



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1502 Vienna, 12 December 2024

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

1. Last week, we convened for the third OSCE Ministerial Council, again overshadowed by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. While we were meeting in Malta, Russia continued to terrorise the Ukrainian population with its relentless, deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian objects, including civilian infrastructure. While Ministers in Malta were strongly appealing to Russia to cease its aggressive actions, the Russian army reportedly attacked Kryvyi Rih in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, killing at least six people and injuring 17, including a six-year-old boy. On 6 December, Russia carried out another deadly attack with aerial glide bombs in Zaporizhzhia, killing at least ten civilians and injuring 24, including three children. These are just a few recent examples of the ongoing Russian attacks. According to the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, from September to November 2024, these bombs killed over 100 civilians and injured approximately seven times as many in Ukraine, accounting for 25% of all civilian casualties during this period. The EU deplors the fact that no Ukrainian region is spared from Russia's targeted attacks on residential neighbourhoods and civilian facilities. We emphasise that intentionally directing attacks on civilians and civilian objects constitutes a war crime.
2. For the third consecutive year, Russia misused the Ministerial Council to justify its war of aggression but again failed in its attempts to deflect

accountability. Groundless claims and false accusations were met with widespread and resolute condemnation. Russia's brutal war represents a flagrant violation of international law, including the UN Charter, as well as OSCE principles and commitments. Russia's war poses the gravest threat to European security. The overwhelming support among participating States for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders highlights the unwavering and non-negotiable nature of these fundamental principles.

3. We remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting Ukraine and its people. Accountability for all crimes committed in the context of Russia's war of aggression, including the crime of aggression itself, is a priority. We also emphasise the importance of the discussions held during the side event, *"In Russia's Captivity: Way to Freedom,"* organised by Ukraine and co-sponsored by the EU. The EU condemns in the strongest terms Russia's widespread and grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in Ukraine, including the arbitrary detention and torture of civilians. These practices, first observed in Crimea in 2014, have escalated to devastating levels in areas temporarily occupied by Russia. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians, including three OSCE SMM officials, remain in detention by Russia.
4. As of August 2024, according to the UN Development Programme, approximately 1,300 civilians have been affected by mines and explosive remnants resulting from Russia's war. Thousands of people face daily threats from unexploded rockets, grenades, or mines — whether letting their children out to play, on their way to the hospital, or returning home after an aerial attack. The physical and psychological effects, such as amputations or trauma, will leave lasting marks on thousands of survivors for decades. The non-physical impacts on swift and sustainable recovery after the conflict are equally severe, including the detrimental effects of landmine contamination on various sectors of the economy, especially agriculture. Ukraine is now the most heavily mined country in the world, with

potentially 23% of its land at risk of contamination from landmines and unexploded ordnance. After nearly three years of Russia's full-scale war, Ukraine is estimated to be littered with hundreds of thousands of explosive remnants. On 6 December alone, pyrotechnic units of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine were engaged 116 times, detecting 246 pieces of explosive ordnance.

5. The EU strongly condemns the use of anti-personnel mines and improvised anti-personnel mines. The EU will continue to provide support for military and civilian mine action, including humanitarian demining. The overall support provided by the EU and its Member States amounts to more than EUR 320 million. This includes EUR 21.5 million from the EU budget and EUR 1.2 million channeled through the SPU. These efforts aim to strengthen the capacity of Ukrainian authorities and non-governmental implementing partners to address large-scale contamination caused by land and sea mines, and explosive remnants of war, release land for productive use, and provide for safe and secure navigation in the Black Sea region. EU Member States significantly contribute to victim assistance programmes, providing prosthetics, rehabilitation, and psycho-social support to help Ukrainians lead self-determined lives post-recovery.
6. We will continue to stand with Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes for Ukraine to rightfully defend itself against Russia's brutal war of aggression and win the just and lasting peace it deserves. To this end, we will continue to provide Ukraine with strong comprehensive support.
7. We once again firmly condemn Russia's unprovoked, unjustifiable and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU also strongly condemns the DPRK's deployment of troops and provision of arms to Russia in support of its war of aggression against Ukraine, in violation of the UN Charter and fundamental principles of international law, as well as multiple UNSC resolutions. These destabilising and illegal actions endanger regional and international peace and security, from Europe to the Indo-Pacific region. We strongly call on Russia and the DPRK to immediately cease their unlawful

military cooperation and to withdraw DPRK troops from Russia. We call on the OSCE executive structures to make full use of the OSCE Conflict Cycle toolbox at their disposal to provide proper early warning and prevention of further escalation.

8. The EU reiterates its strong condemnation of third countries' continued support for Russia's illegal war and continues to urge them to cease all assistance. This includes not only direct military support but also the provision of dual-use goods and sensitive items that sustain Russia's military industrial base, fuel its ongoing aggression, and aid Russia's efforts to circumvent sanctions.
9. We urge the aggressor, Russia, to immediately stop its senseless war, and to completely and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

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, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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