



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1021
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**EU Statement on the Russian Federation's ongoing
aggression against Ukraine**

Mr. Chair, the European Union and its Member States reiterate **their strongest condemnation of Russia's** deliberate, unprovoked, unjustified and brutal **war of aggression** against Ukraine. This war is **illegal** as **the Russian Federation blatantly violates international law**. The principles of States' sovereignty and territorial integrity and of no use or the threat of use of force remain non-negotiable. **We shall not allow these principles to be trampled on by those very few** who wish to drive the world backwards. That's why the European Union and its Member States **stand on the right side, in solidarity with Ukraine** and in support of **international rules-based order**. We will continue to condemn and reject Russia's aggression, facilitated by Belarus, and impose the costs on them.

Russia's aggression is an unspeakable tragedy for Ukraine and its people. As the survival of their country is at stake, the **Ukrainians are fighting bravely and effectively**. We see it every day. The successful Ukrainian counterattacks and the so-called "regrouping" of Russian forces in the recent days showed that high motivation, combined with appropriate training and adequate hardware support, are already making a difference on the battlefield. Mr Chair, while the Ukrainians continue to defend their sovereignty, identity and the right to choose their own future, all States have the right to support Ukraine in this struggle.

This war is a strategic mistake for Russia. The severe costs that Russia has imposed on itself by waging this brutal war cannot be denied. They are political, economic and reputational notwithstanding the devastating human toll. The sooner the Russian decision-makers realise and admit it, the better for all.

Mr Chair, **there is no justification** whatsoever for Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Furthermore, Russia's systematic and large scale violations of IHL and human rights shows its blatant disregard for international law and its failure to abide by its international obligations. Targeting and killing civilians, brutal siege tactics resulting in razing whole towns to the ground, use of cluster munitions, mistreatment of prisoners of war, use of filtration camps, forced deportations, bombing of civilian infrastructure, are all unacceptable. It is particularly worrying that Russia, in contrast to Ukraine, as stated last week in Geneva by Matilda Bogner, Head of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, does not provide access to prisoners of war held on its territory and the territories it occupies. **Perpetrators** of such atrocities **must and will be held to account**, including those responsible for exploding the detention facility in Olenivka, where more than 50 Ukrainian prisoners of war were killed. We will spare no efforts until justice prevails. We also deplore last Sunday's attack, an act of revenge and desperation following Russia's military setbacks, on the Ukrainian electricity grids, undoubtedly a critical civilian infrastructure.

Mr. Chair, what is also horrifying about this war is the fact that **for the first time ever civilian nuclear facilities have been abused for military purposes, in a blatant violation of international law.** The presence of Russian military forces at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant prevents the operator and the Ukrainian authorities from fulfilling their nuclear and radiation safety obligations in accordance with international conventions, IAEA safety standards and security guidance. In this context, **we welcome the IAEA mission to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant** as a first step to de-escalate the situation. The mission's **recommendations should be implemented without delay.** We urge the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its military forces and all other unauthorised personnel from the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, and its immediate surroundings, so that the operator and the Ukrainian authorities can resume their sovereign responsibilities and the legitimate operating staff can conduct their duties without outside interference, threat, or unacceptably harsh working conditions.

We call on Russia to **immediately and unconditionally release the three OSCE SMM national staff** detained since spring this year. We deplore that they are unjustifiably held in conditions unknown to their families, condemn the so-called “legal” proceedings initiated against them and recall that they still enjoy their functional protection as OSCE staff.

Mr Chair, we assess the latest Belarusian military exercise as yet another example of Belarusian military alignment with Russia’s aggressive policies and as a continuous disregard of the spirit of the OSCE commitments in the field of military transparency and predictability. We also **reiterate our call on Belarusian authorities to stop enabling** the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations.

We once again **urge 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. We will never recognise any illegal entities nor annexation of Ukraine’s territory.

Thank you.

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