

THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL IN ŁÓDŹ

TROIKA STATEMENT

We, the Foreign Ministers of Sweden, Poland, North Macedonia, representing the previous, current and incoming Chairmanships of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) are alarmed by the unprecedented violations of the OSCE fundamental principles and commitments. We firmly believe that the use of force and coercion to change borders has no place in the 21st century. We reaffirm our full adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and to all the OSCE norms, principles and commitments, starting with the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the Charter for European Security and all other OSCE documents to which we have agreed.

The Russia's aggression against Ukraine represents the gravest threat to European security since World War II and poses a fundamental risk to the OSCE area. We highly value the OSCE as a unique and proven regional security organization promoting the holistic concept of indivisible and comprehensive security, with human rights, democracy and the rule of law at its core. The recent and continuing violations of shared commitments have brought to an historic low the mutual trust and confidence that we have invested in building over the past 50 years. Nevertheless, we remain convinced that the OSCE, with its unique set of conflict management tools and broad cooperation with civil society, remains relevant and will have an important role to play in restoring trust and confidence in our region in the times ahead.

Russia bears full responsibility for the war and ultimately will be held accountable for all its despicable acts against Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Russia's actions blatantly violate international law, including the UN Charter and the OSCE principles and commitments. We condemn Russia's unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. We urge the Russian Federation to immediately, completely and unconditionally cease its military actions, and to withdraw all of its military forces from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. We call on the Belarusian authorities to stop enabling Russia's continuing aggression. Allowing its territory to serve as a staging ground for attacks against Ukraine constitutes an act of aggression in and of itself.

We reaffirm our commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol. We strongly condemn the Russian Federation's staging of illegal so-called referendums in regions within the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine, in an attempt to legitimize their illegal annexation of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine. These unlawful actions by the Russian Federation have no validity under international law and cannot, and do not, provide the justification for any alteration of the status of these regions of Ukraine.

We are increasingly alarmed by the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Ukraine. In particular we are profoundly concerned by the high number of civilian casualties, including women and

children, and by steeply rising numbers of internally displaced persons and refugees in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

We deplore the dire humanitarian consequences of the attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure by the Russian Armed Forces. This includes the shelling of densely populated areas, as well as targeted attacks, in particular of schools and other educational institutions, water and sanitation systems, energy grid, medical facilities and cultural sites. Both indiscriminate attacks, and intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population, are prohibited under international humanitarian law and amount to committing war crimes.

It is devastating to see again the ravages of war on European soil, in Ukraine. We are horrified by the numerous atrocities committed by the Russian Armed Forces during the last nine months. The world will not ignore these acts or forget their victims. Torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, unlawful deportation, and sexual violence all constitute war crimes. The Russian Federation's consistent disregard for human rights and humanitarian law is unacceptable. Such actions blatantly violate international law, the UN Charter and the OSCE principles and commitments. We fully support all measures to ensure accountability for these grave breaches of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including using the tools available within the OSCE. The perpetrators of these serious crimes must be brought to justice.

We require Russia to immediately and without condition release the three local OSCE staff members detained in Donetsk and Luhansk. We condemn atrocities committed against prisoners of war by the Russian Armed Forces. All prisoners of war should be treated in full compliance with international law, including the Geneva conventions.

We deeply regret that no consensus could be reached on the extension of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine mandates due to the position of the Russian Federation. Both field operations have been a vital part of the OSCE's efforts to support Ukraine. We encourage the continuation of OSCE work in Ukraine and we welcome efforts aimed at preserving the OSCE's ability to operate in Ukraine in the future, including through the OSCE Support Program for Ukraine.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has global implications. The negative impact on global food security is clear, and the manipulation and withholding of food deliveries to those in need is totally unacceptable. We urge Russia to implement the UN Black Sea Grain Initiative in good faith. We remain gravely concerned by Russia's nuclear threats, as well as by the ongoing occupation of, and military actions in and around, the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant that put in peril the people of an entire continent.

We are acutely aware of the destabilizing regional impact of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its consequences for the security situation more widely. The recent incidents undermining the sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova are of particular concern. We reiterate our unwavering support for, and commitment to, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republics of Moldova and Georgia. We remain ready to facilitate efforts to guarantee a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future for the South Caucasus. In this regard, we welcome Armenia's and Azerbaijan's decision to intensify their dialogue. We also underscore the importance of maintaining the security and stability of South Eastern Europe.

In the face of the dramatic degradation of security in the OSCE area we strongly support the work of the Secretary General, the OSCE structures and institutions, including the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the High Commissioner on National Minorities. We also welcome the principled position articulated by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. We value all their efforts aimed at addressing the consequences of the Russia's aggression against Ukraine. We recognize and value their important work in assisting

participating States to continue to implement the OSCE commitments. Finally, we are grateful for and remain convinced of the value of effective co-operation with our Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation in tackling global challenges.