



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1445 Vienna, 5 October 2023

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

1. Day after day, through its illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression, Russia is systematically causing death and destruction in Ukraine, deliberately targeting Ukrainian cities and civilian objects, including grain storage facilities, energy infrastructure and ports, not only in the Black Sea, but also on the Danube close to the border of EU Member States. The latest oral update by the International Independent Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine (the Commission) testifies that Russia's attacks have led to further civilian casualties, the damage or destruction of critical civilian infrastructure, and the disruption of essential services and supplies in Ukraine. Additionally, the Commission consolidated evidence, suggesting that the use of torture by the Russian Armed Forces in areas under their control has been widespread and systematic.
2. The EU reiterates its strongest condemnation of Russia's continued attacks. Intentionally directing attacks on civilians and civilian objects is a war crime. We note that the Commission is also investigating allegations of genocide in Ukraine, and share its concern about rhetoric transmitted in Russian state and other media. The EU is firmly committed to ensuring full accountability for all crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including for the crime of aggression.

3. The EU and its Member States also remain committed to addressing food insecurity aggravated by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its naval blockade of Ukrainian sea ports. Between May 2022 and August 2023, the EU Solidarity Lanes allowed Ukraine to export more than 53 million tonnes of agricultural products. They have become key routes for Ukraine's exports since Russia unilaterally withdrew from the Black Sea Grain Initiative in July. Plans are underway for increasing the capacities of the Solidarity Lanes, as announced by Commissioner Vălean during her latest meeting with Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Kubrakov. On 26 September, a new call was launched under the EU's Connecting Europe Facility, allowing for the first time Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova to apply for funding for infrastructure projects along the Solidarity Lanes – on the same basis as EU Member States.

4. Against the background of the ongoing OSCE CiO Warsaw Human Dimension Conference, we should not forget that violations and abuses of human rights are particularly widespread not only in the Ukrainian territories, illegally and temporarily occupied by Russia, but also in Russia itself. Russia's external aggression is mirrored by increasing internal repression. As underlined by the Moscow Mechanism report, published in September 2022, we are concerned that demonstrations have been repressed, and drastic measures to suppress opposing voices have created a climate of fear and intimidation. The EU strongly condemns Russia's continued use of repressive legislation and politically motivated trials, which run counter to Russia's legal obligations under international human rights law and OSCE commitments, and have resulted in an appalling increase in the number of political prisoners.

5. We are gravely concerned about the increasing nuclear safety and security risks, with potentially severe consequences for Ukraine and its neighbouring countries, as well as wider global repercussions. None of these existed before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In this context,

the EU welcomes the first-ever IAEA General Conference resolution on nuclear safety, security and safeguards in Ukraine, adopted on 28 September. This resolution and Ukraine's election to the IAEA Board of Governors for the period 2023-2025, sent an important message about the international community's strong support for Ukraine. Regrettably, Russia is not complying with the three resolutions adopted by the IAEA Board of Governors in 2022, let alone the previous consensus resolutions of the IAEA General Conference, which clearly state that "any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the UN Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency". Russia must now take the necessary action to implement the resolution, withdraw from Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and return its control to the competent Ukrainian authorities.

6. 30th September marked one year since the attempted illegal annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions following sham "referenda". We do not and will never recognise these so-called referenda, nor their falsified and illegal results which have no validity under international law and do not form the basis for any alteration of the status of these regions of Ukraine, as declared by the UN General Assembly. We will never recognise the illegal annexation of any Ukrainian territory.
7. We will continue striving for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula, which is premised on full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within the country's internationally recognised borders.
8. We will also continue supporting Ukraine and its people, for as long as it takes. This was also evident during this Monday's meeting of EU Member States' Foreign Ministers in Kyiv, marking the first-ever such meeting outside the EU and the first in an EU candidate country. Moreover, on 28

September, the EU decided to extend until 4 March 2025 the temporary protection for people fleeing Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Our resolve to continue providing strong political, financial, economic, humanitarian, legal and military support to Ukraine and its people to rightfully defend themselves against Russia's brutal and unjust war of aggression remains unwavering. Ukraine's future lies within the European Union.

9. Mr. Chair, twenty months have passed since Russia launched its brutal war of aggression against Ukraine. The longer Russian forces fight to maintain their illegal and temporary occupation of territories in Ukraine, the more the Kremlin peddles its own twisted version of "peace," disguising its true intention for territorial conquest. Russia must immediately stop its war of aggression, and completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We also reiterate our strong call on the Belarusian authorities to stop enabling Russia's war of aggression and providing support to Russia, and to abide by their international obligations.

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