



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1087 Vienna, 18 September 2024

EU Statement on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

1. Mr Chair, we welcome that the defining security issue of today in Europe, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, remains at the top of our agenda and receives the high attention that it deserves. Since we last deliberated on this matter in full in July, the ongoing reprehensible actions of the Russian Federation only confirmed why this will remain as the priority for our discussions and activities.
2. The summer has been marked by an intensification of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The months of July and August have so far been the highest in civilian casualties this year as Russia continued with its tactic of indiscriminate attacks or even deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian targets. Sadly, there is no shortage of examples: 10 dead and 35 wounded following a strike on a supermarket in Donetsk on 9 August, another 6 dead and more than 80 wounded in Kharkiv on 30 August, and so many other attacks on schools, hotels and residential areas in Pokrovsk, Sumy, Donetsk, Kramatorsk or Lviv. Indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian objects constitute war crimes under international law. All those responsible will be held accountable.
3. And on 3 September, in one of the deadliest attacks since the start of Russia's full-scale war of aggression, over 50 people were killed and more than 200 injured when Russia hit the Military Institute of Telecommunications and Information Technologies and nearby buildings in Poltava.
4. Even this non-exhaustive list of Russia's recent actions shows a complete disregard for its own commitments within this organisation and the brutal impact of its war of aggression. It is entirely clear who the aggressor is and who is defending themselves and their legitimate right to a peaceful existence. We condemn Russia as fully responsible for the catastrophic repercussions of its war of aggression against Ukraine which violates all our fundamental principles, and for the resulting overwhelming devastation and appalling fatalities, civilian and military.

5. The EU and its Member States also condemn violation of Latvia's air space on the night of 7 September, and the repeated violation of Romania's air space, the latest occurring on the night of 8/9 September, as consequences of brutal Russian attacks against Ukraine. Violations of sovereign airspace are destabilising and irresponsible and carry the risk of escalation.
6. And following the event which took place last week, the EU and its Member States strongly condemn the attack against a civilian ship, transporting grain on the Black Sea. Attacking a commercial ship in transit is an unprecedented escalation and another serious breach of international law by Russia. The EU and its Member States urge Russia to respect the freedom of navigation on the Black Sea and stop threatening global food security and weaponising people's hunger in and outside the OSCE area.
7. Lastly, on 12 September, Russian artillery shelling in the Donetsk region killed three ICRC staff members and injured two others, as they prepared to deliver humanitarian aid to the local population. This is a grave violation of International Humanitarian Law. Aid workers must be able to act in safety when delivering aid to those in need.
8. Mr Chair, the EU and its Member States reiterate that Russia must immediately stop its unprovoked, unjustifiable and illegal 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 core principles and commitments. The EU and its Member States will continue to stand by Ukraine in the exercise of its right to self-defence.

Thank you.

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