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PC.DEL/291/23  
3 March 2023

ENGLISH only



**EUROPEAN UNION**

**OSCE Permanent Council 1413  
Vienna, 2 March 2023**

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

1. Last week, the international community, here at the OSCE and other international organisations, showed continued unity in unwavering support of and solidarity with Ukraine. Our governments and our people made it clear: we stand with Ukraine as it exercises its inherent right to self-defence against Russia's war of aggression, in accordance with international law, notably Article 51 of the UN Charter, and will continue doing so for as long as it takes. We commend the courage and determination of the Ukrainian people in their fight to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and freedom of Ukraine. Ukraine has the right to liberate and regain full control of all Russian-occupied territories within its internationally recognised borders, including Crimea.
2. Ukraine belongs to our European family. The European Union and its Member States will continue to support Ukraine in political, economic, humanitarian, financial and military terms, including through swift coordinated procurement from European industry. We will also support Ukraine's reconstruction, for which we will strive to use frozen and immobilised Russian assets in accordance with EU and international law. We will further increase collective pressure on Russia to end its war of aggression. To this end, the EU most recently adopted the tenth sanctions package, including taking steps against those who attempt to circumvent EU measures, and prolonged the sanctions against Russia's accomplice, Belarus.
3. Together with our international partners, we will make sure that Ukraine prevails, that international law is respected, that peace and Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders are restored, that Ukraine is rebuilt, and that justice is

done. We support President Zelenskyy's peace formula. We applaud the adoption on 23 February 2023 of the UNGA resolution "Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine". The resolution was adopted at the UNGA's resumed Emergency Special Session with 141 votes in favour and just 7 votes against. The Russian Federation, as well as its accomplice, the Belarusian regime, are isolated.

4. The EU condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's persisting heinous attacks against residential buildings, school and medical facilities, cultural sites, and against Ukraine's critical infrastructure, notably its energy, heating and water supply systems. Deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian objects constitutes a war crime. The EU is firmly committed to holding to account all commanders, perpetrators and accomplices of war crimes and other most serious crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU fully supports Ukraine's and the international community's efforts in this respect, including the establishment of an appropriate mechanism for the prosecution of the crime of aggression, which is of concern to the international community as a whole.
5. We condemn Russia's continued violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the occupied parts of Ukraine and remain deeply concerned by the particularly disturbing accounts of the impact this war has on Ukrainian children, including their unlawful forcible transfers and deportations to the Russian Federation and Ukrainian territories temporarily and illegally occupied by Russia. This is a clear violation of international humanitarian law, including of the fourth Geneva Convention, and must end immediately. Yesterday at a side event co-organised by the EU delegation, we had another opportunity to listen to concrete cases in this regard.
6. We express our gravest concern over recent explosions near the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) and Russia's continued actions to illegally occupy and take control over the facility. The situation can only be resolved by the complete withdrawal of Russian troops and equipment from the premises. We reiterate that Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric is absolutely unacceptable. We support the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, including through the continuous presence of IAEA experts and the cessation of all combat operations in and around the ZNPP and surrounding infrastructure.

7. On 26 February, Ukraine marked the Resistance Day to Occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol. We recall the Joint Statement of the Participants of the International Crimea Platform and repeat in a strong and united voice: Crimea is Ukraine!
  
8. One year into Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, there are two opposite poles. While Ukraine is bravely defending its territory, Putin's regime continues not only its war against Ukraine but also its campaign of repression against its own people. Boris Nemtsov and his fearless work for democracy and political pluralism in Russia are not forgotten, nor his denouncement of the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2014. Today, the remnants of independent media voices face threats and persecution, as in the very recent case of The Bell news website. Ethnic and religious minorities, the LGBTI community and human rights advocates are also facing severe persecution. Citizens voicing any kind of disapproval of the invasion end up in jail or fined. The most recent sentences in politically motivated cases include this of the journalist Maria Ponomarenko, sentenced to six years in prison. We call on Russia to immediately release all activists and political prisoners, including Vladimir Kara-Murza, Alexey Navalny, Ilya Yashin, Ivan Safronov, Maxim Lypkan, Lilia Chanysheva, Yuri Dmitriev as well as Andrey Pivovarov.
  
9. To conclude, we demand that Russia immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraws all of its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. In addition, we urge the Belarusian authorities to stop enabling Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, by permitting Russian armed forces to use Belarusian territory and by providing support and training to the Russian military. The Belarusian authorities must fully abide by their obligations under international law. The EU will continue to respond to all actions supporting Russia's unlawful and unjustified war of aggression and remains ready to move quickly with further restrictive measures against Belarus.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ALBANIA\*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA\*, the Potential Candidate Country GEORGIA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and

NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA, MONACO 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.