



PERMANENT MISSION OF ROMANIA  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by H.E. Bogdan Aurescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, at the reinforced meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

**24 February 2023**

Mr. Chair,

One year ago today, Russia has launched a full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine, in blatant violation and disrespect of the principles of international law, the UN Charter and OSCE commitments. This is a war against the core parameters of the European security architecture and against our values.

We reiterate our firm call on the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally stop this unprovoked and unjustified aggression and withdraw all its military forces and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders. We also renew our call on Belarus to stop enabling the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations.

Those responsible for the violations of international humanitarian law and of human rights must and will be held accountable. Romania is contributing to all efforts of the international community to this purpose, including within the OSCE when it joined the participating States that invoked the Moscow Mechanism.

This year we have witnessed the heroism and the resilience of the Ukrainian people in defending their country and resisting the aggressor.

It has been also a year of unwavering solidarity. Romania has been at the forefront of supporting Ukraine and the Ukrainian people affected by Russia's war of aggression since day one.

We have been providing shelter, food, medical assistance, access to education and labour market to all those fleeing the war and entering Romania - counting over 3.6 million Ukrainian citizens – and we will continue to do so. Romania's support for Ukraine remains solid, for as long as it takes.

The security environment has changed not only in hard security terms – the whole world faces more diverse threats than ever.

During the current military aggression against Ukraine, Russia left no stone unturned by using an even larger array of hybrid war techniques. From irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and lies about Ukraine developing chemical or biological weapons to the destruction of the energy infrastructure or violating the basic principle of freedom of navigation, Russia combined old Soviet era tactics and soundbites with tools of contemporary propaganda.

This propaganda has intensified even more lately, with the aim of creating divisions within our societies in order to undermine our solidarity with Ukraine or the unity among ourselves. The Russian-led hybrid campaigns are not limited to Ukraine, nor to its neighbors, like the Republic of Moldova, the Black Sea region, nor even the European continent. They are global

manipulation operations and need to be addressed as such. We need to be aware and prepared to combat these malign influences, as we need to continue to stand by Ukraine.

Russia also recklessly exploited energy and food as a weapon of war. Russia bears responsibility for the global food security crisis it has provoked by instrumentalizing food in its war against Ukraine. Romania, together with all EU Member States, will continue to support timely and stable delivery of Ukrainian agricultural products to global markets. Over 13 million tons of grain from Ukraine have been exported via Romania so far.

The ongoing war in Ukraine has a major negative impact in the region, especially on the most vulnerable states, such as the Republic of Moldova. We are deeply concerned with Russia's latest plans to destabilize the country and condemn these actions.

In this respect, it is absolutely unacceptable to see threatening rhetoric like the one included in the statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry of today by which it is announced that the Russian army would, I quote "adequately respond" to so-called provocations or attacks against the Russian "compatriots and military personnel and depots from the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova. We strongly condemn such provocative behavior based on ungrounded allegations. And we fully support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders.

At the same time, it is of utmost importance to continue to fully support the Republic of Moldova and the renewal of the mandate of the OSCE Mission in Chisinau. Romania strongly stands by the Republic of Moldova.

As stated before, the absence of war does not mean peace. Therefore, it is more clear than ever that protracted conflicts such as those in the Black Sea region must be addressed without deferral and must be high on our agenda.

This unprecedented security and humanitarian crisis has affected also the OSCE, exacerbated existing old problems in the organization, unveiling its weaknesses in some areas. At the same time, the current crisis has also shown that the organization is resilient and has the ability to keep functioning, even in these challenging circumstances.

We thank the current and previous OSCE Chairpersonships, North Macedonia and Poland, alongside the OSCE Secretary General, for the principled, firm position regarding Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and for being the guardians of our principles and commitments, because these are not negotiable.

Romania fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union.

Thank you.