



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1452 Vienna, 23 November 2023

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

1. Over the last weekend Russia launched another wave of attacks against Kyiv with the highest number of drones reported in more than six weeks. The drone strikes of 17th November caused power cuts in more than 400 towns and villages across Ukraine and also damaged an oil depot in Odesa, reportedly leaving thousands of residents without power.
2. Russia is fighting its war of aggression against Ukraine not only on the battlefield, but also in the information space. Russia's information manipulation and disinformation attacks vis-à-vis Ukraine began long before the onset of Russia's full-scale invasion of February 2022. Since at least 2014 the Russian state-controlled media ecosystem has been peddling a litany of sham pretexts and false claims, seeking to question Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and prepare the soil for full-scale invasion and military aggression against it.
3. Since the beginning of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, we have been witnessing the vigorous application of the entire playbook of Russia's information manipulation and interference, including disinformation. Internationally, the main aims of this "information war" have been to falsely justify Russia's illegal aggression against Ukraine, deflect the responsibility for Russia's war crimes and undermine international support for Ukraine. And as documented in the first [EEAS Report on Foreign Information Manipulation](#)

[and Interference Threats](#), official social media accounts of Russia's diplomatic representations have been used as amplifiers of disinformation narratives.

4. Domestically, Russia's information manipulation has been aimed primarily at sustaining public support for its war of aggression against Ukraine and stifling any opposition to it. This has been accompanied by a systematic state policy of complete censorship of all dissenting voices and destruction of independent media. The state imposed media censorship has been backed by draconian legislation, whereby anyone expressing opinions deviating from the official government line on the war risks criminal charges. Even more worryingly, during its latest oral update the [Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine](#) sounded the alarm that some of the rhetoric transmitted in Russian state and other media may constitute incitement to genocide.
5. As we continue to support Ukraine, we will spare no effort to expose the highly distorted picture of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine that Russia is attempting to construct on the basis of unsubstantiated claims and historical revisionism. Facts speak for themselves. In February and March of 2014, Russia carried out its illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula through brutal force. This brazen violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity and international law marked the beginning of the Kremlin's deplorable attempt to deny Ukraine its freedom. It followed Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity, whose 10th anniversary we commemorate this week, in which brave Ukrainian citizens demanded justice, democracy and the right to choose their own future in Europe.
6. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 is nothing short of an illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression in blatant violation of international law. Under the terms of the UN Charter, Russia is the aggressor and Ukraine is the victim that is exercising its legitimate right to self-defence in full conformity with Article 51 of the UN Charter. In exercising this right, Ukraine can count on the European Union's unwavering support in defending

its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

7. It is Ukraine, not Russia, that has shown genuine interest for a just and sustainable peace that would be fully in line with international law, and the UN Charter, including the OSCE principles and commitments, enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter.
8. With its war of aggression against a sovereign and independent and peaceful state, Russia is not only flagrantly violating international law, including the UN Charter, but is also trying to supplant them with an alternative “order”, based on power politics and spheres of influence. We reiterate that the use of force and coercion to change borders has no place in the 21st century. Relations among sovereign States are guided by the UN Charter, international law and its principles, including those enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter. The principles of inviolability of internationally recognised borders, and of the territorial integrity and sovereign equality of independent states lie at the heart of the rules-based international order that Russia attempts to upend.
9. Mr. Chair, 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 financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support.
10. We reaffirm our unwavering support for Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. The EU and its Member States will continue their intensified diplomatic outreach efforts and cooperation with Ukraine and other countries to ensure the widest possible international support for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace and the key principles and objectives of Ukraine’s Peace Formula, with a view to a Global Peace Summit being held.

11. In conclusion, we once again call on Russia to immediately stop its war of aggression against Ukraine, and completely and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We also condemn the continued military support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine provided by Belarus and Iran, as well as the reported arms transfers and military cooperation between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Russia for use in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. We urge all countries not to provide material or other support for this aggression.

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.