Beat: News

Russian military aggression against Ukraine

European Council

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USPA NEWS - European Council conclusions on the Russian military aggression against Ukraine

The European Council held an exchange of views with the President of the United States on transatlantic cooperation in the context of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine.

I. RUSSIAN MILITARY AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

1. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine grossly violates international law and is causing massive loss of life and injury to civilians. Russia is directing attacks against the civilian population and is targeting civilian objects, including hospitals, medical facilities, schools and shelters. These war crimes must stop immediately. Those responsible, and their accomplices, will be held to account in accordance with international law. The siege of Mariupol and other Ukrainian cities, and the denial of humanitarian access by Russian military forces are unacceptable. Russian forces must immediately provide for safe pathways to other parts of Ukraine, as well as humanitarian aid to be delivered to Mariupol and other besieged cities.

2. The European Council urges Russia to urgently guarantee safe passage to civilians entrapped in all other war zones to a destination of their choice, to immediately release all hostages, to provide uninterrupted humanitarian access and to establish humanitarian corridors. It also urges Russia to fully respect its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, and abide by the recent order by the International Court of Justice.

3. The European Council demands that Russia immediately stop its military aggression in the territory of Ukraine, immediately and unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders.

4. The European Union stands by Ukraine and its people and the European Council reaffirms the Versailles Declaration, acknowledging the European aspirations and the European choice of Ukraine, as stated in the Association Agreement. The European Council reiterates its invitation to the Commission to submit its opinion in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Treaties. The European Union will continue to provide coordinated political, financial, material and humanitarian support. The European Union has so far adopted significant sanctions that are having a massive impact on Russia and Belarus, and remains ready to close loopholes and target actual and possible circumvention as well as to move quickly with further coordinated robust sanctions on Russia and Belarus to effectively thwart Russian abilities to continue the aggression. The European Council calls on all countries to align with those sanctions. Any attempts to circumvent sanctions or to aid Russia by other means must be stopped.

5. The Russian military aggression against Ukraine has forced millions of people to flee their homes. Many of them have found shelter and safety in the European Union, facilitated by the temporary protection mechanism. Particular attention should be paid to the needs of the most vulnerable and measures to prevent and detect human trafficking. The European Council pays tribute to all the citizens, organisations and governments across Europe who have shown solidarity with those fleeing this atrocious war.

6. This crisis represents a significant challenge for the infrastructure and public services of hosting States, notably at the borders with Ukraine. The European Council recognises all the efforts already made to welcome refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine, and calls on all Member States to intensify their efforts in a continued spirit of unity and solidarity, and invites the Commission to take any necessary initiatives to facilitate such efforts. It also calls for work to be urgently completed on the recent Commission proposals to support Member States so as to ensure that EU funding for refugees and their hosts can be mobilised rapidly and invites the Commission to work on additional proposals to reinforce EU support in this regard. It calls on the Member States, with the support of the Commission, to develop contingency plans to address medium- and long-term needs as well.

7. The European Union is committed to ensuring continuous and uninterrupted electricity and gas flows to Ukraine. The recent

synchronisation of Ukrainian and Moldovan electricity grids with the EU's grids is a remarkable achievement. It shows that our futures are now interconnected. The safety of Ukrainian nuclear facilities must be ensured, including with the support of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

8. Bearing in mind the destruction and enormous losses brought upon Ukraine by Russia's military aggression, the European Union is committed to provide support to the Ukrainian Government for its immediate needs and, once the Russian onslaught has ceased, for the reconstruction of a democratic Ukraine. To that end, the European Council agrees to develop a Ukraine Solidarity Trust Fund and invites its international partners to participate, and calls for preparations to start without delay. It calls on the Commission to continue to provide technical assistance in order to help Ukraine implement necessary reforms.

9. The European Council calls for an international conference to be organised in due time to raise funding under the Ukraine Solidarity Trust Fund.

10. The European Council also reaffirms its commitment to stand by the Republic of Moldova and its people.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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