

## **Council conclusions on Ukraine**

### **Foreign Affairs Council meeting**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The European Union is increasingly concerned at the worsening crisis in eastern Ukraine and its humanitarian impact on the civilian population. It recalls its unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine. Any unilateral military actions on the part of the Russian Federation in Ukraine under any pretext, including humanitarian, will be considered by the European Union as a blatant violation of international law. In order to achieve rapid and tangible results in de-escalation and to improve the situation of the civilian population, the European Union urges the Russian Federation to put an immediate stop to any form of border hostilities, in particular to the flow of arms, military advisers, and armed personnel into the conflict region, and to withdraw its forces from the border.
2. The need to find a political, sustainable solution to this crisis has become a matter of urgency. The Council calls on the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the United States and the OSCE to join the European Union in this task. To this end, the European Union will actively support any meeting format conducive to creating a new political impetus. In this context, the Council underlines the importance of the implementation of President Poroshenko's peace plan.
3. The Council welcomes the upcoming consultations between the Presidents of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the European Commission on issues related to the implementation of the Association Agreement's Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area as well as on the supply of gas, parallel to the efforts in stabilising the security and political situation.
4. The Council encourages the continuation of inclusive and comprehensive reforms in Ukraine notably through the implementation of the Association Agreement and addressing in particular decentralisation, reform of the constitution, and the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. This will build on a genuine national dialogue involving the central authorities and democratically legitimised representatives of Ukraine's regions. The Council considers that such a process can be instrumental in delivering a lasting political solution to the conflict.

5. The Council calls on all parties involved to expand the OSCE Observer Mission, which has provided valuable and objective reporting on the state of affairs at the Gukovo and Donetsk border crossing points, in order to contribute to an effective, comprehensive and bilateral control of the Russian-Ukrainian border. The Council calls for regular and expeditious exchange of information between the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the OSCE.
6. The Council welcomes the United Nations-led Preliminary Response Plan for Ukraine covering immediate and recovery phases, and in this context welcomes the European Commission's decision to allocate an additional EUR 2.5 million to meet the most urgent needs. The EU and its Member States are ready to provide further contributions in line with identified needs. The EU calls on all contributors, including the Russian Federation, to support this international relief effort led by the United Nations, in full recognition of the Ukrainian Government's role as a first responder.
7. The Council calls on all parties to support and facilitate without delay the work of international humanitarian organisations, in accordance with international humanitarian law and principles. Assistance should be delivered through the appropriate channels in agreement with the Ukrainian authorities. The delivery of humanitarian aid can only be carried out with due respect for the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. To this end, the Council reiterates its call on all parties to agree on a ceasefire, in particular in response to the humanitarian urgency. The Council also calls for full and unimpeded access for humanitarian actors, as well as for allowing the free and safe movement of the population out of the conflict zone, and is ready to explore options.
8. The EU calls upon all States and actors in the region to ensure immediate, safe and unrestricted access to the crash site of MH17, to allow resumption of the investigation and the repatriation of the remains and belongings of the victims still present at the site. The EU reiterates that those directly and indirectly responsible for downing of MH17 should be held accountable and brought to justice as soon as possible.
9. The recent establishment of EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform (EUAM Ukraine) further demonstrates the commitment of the EU to assist the Ukrainian Government in its security reform efforts. The Council welcomes the early arrival of the Head of Mission and his Advance Team of experts.
10. The European Union notes that the grounds for the imposition of restrictive measures against the Russian Federation remain valid. The Council recalls that the restrictive measures taken by the EU are directly linked to the Russian Federation's violation of international law with the illegal annexation of Crimea and the destabilisation of Ukraine. The Council, together with the Commission and the HR/VP, remains engaged in the monitoring and assessment of these measures and remains ready to consider further steps, in light of the evolution of the situation on the ground.
11. The European Union regrets the Russian Federation's announcement of measures targeting imports of certain agricultural products originating in the EU. The Council welcomes the exchange of information organised by the Commission to assess the impact of these measures and the appropriate response and looks forward to continuing work in this respect. To this end an extraordinary meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council has been convened for early September. In order to ensure the unity of the international community and to uphold international law, the European Union expects third and candidate countries to refrain from measures which are aimed at exploiting new trading opportunities arising from the introduction of these measures.

12. The Council welcomes the on-going progress on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and looks forward to the upcoming trilateral ministerial meeting in Brussels on 12 September. The Council is of the view that recent trade measures taken by the Russian Federation against Ukraine in this context are without justification and risk undermining this process. The Council considers that similar measures taken against other Eastern Partnership countries which have recently ratified the Association Agreements with the EU are equally unjustified and welcomes the Commission's on-going efforts in support of these partners, as needed.
13. The Council supports the Commission's efforts to facilitate a resumption of the negotiations between Ukraine and Russia on the conditions of gas supply, and urges both sides to reach an agreement as soon as possible. The agreement is critical in safeguarding the security of gas supply to Ukraine as well as the unhindered transit of natural gas through Ukraine. These two objectives should be pursued by the Russian Federation and Ukraine and no actions should be taken by any side that could negatively impact on achieving them. The Council looks forward to the upcoming trilateral EU-Russia-Ukraine consultations on energy at ministerial level in September and expresses the hope that full use of these consultations can be made in order to deliver concrete progress.

The security of energy supplies, including through improved interconnections, is of utmost importance for the EU. The Council reiterates that the Ukrainian gas transit system is in urgent need of modernisation in order to secure safe energy supplies through the territory of Ukraine. The Council calls on the Ukrainian authorities to closely coordinate with the Commission any actions which could put at risk smooth energy supplies to the EU."

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