



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1478 Vienna, 13 June 2024

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

1. Russia's brutal war of aggression continues to take a heavy toll on the Ukrainian people. On 12th June alone, Russian attacks against Ukraine killed at least 10 people and injured 38 more. Russia's offensive against Ukraine's Kharkiv region has been particularly deadly, causing more than half of all civilian casualties in May, which, according to the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, has seen the highest numbers of civilians killed and injured in a single month since June 2023. The increasing harm to civilians has been compounded by Russia's intensified attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, with 19 such attacks registered in May alone, leading to severe humanitarian consequences.
2. As Russia continues to promote its false propaganda regarding its war of aggression against Ukraine, we should not forget two basic facts. Firstly, Russia is manifestly violating fundamental principles of international law, which guide the peaceful co-existence of sovereign states. Secondly, Russia is blatantly disrespecting the rules governing the conduct of hostilities. The four respective Moscow Mechanism reports, as well as relevant ODIHR and OHCHR reports, provide evidence that Russia is responsible for a wide range of violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in Ukraine, many of which amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.
3. The growing civilian death toll and the destruction of civilian objects in Ukraine are two of the most tangible indications of Russia's continued

disregard for the basic principles of international humanitarian law. Another such indication is the rising number of killed and injured among humanitarian personnel in Ukraine. According to OCHA, the number of humanitarian aid workers killed has more than tripled in 2023 compared to 2022. Moreover, in 2023 aid organisations reported 227 incidents affecting humanitarian operations in Ukraine. OCHA has confirmed Russia's pattern of double-tap strikes, targeting first-aid responders in Ukraine, in blatant violation of the prohibition on directing attacks against the wounded and those helping them.

4. The images of emaciated Ukrainians, which emerged after the latest exchange of prisoners of war between Russia and Ukraine, are a stark visual record of Russia's disregard for its international obligations and human dignity. Under the Third Geneva Convention, Russia is required to treat POWs in its custody humanely and with dignity, providing them with all necessary medical attention and food. Any acts causing death or seriously endangering the health of a POW, and any acts of violence, intimidation or reprisal are prohibited. Yet, there is a growing body of evidence that Russia systematically subjects Ukrainian POWs to torture and ill-treatment, including severe beatings, inhumane conditions of detention and denial of medical support.
5. The EU once again urges Russia to respect its international obligations. This includes taking all precautionary measures to spare Ukrainian civilians and civilian objects and ensuring Ukrainian POWs, humanitarian workers and first-aid responders the protection to which they are entitled under international law. Russia must ensure access for the ICRC to all POWs and civilian internees, including to all places where they are held, and allow it to repeat visits as often as needed in accordance with the Geneva conventions.
6. We also demand the immediate release of all individuals unlawfully deprived of their liberty, including the three arbitrarily detained OSCE staff members. Russia must ensure that all Ukrainians in Russian captivity are

treated in full compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

7. The recently adopted UN Security Council Resolution on the safety and security of humanitarian and UN personnel is a powerful reminder of the responsibility of states to respect international humanitarian law in all circumstances, including by protecting humanitarian personnel. The EU remains firmly committed to ensuring full accountability for all crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression, including victims' rights to justice and reparation, as well as guarantees of non-repetition.
8. We are more steadfast than ever in our support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. Equally, we reiterate our firm support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and Georgia within their internationally recognised borders, which are too the target of Russia's destabilising activities. In view of this, we do not recognise the constitutional and legal framework in which the so-called parliamentary elections took place in Georgia's occupied breakaway region of South Ossetia on 9th June.
9. We are determined to continue providing Ukraine and its people with all the necessary political, financial, economic, humanitarian, legal, military and diplomatic support for as long as it takes and as intensely as needed, also taking into account the critical importance of accelerated and intensified deliveries of military material based on Ukraine's urgent needs.
10. As we approach the 'Summit on Peace in Ukraine' convened by Switzerland on 15-16 June 2024, our goal remains to secure international support for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, as well as the implementation of the key principles and objectives of Ukraine's Peace Formula, based on the UN Charter and its principles, notably respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

11. In conclusion, we once again demand that Russia immediately end its illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine, and completely and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We also condemn the continued military support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine provided by Belarus, as well as Iran and the DPRK. We urge all countries not to provide material or other support for Russia's war of aggression, which is a blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter, and the OSCE's core principles and commitments.

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

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