders is unacceptable. This remains the foundation of the international rules-based order established with the creation of the United Nations after the horrors of the II World War. By wilfully undermining the rules-based international order and blatantly violating international law, including the UN Charter, Russia is putting global security at risk. We therefore welcome the unequivocal condemnation of Russia's actions by UN Secretary General António Guterres and the OSCE leadership. Likewise, we reiterate our call on all States and international organisations to reject this illegal annexation.

In the face of Russia's war of aggression as well as Moscow's latest escalation, the European Union stands resolutely, now more than ever, with Ukraine and its people. In a united response, we, together with our partners, will continue to denounce the Kremlin's actions and to provide the support Ukraine needs to uphold its sovereignty and territorial integrity and to defend itself against the Russian aggression. Neither the military mobilisation, nor illegal annexations, nor any other threat by Russia will shake our resolve.

We urge Russia to immediately cease all actions against, and at, the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant and any other nuclear facility in order for the competent authorities of Ukraine to regain full control over all nuclear facilities within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders. We also reject Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric.

We will continue to provide strong economic, military, social and financial support to Ukraine for as long as it takes. We will also continue to increase pressure on Russia, including through restrictive measures, to end its war of aggression.

In conclusion, the European Union and its Member States demand that Russia immediately and unconditionally cease its military actions and withdraw all its troops and military equipment from Ukraine. We reiterate our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Thank you!

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ALBANIA\*, UKRAINE and REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, the Potential Candidate Country GEORGIA the EFTA countries NORWAY, ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well ANDORRA 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.

