



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1035 Vienna, 8 February 2023

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

Mr Chair, for almost a year, Russia has been waging a deliberate, unprovoked, unjustified **war of aggression** against Ukraine. The fact that this Russian aggression is illegal under international law is beyond any doubt. We, and an overwhelming majority of colleagues around this table, did and will continue to condemn in the strongest possible terms this outrageous violation by Russia of international law, the UN Charter and OSCE principles and commitments. The Russian delegation here, and in other international fora, should stop their preposterous claim of being the "victim". **Russia is the aggressor**, with its forces deployed on another sovereign state's territory. Not the other way around.

The past tragic 350 days are a striking testimony to **the grave miscalculation by the Kremlin to invade Ukraine**. Those in Russia who, a year ago, had been readying themselves for a parade in Kyiv had to rapidly change their plans. In his speech in the morning hours of 24 February 2022, President Putin tried to coax the international community into passivity by threatening it with "consequences that you have never faced in your history". That threat did not intimidate anyone. The **Kremlin underestimated the tenacity and resolve of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people** in defending their homeland, their freedom and their European future. In strong unity, also **underestimated by the Kremlin, we, along with our international partners, chose to stand with Ukraine** by providing it, in line with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, with the means to defend itself. **That was and is the right thing to do.**

Mr Chair, **Russia's war is** not only senseless but **extremely ruthless**. Last week, when the Russian representative in this Forum was peddling the usual mix of threats and disinformation, on the 5th floor in the Ratsaal, survivors from the Kherson region, including a 14-year-old boy, were describing their horrific first-hand

experience of what it meant to live under the Russian occupation. Pain, torture, electroshocking, beatings were some of those traumatic experiences. Those were cases from the territory of Kherson that was liberated back in November. We can only imagine what other violations of IHL are happening in other territories of Ukraine, currently under Russian control. As long as Russia's brutal war of aggression and the Russian illegal occupation continue, Ukrainians cannot feel safe and secure. Systematic and deliberate bombings and shelling of Ukrainian cities, Ukrainian population and critical civilian infrastructure, regular air-raid sirens, inhumane treatment of PoWs, and forceful deportation of children must not be tolerated.

The atrocities committed by Russia in Ukraine must end; the sooner the better for all of us, including for Russia. For the time being, Russia has not shown any genuine willingness regarding negotiations for a fair and sustainable peace. **We support the peace formula of President Zelenskyy and are committed to actively work with Ukraine on the implementation of the 10-point plan.**

The EU is engaging with Ukraine and international partners to **ensure full accountability** for war crimes and the other most serious crimes in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including the crime of aggression. We support inter alia the development of an international centre for the prosecution of the crime of aggression in Ukraine in The Hague. Its objective will be to coordinate investigation, preserve and store evidence for future trials.

Mr Chair, the **European Union and its Member States are determined to support Ukraine**, the victim of Russia's aggression, for as long as it takes. Last week, the leadership of the EU travelled to Kyiv to participate in the first ever meeting of the European Commission with the Ukrainian government on 2 February and at the 24th EU-Ukraine Summit on 3 February. They delivered a clear message of solidarity with Ukraine and its brave people.

The EU and Member States have already **mobilised €12 billion worth of weapons and related supplies for Ukraine**. [€3.6 billion](#) of this amount comes from the European Peace Facility. Together with macro-financial and humanitarian aid, our total support to date is approximately [€50 billion](#).

Moreover, the EU and its Member States are an essential provider of military training for Ukrainian personnel. The [EU Military Assistance Mission](#) is on track to have trained 15,000 troops by May. We will double the effort and train another

15,000 by the end of the year. The EU is also working on a tenth package of sanctions, having already cut the dependence on Russian energy imports within just a few months. **The war costs the Kremlin dearly, and these costs will only rise the longer it lasts.**

Last but not least, **we urge Russia to release the three illegally detained OSCE staff members** and **to return the stolen OSCE SMM armoured vehicles** to their legitimate owner, all OSCE participating States.

In conclusion, we **urge Russia to stop its war** of aggression and to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. We also **urge the Belarusian authorities to stop their support of and refrain from any further involvement in** or facilitation of Russia's illegal war of aggression.

Thank you!

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