



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council 1417 Vienna, 30 March 2023

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

1. Mr. Chair, tomorrow the Bucha Summit will take place – a high-level event organised by Ukraine to commemorate the victims of the heinous acts committed by Russia during its brutal and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. Exactly a year ago, after Ukrainian forces liberated Bucha, Irpin, Borodyanka, and other settlements around Kyiv, the world saw the barbaric face of the Russian invaders. Arbitrary detentions and intimidation of local residents; torture; wilful killings of civilians, many of whom were summarily executed just before the Russian retreat; the deliberate targeting of women, children and the elderly who tried to evacuate; rape and other acts of sexual or gender-based violence, including against children - these are just some examples of the documented crimes committed by Russian troops against civilians in this region. The sheer magnitude of Russia's atrocities committed in Ukraine since 24 February 2022, is beyond words. The Ukrainian Prosecutor General announced last week that they have already documented over 76,000 criminal cases, and this number continues to climb every day. Criminal acts carried out by the Russian occupiers will continue to be documented as Ukraine liberates all of its territories currently under Russian control.
2. The EU is firmly committed to ensuring full accountability for war crimes, and other most serious crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including through the establishment of an

appropriate mechanism for the prosecution of the crime of aggression. We reaffirm our support for the newly established International Centre for Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine (ICPA) in The Hague, which will be linked to the existing Joint Investigation Team supported by Eurojust.

3. We also reiterate our full support for the investigations of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC). We also deplore the measures announced by Russia against the ICC Prosecutor and Judges involved in the issuance of the arrest warrants against Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova. These arrest warrants are the beginning of a process to seek accountability for the atrocities ordered or committed in the context of Russia's illegal war of aggression. Any retaliatory measure against those involved in this process is unacceptable. In leading the fight against impunity, the ICC must be able to work independently and impartially. We remain committed to defending the Court from any outside interference aimed at obstructing the course of justice and undermining the international system of criminal justice.

4. Mr Chair, the only way to end this war is for Russia to stop its aggression and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces and proxies from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. Russia must also immediately ensure the safe return of all Ukrainians forcibly transferred to Ukrainian territories temporarily and illegally occupied by Russia or deported to Russia, in particular children. We condemn Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric including its announcement regarding the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons to Belarus. This represents another reckless provocation and adds to the already serious threat that Russia poses to European security. The Belarusian authorities must stop providing military or other support for Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU remains committed to maintaining and increasing collective pressure on Russia,

including through possible further restrictive measures, as well as to effectively preventing and countering circumvention of the restrictive measures in and by third countries.

5. Russia must also stop its information manipulation and interference against Ukraine, other neighbouring countries, such as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, as well as against any other OSCE participating State. The EU is committed to intensifying its efforts with partners to counter false Russian narratives and disinformation about the war, in a systematic, long-lasting and comprehensive manner.
6. The EU stands united and in full solidarity with Ukraine and its people who are rightfully and courageously defending themselves against Russia's brutal war of aggression. Ukraine is exercising its inherent right to self-defence in full compliance with international law, notably Article 51 of the UN Charter. Ukraine has the right to liberate and regain full control of all illegally Russian-occupied territories within its internationally recognised borders, including the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula.
7. The EU will continue to provide strong political, economic, military, financial, legal and humanitarian support to Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes. The EU and its Member States are increasing their efforts to help meet Ukraine's pressing military and defence needs.
8. The EU remains committed to supporting Ukraine's repair, recovery, and reconstruction, in coordination with international partners. In this context, the EU fully supports the establishment of an international mechanism to register the damages Russia has inflicted. Together with partners, the EU will continue to step up work towards the use of Russia's frozen and immobilised assets for Ukraine's reconstruction and for the purposes of reparation, in accordance with EU and international law.

9. The EU reiterates its support for President Zelenskyy's initiative for a just peace. We will continue working with Ukraine on the 10-point peace plan. Regrettably, we have not seen to date any willingness on Russia's side to cease its hostilities, withdraw its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, and work towards a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace. The Kremlin is only repeating its ultimatums, doubling down on its brutal aggression, now once again using irresponsible nuclear rhetoric, without abandoning its goal of subjugating Ukraine and undermining its statehood and independence. However, we will not tire to repeat – any diplomatic solution to end Russia's illegal war must be based on full respect of international law and its rules and principles, including those enshrined in the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, and the Paris Charter.

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.