



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

Mr Chair, Russia continues its escalatory path. Last week on the night of 18-19 July, Russia carried out one of its largest missile attacks on Kyiv since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, employing an unprecedented concentration of ballistic and hypersonic missiles. The EU and its Member States resolutely condemn Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a manifest violation of international law including the UN Charter as well as the OSCE's core principles and commitments.

We reaffirm our commitment to justice and full accountability for international crimes and other violations of international law committed in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Last month, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine confirmed executions of 129 Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs) since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine almost four and a half years ago. The actual number of executed Ukrainian POWs likely remains much higher. Furthermore, according to the UN reporting 96% out of 853 Ukrainian POWs interviewed reported torture or ill-treatment during all stages of captivity and interrogations, which the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine concluded was systematic. This included, among others, sexual violence, severe beatings, suffocation or mock executions. Many were held in inhumane conditions, with the UN attributing 48 deaths in custody to torture, ill-treatment and lack of adequate medical assistance. Prisoners of war were also systematically prosecuted and sentenced to long prison terms. At the same time, independent international monitors still have no or severely restricted access to POWs. The International Committee of the Red Cross must be able to fulfil its mandate. It must be ensured that ICRC has access to all places where Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilian detainees are held.

Other reports also highlight the gravity of the situation. As indicated in the ODIHR Ninth Interim Report on reported violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in Ukraine published last week, former POWs interviewed by ODIHR reported being subjected to torture at almost every detention facility, providing further evidence consistent with the widespread and systematic use of torture by the Russian authorities previously documented by ODIHR. We reiterate our call to uphold international humanitarian law and human rights law for all prisoners including ceasing the brutal executions and use of torture against prisoners of war and civilian detainees.

Last week, the EU imposed new sanctions against 15 individuals and one entity responsible for serious human rights violations against Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilian detainees both in the temporarily occupied regions of Ukraine and in Russia. Listed individuals include Russian high-level officers and staff who carried out torture and other cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment of Ukrainian POWs and civilian detainees.

Mr Chair, the EU and its Member States support a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law and underpinned by robust and credible security guarantees for Ukraine. It must respect Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and cannot be decided without Ukraine.

We call on Russia to stop its aggression and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

We urge all countries to immediately cease any assistance to Russia in its war of aggression against Ukraine, whether direct or indirect, and notably through the provision of dual-use goods and components. In particular, we strongly condemn the deployment of the DPRK's military forces in the war against Ukraine as well as the continued military support provided to Russia by Belarus, Iran and the DPRK, among others.

The EU and its Member States stand by Ukraine as our multi-faceted support to Ukraine and its people remains unwavering, including political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support.

In view of the latest incidents in the Black Sea, including in Romania's exclusive economic zone, directly resulting from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, we also reiterate the importance of upholding the freedom of navigation and of the respect of the international law of the sea, as reflected in the UNCLOS.

Thank you.

Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway and Ukraine align themselves with this statement