

Joint statement by the Foreign Ministers of Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden and Ukraine

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden and Ukraine, strongly condemn the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine that has caused enormous suffering to the Ukrainian people. It has also undermined security and stability in Europe and represents a serious attack on our rules based international order.

We stand in full solidarity with Ukraine. We will never recognize the illegal attempted annexation of Ukraine's territories, including Crimea. We reaffirm our joint efforts to further strengthen the activities within the International Crimea Platform aimed at achieving the de-occupation of Crimea. Ukraine has the inherent right to self-defence to ensure its independence and sovereignty and restore its territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. Russia must stop its aggression and withdraw its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine.

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion, the Nordic and Baltic states have provided substantial political, economic, military and humanitarian support to Ukraine. We will continue working together in providing political and practical support to ensure Ukraine's ability to defend its independence and territorial integrity.

Russia's aggression has caused immense suffering to the people of Ukraine. It has triggered a humanitarian catastrophe and several million people have been displaced. Russia alone bears responsibility for this. States knowingly aiding or assisting another State in the commission of internationally wrongful acts bear international responsibility for doing so. We condemn in the strongest terms Russia's attacks against civilians and critical infrastructure, including energy facilities, aiming at terrorising the civilian population. These attacks on civilians constitute war crimes. Russia must cease these actions immediately. We deem it important to continue providing international support aimed at improving Ukraine's air defence capabilities, thus enabling the protection of Ukraine's civilian infrastructure against Russia's inhumane attacks.

We call on the Russian Federation to fulfill its obligations in accordance with international humanitarian law. We urge Russia to release Ukrainian civilians illegally deported and detained under political pretext as well as those taken hostage during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. We emphasise the need to ensure humanitarian access to protect lives, rights and dignity of victims of armed conflict in accordance with international humanitarian law. In this regard access of humanitarian actors to people in need must be provided.

We firmly reject Russia's irresponsible and highly provocative rhetoric on nuclear weapons. We strongly condemn the continuous occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and relentless attacks against civil nuclear facilities in Ukraine. These attacks are in gross violation of international law and pose a direct threat to nuclear safety and security.

We agree on the need to continue to impose economic costs on Russia and on other countries, individuals or entities providing support for Moscow's war of aggression. We reiterate the necessity to strengthen sanctions on Russia and to ensure that the measures are strong and efficient. Russia's main export revenues must be cut off, so that they are no longer able to fuel its war against Ukraine. We should continue to raise the cost for Russia until the very last

Russian soldier has left the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine and until Russian aggression has stopped.

We emphasize the importance of limiting the issuance of Schengen and national visas of Russian citizens into the European Union.

The suffering inflicted by Russia on the Ukrainian people is unprecedented and we welcome efforts to ensure full accountability for those responsible for the crime of aggression against Ukraine and for perpetrators of war crimes and other atrocities during the war. The sovereignty and equality of all the states are under threat unless we respond decisively to Russia's aggression. We support the ongoing accountability efforts, and note with interest the discussion on the establishment of an international tribunal for crime of aggression, which is the crime that is the source of all the other atrocities committed during the aggression in Ukraine.

We commit to providing further humanitarian aid and support Ukraine's winterisation efforts, in particular towards restoring Ukraine's energy infrastructure. In parallel, we will continue our efforts to support the reconstruction of destroyed Ukrainian infrastructure. We call on international community to support Ukraine's reconstruction, including exploring ways to do so with funds from Russia. We recall the UN General Assembly Resolution of November 14, 2022 ES-11/6 titled "Furtherance of Remedy and Reparation for Aggression against Ukraine" which established the need for an international mechanism for reparation for damage, loss or injury arising from the internationally wrongful acts of Russian Federation in or against Ukraine.

A strong, independent and prosperous Ukraine is essential for the future of European security. The sacrifice of the Ukrainian people for their European choice is unprecedented. We reaffirm our joint commitment and unwavering support to Ukraine's European integration and commend Ukraine's determination to ensure progress in implementing reforms necessary for further steps in its EU-accession process. We will seek ways to strengthen our partnership with Ukraine as it advances its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. We reiterate each country's sovereign right to choose their own security arrangements.

We will make consistent efforts to support the proper functioning and further expansion of the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the New Grain from Ukraine program to help countries in need.

We express our readiness to support businesses in investing in Ukraine and support continuing the current trade liberalization measures for Ukraine. We are ready to further enhance our trade related support.

We agree on the need to intensify cooperation in the domain of cybersecurity, digitalization, countering disinformation and various types of hybrid threats.

This is part of our collective responsibility to make sure that justice, human rights and international law prevail. We will continue our close collaboration in ensuring strong political financial and military support to Ukraine for as long as it takes. We reiterate our demand for the immediate cessation of the military aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation as well as for the full, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of its forces and military equipment from Ukraine's territory.