



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Special Permanent Council 1403 Vienna, 22 December 2022

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

1. Mr Chair, the European Union thanks you for convening this Special meeting of the Permanent Council.
2. In normal circumstances, at such a point in the year we would be looking forward to meeting our families and friends for Christmas get-togethers and for the New Year festivities. However, Russia's continued war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as its incessant deliberate targeting of Ukrainian towns, critical infrastructure and civilians, makes any celebration extremely difficult.
3. Russia intends to deprive the people of Ukraine of their festivities this year. But Russia should realise that it can neither destroy Christmas nor Ukraine. Russia will never succeed in destroying the will of the Ukrainian people to live freely and independently, their determination to fight the aggressor until victory, and their democratic and prosperous European future.
4. We also wish to express our sincere appreciation to Mr Mykola Lukashuk, Head of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council, for joining our meeting today and for sharing his harrowing testimonies about the devastating consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the people in his region and beyond. Listening to how daily life under constant indiscriminate shelling by Russian forces looks like was indeed heartbreaking. But your address was also reassuring – you know what you defend, you know what you fight for and we all know that both your country and all those supporting you are on the right side of history.

5. Your testimony tragically confirms the conclusions of ODIHR's second Interim Report on reported violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in Ukraine, which was published last week. This report provides credible evidence that the conduct of hostilities by Russia has continued to be characterised by a general disregard for the basic principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions set out by IHL. These actions, which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, have led to tremendous loss of civilian life and widespread suffering over the course of the conflict. We are appalled by the report's particularly disturbing accounts of unlawful forcible transfers and deportations of children to the Russian Federation and other territories under Russian temporary military control.
6. Mr Lukashuk, dear Ukrainian colleagues, please be reassured of our unwavering support and solidarity with Ukraine. Since the very first day of this shameful imperialistic war Russia waged against your country, the EU has been steadfast in standing with Ukraine and providing all necessary support to the Government of Ukraine and to the Ukrainian people.
7. We will continue doing so in the coming year. At last week's European Council, EU leaders made it clear that the EU and its Member States are resolute in their condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. They reaffirmed the EU's full support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, as well as for Ukraine's inherent right of self-defence against the Russian aggression. Allow me to briefly refer to the main decisions of the European Council meeting last week.
8. First, EU leaders reiterated that the EU remains committed to providing political and military support to Ukraine, notably through the European Peace Facility and the EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine, and by stepping up the bilateral provision of support, in particular air defence capacities and demining assistance.
9. Second, the European Council decided to urgently intensify the provision of humanitarian and civil protection assistance to Ukraine, including in kind, and assist in the restoration of Ukraine's critical infrastructure to help Ukraine get through the

winter. It also called on Russia to immediately cease actions endangering the safety and security of civilian nuclear facilities and underlined the EU's full support for the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Together with European industry and international partners, we strive to provide a sustainable supply of priority equipment to Ukraine, such as mobile heating stations, power generators, power transformers, and high voltage and lighting equipment. In this context, the EU also welcomed the outcome of the Paris conference on Ukraine's resilience and reconstruction on 13 December 2022.

10. Third, the EU will maintain its support for displaced persons, both within and outside Ukraine.
11. Fourth, the EU remains committed to providing, along with partners, financial relief to Ukraine, and supporting its resilience and long-term reconstruction. In this context, the EU agreed to provide EUR 18 billion of assistance to Ukraine in 2023. The European Council also welcomed the G7 agreement to establish a multi-agency Donor Coordination Platform.
12. Fifth, the European Council welcomed and encouraged further efforts to ensure full accountability for war crimes and the other most serious crimes in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including ways to secure accountability for the crime of aggression. It underlined the EU's support for the investigations by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and took stock of options to use frozen assets to support Ukraine's reconstruction, and for the purposes of reparation. The EU leaders invited the EU institutions to take work forward, in accordance with EU and international law, stressing that the prosecution of the crime of aggression is of concern to the international community as a whole.
13. Sixth, the EU reinforced its restrictive measures against Russia, including through the EU's ninth package of restrictive measures and the international oil price cap, while ensuring a global level playing field. The EU stands ready to continue to reinforce the restrictive measures, in order to further increase collective pressure on Russia to end its war of aggression and to withdraw its troops from Ukraine.

14. And seventh, the European Council reiterated that it is ready to support Ukraine's initiative for a just peace. It noted that, to date, Russia has not shown any genuine willingness regarding a fair and sustainable peace.

15. To conclude, we demand that Russia immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw 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 refrain from any further involvement in Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as to immediately stop allowing its territory to serve as a launchpad for attacks against Ukraine, which is an aggression in itself. Belarus must also stop providing military support to Russia. We reiterate that any further actions and, in particular, any direct involvement of the Belarusian military in Russia's war of aggression will be met by new and strong restrictive measures.

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

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