



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1076 Vienna, 8 May 2024

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#### EU Statement on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

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1. Mr Chair, today's Security Dialogue showed how this Forum remains a unique platform for politico-military dialogue. At the same time, it has also reminded us that the overall situation in the OSCE area regarding landmines instead of improving continues to deteriorate due to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine which will inevitably lead to further loss of life.
2. The senseless death toll does not end there. Protecting their compatriots in their own country, Ukrainian soldiers are putting their lives at risk every day with tens of thousands dying while defending their homeland. For instance, we remain strongly concerned about the growing number of reports, including by Russian information sources, on the use of riot control chemical agents by Russia in combat operations. We also take very seriously reports about the alleged use of choking agent chloropicrin against Ukrainian soldiers. This is not the first time that the world is alerted about the illegal use of chemical weapons by Russia. The Chemical Weapons Convention, to which Russia is a State party, prohibits under any circumstances the use of chemical weapons, as well as the use of riot control chemical agents as a method of warfare. There is no impunity for their use and perpetrators will be held accountable.
3. We also recognise evidence of further violations of international law by Russia in the recently released Moscow Mechanism report. We see the report's finding that the number of Ukrainian civilians arbitrarily deprived of their liberty by the Russian Federation is in the thousands, although an exact number cannot be yet determined due to Russia's ongoing war of aggression. This clearly shows that we must both address these appalling crimes and the overarching fact that one participating State, Russia, has conducted a full scale invasion of another state. The report also identified the practice of interning civilian detainees as prisoners of war (POW). At the same time, other reports have also emerged on serious mistreatment and denying POWs basic dignity and abuse of human rights. In this

regard, we recall the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the OSCE Code of Conduct signed by all participating States, which states that governments must ensure that their armed forces comply with these conventions.

4. The EU and its Member States will continue to stand by Ukraine in these dire times. On Monday this week, an EU-Ukraine Defence Industries Forum took place in Brussels, with the support of the Belgian Presidency of the Council. Over 350 representatives from the EU institutions, governments, European and Ukrainian defence industries, industry associations, key partner countries and organisations gathered to strengthen the cooperation between European and Ukrainian defence industries and help Ukraine to obtain capabilities in priority areas that Ukraine needs most - air defence, ammunition, missiles, and drones. The Forum was a first step in the implementation of the European Defence Industrial Strategy which had been announced by Commission President von der Leyen during her State of the Union speech last year.
5. Mr Chair, the EU and its Member States reiterate that Russia must immediately stop its war of aggression, put an end to this unbearable suffering and devastation, 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 condemn the continued military support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine provided by Belarus, as well as Iran and the DPRK. We urge all countries not to provide material or other support for Russia's war of aggression, which is a blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter, and the OSCE's core principles and commitments.

Thank you.

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

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