

Reply of the European Commission
to the Contribution of the LXVIII Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC) plenary meeting adopted in Prague, 13-15 November 2022

1. Ukraine

The EU has firmly rejected and unequivocally condemned the illegal annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions and will never recognise the sham illegal 'referenda' that Russia has engineered, nor their falsified and illegal results. On 30 September 2022, the European Council confirmed that the EU Member States will never recognise the illegal annexation of these regions, nor of Crimea.

The EU has been standing by Ukraine and its people since day one of this war, providing Ukraine with comprehensive political, military, financial and humanitarian support. The EU and its Member States have provided close to EUR 49.5 billion assistance to Ukraine which includes a package of EUR 18 billion of macro-financial support to provide stable, regular, and predictable financial assistance to Ukraine in 2023, of which the first instalment of EUR 3 billion has been disbursed on 17 January 2023.

The EU is also providing military support of more than EUR 3.6 billion under the European Peace Facility (EPF). The estimated total amount of EU military support for Ukraine – provided by the EPF and Member States directly – is close to EUR 12 billion. Moreover, in November 2022, an EU Military Training Mission was launched with the objective of training 15 000 Ukrainian troops, as a first step, on EU soil.

In view of the life-threatening situation faced by the Ukrainian citizens, the European Commission currently addresses three short-term top priorities regarding Ukraine:

1. *Macro-economic stability of the country*: next to the new macro-financial assistance package of EUR 18 billion for 2023, the EU provides support via the Energy Community Secretariat and its Support fund for Ukraine for the purchase of vital energy equipment (on 4 January, the EU donated EUR 5 million).
2. *Humanitarian and emergency assistance, including on winterisation, shelter, housing, and urgent repairs of municipal buildings*: so far more than 55.000 energy items have been provided, including over 3.300 generators (through Union Civil Protection Mechanism, repurposed decentralisation programme and the funding implemented by the EU humanitarian partners) with an additional 40 large scale generators for hospitals.
3. *Short-term repair and rehabilitation to ensure that vital energy infrastructure continues to function*: the Commission is mobilising and delivering critical equipment needed to sustain Ukraine's energy system in cooperation with its international partners.

Last December, the G7 leaders took the decision to set up a donor coordination platform for Ukraine. Membership will consist of Ukraine, the G7 plus wider donors. The Commission offered to host the Secretariat and is currently working with all partners to flesh out outstanding questions. This would ensure that reconstruction and reforms on Ukraine's EU path are mutually reinforcing each other, as Ukraine's integration into the EU should be at the core of the reconstruction process.

The EU has adopted nine packages of sanctions against Russia and Belarus, targeting the Russian financial, energy and transport sectors and state-owned enterprises. It has imposed asset freezes on 1386 individuals and 171 entities, including full asset freezes on seven Russian banks, banned transactions related to the foreign held reserves of the Central Bank of Russia, decoupled key Russian banks from SWIFT, closed the EU airspace to Russian aircrafts, banned the broadcasting in the EU of Russian state-owned media outlets and prohibited the export and import of several goods (including the export of goods and technology in the aviation, maritime and space sectors) and the provision of certain services.

2. Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership

The Commission welcomes COSAC's support for the decision of the European Council to grant the status of candidate country to Ukraine and to the Republic of Moldova, and a European perspective to Georgia. The three countries have made a clear European choice, which will demand significant reform efforts, and the Commission will continue to support them on their path towards accession to the EU. The Commission also welcomes COSAC's support to the process of EU integration of the Western Balkans and the candidate country status of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Commission welcomes COSAC's position on the European Political Community. Every forum that strengthens relations and increases engagement with partners is positive. The Commission agrees that the European Political Community neither can nor should serve as a replacement for the EU enlargement policy or for the Eastern Partnership policy. The Commission believes these policies can co-exist and reinforce each other.

3. Strategic Autonomy

The Commission appreciates COSAC's support for its efforts to ensure security of supply, demand reduction and tackle the increase of energy prices for households and industry caused by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. The Commission also agrees with COSAC on its call to direct investments in future-proof energy infrastructures and innovative renewable energy technologies. As announced by President von der Leyen, the Commission will push its Green Deal Industrial Plan and push forward also a new Net-Zero Industry Act that will go hand in hand with the Critical Raw Materials Act as part of making Europe home of the clean-tech economy and industrial innovation for the net-zero transformation.

5. Inter-parliamentary cooperation

The Commission acknowledges that in the context of the COSAC working groups initiated under the French Presidency, national Parliaments have been actively reflecting how to reinforce their role in EU policymaking and fostering and monitoring the respect of European values.

The Commission welcomes the resulting valuable suggestions and stands ready to strengthen the dialogue with the national Parliaments through the established channels of communication and cooperation to facilitate their input to and feedback on the Commission's political and legislative initiatives. It equally shares the objectives of promoting a better understanding of the concepts of European values and the rule of law and their articulation with the constitutional identity of the States, and of ensuring the respect for European values and the rule of law. National parliamentarians are important allies to deliver on citizens' expectations and to shape constructively the Union's future.

The Commission looks forward to a continued fruitful cooperation with the national Parliaments.
