



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

Madam Chair, in the 16th month of its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, **Russia continues to** brutally and blatantly **disregard the most fundamental rules and principles of international law**, including those enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act. Amid **this unwarranted and illegal aggression from Russia**, Ukraine remains steadfast in exercising its right to self-defence in accordance with Art. 51 of the UN Charter, in protecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity, determined to chart its own future. We reiterate our 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.

Day after day, **Russia persists in assaulting towns and cities across Ukraine with massive missile and drone strikes**. The intent is clear: **to inflict fear and suffering upon Ukrainians**, attempting to destroy their will to resist against a ruthless invader. Such strategies, though abhorrent, show desperation on Russia's part, as they must realise their efficacy is limited. Thankfully, Ukrainian air defence intercepts most of the missiles and drones, as was the case during the most recent incessant attacks on Kyiv. This demonstrates the effectiveness of Ukrainian defence and highlights the lifesaving benefits of international military assistance. However, even the most advanced air defence system cannot provide absolute security, especially in areas close to the frontline.

Just last Friday, in the early morning, **a medical facility in Dnipro was struck by Russian missiles**, reportedly resulting in at least four fatalities and leaving at least

30, including two children aged three and six, injured. Such an act - inhumane and savage - might amount to a war crime. These indiscriminate attacks underscore again Russia's reckless use of force and blatant disregard for civilian casualties. We express our strongest condemnation of the atrocities perpetrated by the Russian forces. We stress that those responsible for war crimes and the other most serious crimes must be held accountable.

Madam Chair, **Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric** is unacceptable. The European Union **condemns the agreement by Russia and Belarus to allow the deployment of Russian nuclear warheads on Belarusian territory**. This step adds to the already serious threat that Russia poses to European and global security. We recall the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States of 3 January 2022 on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races, and affirm that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. We also recall Belarus' accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon State and its commitment to eliminate all nuclear weapons from its territory, as acknowledged in the Budapest Memorandum. We call on Russia to re-commit in words and deeds to the principles and commitments undertaken in those documents. Once again, we urge the Belarusian authorities to cease their support for, and refrain from any further involvement in or facilitation of Russia's illegal war of aggression.

Moreover, we reiterate **our support to the work of the IAEA and the efforts of DG Grossi** in the protection of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Russia must withdraw all military personnel and equipment from the power plant and hand back control to its rightful owner – Ukraine.

The EU **will continue standing with Ukraine and its people for as long as it is takes** to help Ukraine to rightfully defend itself and restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. We are united and determined in our support, which is comprehensive and of unprecedented scale, encompassing long-term political, financial, humanitarian, legal, economic and military support.

We also renew our firm demand for **Russia to immediately and unconditionally release the three unlawfully detained OSCE SMM staff members** and return the

illegally seized OSCE SMM vehicles to their rightful owners, all OSCE participating States.

Madam Chair, **we remain determined to work** with Ukraine and our international partners **to find a just, lasting and comprehensive peace** based on respect for international law, including the UN Charter, Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. 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, 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