



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1052 Vienna, 19 July 2023

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

Madam Chair, the European Union and its Member States reiterate **their strongest condemnation of Russia's** deliberate, unprovoked and brutal **war of aggression** against Ukraine. There is **no justification** whatsoever for this war. The Russian Federation has blatantly violated the principles of States' sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and the prohibition of the use or threat of force. Alongside our international partners, we stand united in support of these fundamental principles and the rules-based international order built upon them. We will continue our comprehensive support to Ukraine for as long as it takes to repel the Russian aggression and to ensure that such reckless acts of aggression never occur again.

The catastrophic **cost of Russia's illegal war on Ukraine is staggering**. Russia has brought to Ukraine not just death, devastation, and destruction, but an unspeakable human tragedy. Russia's forces persist in their systematic attacks on Ukrainian cities and critical civilian infrastructure but remain unable to break the indomitable spirit of the Ukrainian people staunchly defending their homeland.

The recent FSC-PC and EEC meetings shed crucial light on the dire consequences of Russia's war of aggression, notably its **devastating environmental impact**, including the destruction of the Kakhovka dam. The effects on ecosystems and livelihoods will resonate for decades, necessitating substantial humanitarian and development assistance. The environmental damages alone inflicted by Russia on Ukraine amount to more than 50 billion EUR.

Russia must compensate Ukraine and its people for all the damage and suffering caused by its war of aggression. The principle of the "**aggressor pays the damage**" must be upheld. Moreover, Russia will not evade accountability for any war crimes and other serious international crimes committed, including for the crime of aggression.

The situation at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) also remains precarious and very concerning. We strongly support IAEA's efforts to ensure nuclear safety and security of the power plant. It is imperative that Russia grants IAEA staff full and unhindered access to the ZNPP, withdraws all military equipment and personnel from its premises, and returns full control to its rightful owner, Ukraine. We reiterate that in the event of any nuclear accident in Ukraine, Russia will bear full responsibility.

The EU condemns unequivocally Russia's decision to terminate the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI). With this decision, Russia is further exacerbating the global food security crisis that it created through its war of aggression against Ukraine, continuing to deliberately use food as a weapon. This will put millions of the most vulnerable people at even greater risk. Since August 2022, the BSGI has helped to revive grain shipments from Ukraine's Black Sea ports, contributing to a global reduction in food prices and easing the burden for some of the world's most food-insecure countries. As part of our response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the EU's Solidarity Lanes and EU MS' efforts remain instrumental in bolstering global food security. Russia must cease its illegal blockade of Ukrainian seaports and allow freedom of navigation in the Black Sea.

The situation at the frontline in Ukraine today stands in stark contrast to the early weeks of the full-scale invasion. Since the beginning of Russia's aggression, the **Ukrainian armed forces have shown remarkable resilience, determination, and courage.** Not only did they successfully prevent the aggressor from seizing Kyiv, but they have now reclaimed over half of the territory seized by Russia in Spring 2022. Yet, for over 16 months, we have heard the relentless Russian rhetoric of the so-called "special military operation" supposedly achieving its objectives. The facts on the ground paint a different picture, suggesting that Russian officials, including the Vienna-based delegates, are more invested in deluding themselves than confronting the reality.

Russia and its people are now directly facing the dire repercussions and severe costs of Putin's ill-conceived decision to invade Ukraine. Every passing day only further magnifies its calamitous consequences for Russia's future.

The EU and its Member States **remain unwavering in their support** for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and demand that Russia **immediately stop its war of aggression** and completely and unconditionally

withdraw all its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We urge the Belarusian authorities to cease their support and refrain from any further involvement or facilitation of Russia's illegal war of aggression.

Madam Chair, we remain determined to work with Ukraine and our international partners **to find a just, lasting and comprehensive peace based on full respect for international law**. The EU supports President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula and is ready to work with Ukraine on the 10-point peace plan. We will continue to support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in their fight for freedom, sovereignty, and their European future.

Thank you.

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