



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1499 Vienna, 28 November 2024

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

1. As Ukraine enters its third winter of Russia's war of aggression, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, Matthias Schmale, reports that nearly 40 percent of Ukraine's population requires humanitarian assistance, including 3.6 million internally displaced people. Civilian infrastructure has been devastated, with over 2,000 attacks on healthcare facilities and two million homes damaged since February 2022. Russia's war continues to cause widespread trauma and psychological distress among civilians. Systematic attacks on energy infrastructure pose an additional risk during winter, especially for vulnerable populations, as power outages lasting more than a few days in subzero temperatures have dire consequences. Data from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights confirms 39,081 civilian casualties since February 2022, including at least 12,162 deaths, while pointing to the likelihood of higher actual figures due to pending reports.
2. In recent days, we have once again witnessed an alarming escalation of Russia's brutal attacks on Ukraine's civilians and civilian infrastructure, carried out with blatant disregard for the international humanitarian law principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution, such as the assault on the city of Kryvyi Rih in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. This includes Russia's reckless launch of an intermediate-range, nuclear-capable ballistic missile at Ukraine on 21 November, accompanied by irresponsible nuclear rhetoric. Intentionally directing attacks on civilians and civilian objects constitutes a

war crime. Ensuring accountability for all crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression remains paramount for achieving the just and lasting peace that Ukraine deserves. There can be no impunity for any perpetrators and accomplices of Russia's crimes. The EU remains firmly committed to holding Russia and its leadership fully accountable for waging a war of aggression against Ukraine and for other crimes under international law, as well as for the massive damage caused by its war.

3. On 20 November, we commemorated the 35th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The EU remains deeply alarmed by the devastating impact of Russia's war of aggression on children. The figures are staggering - according to the UN, 659 children have been killed, and more than 1,747 wounded, with the actual toll likely to be much higher. According to Ukrainian authorities, nearly 20,000 have been forcibly displaced or deported. Many children have lost family members, or face additional risks from disrupted health services and limited access to education. Countless children spend endless hours in bomb shelters due to indiscriminate attacks. The grave violations committed by Russia against children in Ukraine have exacerbated their need for protection, mental health and psychological support, food, healthcare, education, and sanitation. We strongly affirm that all children must be protected, particularly from conscription into and use by the army or other armed forces, as well as from human trafficking, illegal adoption, sexual exploitation, and separation from their families. We remain deeply concerned about the fate of all Ukrainian children and other civilians unlawfully deported and transferred to Russia and Belarus.
4. The methods employed by Russia in its brutal war are particularly repulsive. We express deep concern over the 18 November OPWC report confirming the presence of the riot control agent CS in samples collected in the Dnipropetrovsk region of Ukraine. The use of riot control agents as a method of warfare is prohibited under Article I of the CWC. We reiterate our call on

Russia to strictly comply with its obligations under the Convention. There can be no impunity for the illegal use of chemical weapons.

5. Russia's deplorable attacks on Ukrainian cultural heritage and legacy sites add to its long list of crimes. The EU shares UNESCO's condemnation of the strikes on Odesa on 14-15 November. We deeply regret that core material and spiritual tenets of Ukrainian heritage are among Russia's main targets in its imperialistic and revisionist attempts to erase Ukraine's cultural and national identity and deny its right to independent statehood. The destruction of Ukraine's cultural heritage is not a collateral effect of the war but a core objective of Russia's aggression.
6. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continues to have a devastating impact on the lives of innocent civilians in Ukraine, but also on the state of human rights in Russia itself, where internal repression has further intensified. Systematic, state-sponsored human rights violations are part of the Kremlin's strategy to control all spheres of life, both public and private, and to suppress dissent against its aggressive foreign policy of waging war, in violation of Russia's international obligations and OSCE commitments.
7. We once again firmly condemn Russia's unprovoked, unjustifiable and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU also strongly condemns the DPRK's deployment of troops and provision of arms to Russia in support of its war of aggression against Ukraine, in violation of the UN Charter and fundamental principles of international law, as well as multiple UNSC resolutions. These destabilising and illegal actions endanger regional and international peace and security, from Europe to the Indo-Pacific region. We strongly call on Russia and the DPRK to immediately cease their unlawful military cooperation and to withdraw DPRK troops from Russia. We call on the OSCE executive structures to make full use of the OSCE Conflict Cycle toolbox at their disposal to provide proper early warning and prevention of further escalation.

8. The EU reiterates its strong condemnation of third countries' continued support for Russia's illegal war and continues to urge them to cease all assistance. This includes not only direct military support but also the provision of dual-use goods and sensitive items that sustain Russia's military industrial base, fuel its ongoing aggression, and aid Russia's efforts to circumvent sanctions.
9. We urge the aggressor, Russia, to immediately stop its senseless war, and to completely and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

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, Serbia, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.