



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Special Permanent Council No.1486 Vienna, 26 August 2024

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

1. On 24 August, we marked the 33rd anniversary of Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union—a day dedicated to celebrating Ukraine's unique history, culture, and identity. This day also serves as a reminder to Russia that Ukraine, as a sovereign, free, and independent state, has the inherent right to determine its own foreign policy and security arrangements, in full accordance with international law and the Helsinki Final Act. The European Union and its Member States remain steadfast in their support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to providing continued political, financial, economic, humanitarian, legal, military and diplomatic support to Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes and as intensely as needed, in their rightful self-defence against Russia's unprovoked, unjustifiable and illegal war of aggression.
2. As Ukraine exercises its inherent right to self-defence, we call for the delivery of military support to Ukraine to be stepped up. In particular, air defence systems, ammunition, and missiles are urgently needed to protect Ukraine's population and critical energy infrastructure. Military support will be provided in full respect of the security and defence policy of certain Member States and taking into account the security and defence interests of all Member States.
3. 24 August also marked thirty months since the onset of Russia's illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022—an assault on our shared

values and security, executed with utter contempt for international law, including the UN Charter, and OSCE principles and commitments. Thirty months on, Russia continues its brutal shelling of civilians and civilian infrastructure across Ukraine. Earlier today, yet another massive Russian aerial attack reportedly killed at least four people and injured dozens more across Ukraine. We strongly condemn the persistent pattern of Russian indiscriminate strikes on populated areas and civilian objects, which continues to cause deaths, human suffering, massive destruction, displacement, and soaring humanitarian needs.

4. Intentionally directing attacks on civilians and civilian objects constitutes a war crime. Russia's political and military leadership, along with those directly responsible for these attacks, will not evade accountability for waging a war of aggression against Ukraine and for other most serious crimes under international law, as well as for the massive damage caused by Russia's war. The EU will spare no effort until justice prevails.
5. The EU condemns in the strongest possible terms any attempts by Russia to forcibly and illegally integrate or annex parts of Ukraine's territory. Such attempts represent a blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter, the Ukrainian constitution, and Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and we will never recognise such actions. Crimea, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, and Luhansk are Ukraine.
6. Russia's attempts to erase Ukraine's distinct identity and heritage further demonstrate the egregious nature of Russia's conduct of war and disregard for the Helsinki spirit. This includes deliberate attacks on Ukrainian cultural, educational, and religious institutions; the deportation of Ukrainian civilians, including children, and their forced re-education and militarisation, and the forcible issuance of Russian passports to Ukrainian citizens, as well as attempts to conscript them into the Russian Armed Forces.
7. We will continue to demand the immediate release by Russia of all individuals unlawfully deprived of their liberty, including the three arbitrarily detained OSCE staff members, and we fully support all OSCE and the Chairperson's efforts in this regard.

8. Over the past thirty months, we have witnessed a stark contrast between Ukraine's steadfast pursuit of a just and lasting peace and Russia's relentless aggression and justification of violence, marked by a blatant disregard for human life in service of its imperialist ambitions. Russia remains resolute in its path of war, relying on faits accomplis by the use of force, death, and destruction, indifferent to international calls to end its ruthless campaign. The EU and its Member States pursue a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law, including the respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, in line with the key principles and objectives of Ukraine's Peace Formula.
9. Today, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to Ukraine on its Independence Day and reiterate our demand for an immediate end to this brutal war of aggression waged by Russia—an end to the harrowing images of bodies in the streets, emaciated prisoners of war, missiles striking residential buildings, and the shelling of kindergartens, train stations, hospitals, commercial malls and theatres. Over the past two and a half years of unimaginable adversity and suffering, the people of Ukraine have shown remarkable resolve and bravery. They have courageously defended not only their country and their path towards a democratic European future but also the core principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, to which all OSCE participating States committed nearly 50 years ago: sovereignty, the inviolability of borders, territorial integrity, and respect for international law. Their fight is our fight.
10. Thirty-three years ago, Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada declared that "the territory of Ukraine is indivisible and inviolable." Today, we pay tribute to the Ukrainian people's heroic defence of this principle and the inviolability of Ukraine's borders in the face of Russia's ongoing war of aggression. Russia's intent has remained unchanged since 2014: to subdue Ukraine's independence, and break the Ukrainian people's resolve for a self-determined, brighter future. However, the outcome has been quite the opposite. Today, despite the immense challenges it faces, Ukraine not only

celebrates its 33rd year of independence, but is also a candidate for European Union membership. Our solidarity with the Ukrainian people has never been stronger, and our commitment to a free, independent and democratic Ukraine has never been more resolute. Ukraine and its people will prevail and win the just and lasting peace they deserve.

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

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