



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council No. 1378
Vienna, 16 June 2022**

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

1. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine grossly violates international law and international humanitarian law, blatantly disrespects the OSCE principles and commitments, and is causing massive loss of life, injury and damage. Shelling of Ukrainian cities and towns by the Russian Armed Forces continues, most heavily concentrated in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, as well as in the Kharkiv, Sumy, Zhytomyr, Mykolaiv, Kherson, and Dnipropetrovsk areas. Russia keeps directing its attacks against the civilian population and is targeting civilian objects, including hospitals, medical facilities, schools, cultural sites and shelters. Amnesty International has reported attacks on Kharkiv where Russia used cluster bombs, killing hundreds of civilians. In the territories from where Russia has been forced to withdraw, the Ukrainian police are investigating deaths of more than 12,000 civilians and mass graves of executed civilians are being uncovered. These horrifying atrocities must stop immediately. Russia bears full responsibility for these acts and all the destruction and loss of life it causes.
2. Those found responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity, and their accomplices, must and will be held to account in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian law. We also remind Russia that prisoners of war must be treated according to international standards.
3. The European Union condemns Russia's premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. President Putin's latest remarks are disturbing and revealing of Russia's violent attempt to rewrite history: this war of aggression is imperialistic in nature. Once again, we call on Russia to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, 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. We firmly believe that the use of force and coercion to change borders has no place in the 21st century. Relations among sovereign States are guided by the UN Charter, international law and its principles, including those enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter.

4. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has global implications. Experts assess that this year alone 275 million people across the world are likely to be at the risk of food insecurity. Russia's weaponisation of food supplies is unacceptable. The Russian Armed Forces shell and occupy arable land in Ukraine. Russia deliberately attacks Ukrainian farm equipment, warehouses, markets, roads, bridges, and ports. Russia has turned the Black Sea into a war zone, blocking shipments of grain and fertilizer from Ukraine to consumers, farmers and food producers all over the world. Russia's attempts to blame food scarcity on international sanctions is blatant disinformation. This is a cold, callous and calculated strategy made up in the Kremlin to hurt not only Ukraine but also other vulnerable countries, which now risk starvation and famine.
5. The EU is fully committed to working with its global partners in addressing the consequences of Russia's actions, including through setting up solidarity lanes for Ukraine's grain export and providing Ukrainian farmers with agricultural inputs and equipment so that they can continue production despite ongoing hostilities. We also support the efforts of the United Nations to find a solution to open the Black Sea ports in order to mitigate the global effects of Russia's war.
6. The EU condemns in the strongest possible terms the behaviour of the Russian Armed Forces and their proxies who are detaining, abducting or kidnapping Ukrainian journalists, civil society activists, local officials and other civilians in Ukrainian territories under the military control by the Russian Armed Forces. We are also gravely concerned about Ukrainians being reportedly forcibly deported to Russia, including to so-called "filtration camps", and about the numerous reported cases of sexual violence. The taking of hostages and forcible transfer of civilians are prohibited under international humanitarian law, notably the Geneva Conventions. The

European Union will not recognise passports, issued as part of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as any attempts by Russia to replace democratically elected and legitimate Ukrainian administrations and to legitimise Russian puppet administrations on Ukrainian territory through fake referenda.

7. Moreover, the EU condemns the continued detention of SMM staff in areas held by Russia-backed armed formations. SMM staff are still under OSCE functional legal protection. We urge Russia to ensure the immediate release of those remaining in detention and to end the media campaign against SMM.
8. Inside Russia, Russian independent journalists and media outlets are being silenced for giving a platform to voices that challenge the manipulated picture of the situation on the ground in Ukraine as portrayed by the Russian government and the disinformation network under its control, including Russian state-controlled TV channels. We condemn the mass arbitrary detentions and arrests of protestors, including journalists and activists speaking out against Russia's war. We applaud Russian independent journalists and media as well as Russian NGOs that defend the values of democracy, rule of law and freedom, and strive to inform the Russian people with factual information about the situation on the ground in Ukraine despite the risks.
9. The EU is also stepping up its support to the Republic of Moldova, which has been severely affected by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. We have strengthened the border management cooperation between Moldovan border guards and the European and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and reinforced the EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine, including assisting in the management of the refugee flow. The EU Member States have also accepted refugees to their territory in order to relieve the pressure faced by Moldova's public and non-governmental sector. We have increased our humanitarian assistance and have increased support to strengthen Moldova's cyber security, to fight disinformation and to counter hybrid threats. The EU is closely monitoring the situation in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova.
10. Russia is facing a wall of unity from the international community. The EU has reacted strongly by imposing the largest sanctions packages in our Union's history. We adopted far-reaching support packages to help the Ukrainian Armed Forces to defend

Ukraine's territorial integrity and population. Also our transatlantic unity has been unwavering in taking common actions. Moreover, in the UN General Assembly, an overwhelming majority voted for the resolutions deploring in the strongest terms Russia's aggression against Ukraine as well as the involvement of Belarus. The message is clear: wars of aggression cannot be permitted. We stand with Ukraine.

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