



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council 1387 Vienna, 1 September 2022

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

1. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continues to cause tremendous suffering to millions of people. By deliberately targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure, Russia is trying to subdue the peaceful and democratic neighbouring State of Ukraine. Last week, Russia continued its attacks on civilian infrastructure in a number of regions, including Donetsk, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv. Russia also struck a railway junction and a residential area in Chaplyne, which took the lives of 25 civilians, including two children. We reaffirm our solidarity with the Ukrainian people and pay tribute to all those who have sacrificed their lives in defence of the independence of Ukraine. We also express our deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims of Russia's ongoing aggression.
2. Moreover, in blatant disrespect of international law and OSCE principles, Russia is even questioning the very existence of Ukraine as an independent, sovereign State. Not only by offending words here in the Permanent Council, but also by further actions, as Russia is imposing puppet administrations and reportedly intends to hold illegal so-called "referenda" in the parts of Ukraine that are temporarily under Russian military control. Just as with the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula, such sham "referenda" are unacceptable, condemnable and will never be recognised by the international community. Crimea is Ukraine. Donbas is Ukraine. Mariupol and Kherson are Ukraine. Ukraine is a sovereign State whose internationally recognised borders must not be violated.
3. In this vein, the European Union condemns Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. We call on 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, including the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula. We also reiterate our call on Belarus to stop enabling the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations.

4. The European Union condemns Russia's ongoing military activities in and around Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. We welcome the visit by the IAEA this week. The IAEA must be granted free and unrestricted access to the facility to assess the situation and plan necessary measures to prevent a major nuclear accident, which would be devastating for the region. We urge Russia to stop all military hostilities and to immediately cede control of the power plant to its rightful sovereign owner, Ukraine.
5. Furthermore, we again urge Russia to ensure that the three local OSCE staff members detained in non-government controlled areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts of Ukraine are immediately and unconditionally released. We also condemn atrocities committed against prisoners of war by the Russian Armed Forces and its proxies. All prisoners of war must have the right to a fair trial in full compliance with international humanitarian law.
6. We continue to condemn Russia's ongoing suppression of human rights and persecution of its citizens, in particular the actions aiming to silence any kind of criticism or public resistance in connection with its illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. We call for the immediate and unconditional release of the politician and activist Vladimir Kara-Murza, who was detained for criticising Russia's invasion of Ukraine. We urge Russian authorities to immediately drop the charges against the respected political figure and former mayor of Yekaterinburg, Yevgeny Roizman, for openly criticising Russia's illegal war against Ukraine. We urge Russia not to use threat of punishment and detention as a means to discourage alternative views on the senseless war it is waging against Ukraine. We call on Russia to respect international human rights law and its OSCE commitments on human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly. We remain concerned about the accelerated internal repression restricting fundamental

freedoms of Russian citizens, including against the co-founder of the anti-plagiarism project *Dissernet* and prominent journalist for Novaya Gazeta, Andrei Zayakin. Similarly, we urge the immediate release of the artist Aleksandra Skochilenko who has been in detention for almost four months without being provided with adequate medical and nutritional assistance despite her poor health condition.

7. In the same way, Russia's illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol in 2014 has caused the situation for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the peninsula to deteriorate significantly. Since February, Russia has used Crimea as a strategic springboard to invade other parts of Ukraine from the south and to attack Ukraine with indiscriminate missile strikes. We also deeply deplore Russia's use of the Ukrainian peninsula as a transit point to deport Ukrainian citizens to infamous "filtration camps", where acts of torture and abuse have been reported.
8. The Crimean peninsula has moreover become a transportation hub for grain stolen from other parts of Ukraine, and Russia's military presence there has enforced its blockade of Ukrainian Black Sea ports. This has damaged the Ukrainian economy and resulted in a global food security crisis. Let us be clear, this is a deliberate and cynical choice by the Kremlin, a deliberate decision to weaponise hunger, and an attempt to weaken international support for Ukraine. We therefore welcomed the grain deal brokered in Istanbul by the United Nations and the host country and the departure of commercial ships from Ukraine's Black Sea ports. We will remain extremely vigilant to make sure Russia implements this deal fully and in good faith. We will continue implementing the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes, which have allowed Ukraine to export 3 million tonnes of agricultural goods in August alone through alternative routes.
9. The EU has been rock solid in its support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity since the start of Russia's aggression in 2014. We are also actively supporting the ongoing ICC investigation and we have adopted the most hard-hitting sanctions ever against Russia. We have bolstered our already substantial support to Ukraine with humanitarian aid, macro-financial assistance, support for refugees and unprecedented military support. Additionally, we are deeply committed to Ukraine's prosperous European future and we are ready to play a major role in international efforts for the

reconstruction of Ukraine. The EU is standing with Ukraine in these dramatic times, and we will continue to do so for as long as it takes.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE and REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, the Potential Candidate Countries BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA* and GEORGIA, the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well ANDORRA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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