
Russia's aggression against Ukraine: Press Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell

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Statements by the HR/VP

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These are among the darkest hours for Europe since World War II. A major nuclear power has attacked a neighbouring country and is threatening reprisals on any other state that may come to its rescue.

This is not only the greatest violation of international law, it is a violation of the basic principles of human co-existence. It is costing many lives with unknown consequences ahead of us.

The European Union will respond in the strongest possible terms. The President of the European Council, [Charles] Michel has called for a meeting of the European Council this evening. And they will agree and provide political guidance to adopt the strongest package, the harshest package of sanctions we have ever implemented.

As High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union, I will be in touch with our partners around the world to ensure the international community will be fully grasping the gravity of the moment and to call strongly and united on Russia to cease immediately this intolerable behaviour and the Russian leadership will face unprecedented isolation.

This is not a question of blocs, this is not a question of diplomatic power games. It is a matter of life and death. It is about the future of our global community.

We will stand united with our transatlantic partners and with all European nations in defending this position. We stand united in saying no to violence and destruction as means to obtain political gains.

We, the European Union, remain the strongest group of nations in the world. And this should not be underestimated. We immediately will be designing urgent assistance to Ukraine in this dire situation.

We will also be active in supporting evacuation operations, including of our own staff in zones affected by this Russian attack.

The European Union, together with transatlantic and like-minded partners, have made unprecedented efforts to achieve a diplomatic solution to the security crisis caused by Russia, but Russia has not reciprocated these efforts and instead has opted unilaterally for a grave and premeditated escalation conducting to war.

President [of Russia, Vladimir] Putin needs to stop this senseless aggression. Today our thoughts are with the people of Ukraine. We will stand by them.