

EUMAM Ukraine: Press remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell during his visit to the Brzeg training facility

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📍 Brzeg (Poland)

👤 [EEAS Press Team](#)

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Thank you for joining us today here, at the training site of the new [Military Assistance Mission of the European Union to support Ukraine \(EUMAM for Ukraine\)](#).

I have been visiting the Ukrainian soldiers being trained. I am very humbled by these encounters. I am very humbled and honoured to be here with Ukrainian soldiers that are being trained here to defend their soil against Russia's aggression.

Everybody is full of admiration for the bravery of the Ukrainians soldiers, their courage and determination to defend their homeland. The Ukrainian men and women who are defending their nation and their freedom.

When I met with President [of Ukraine, Volodymyr] Zelenskyy in Kyiv in April, I told him: "You do not need our applause. Everybody is saying that you are very courageous, but you do not need our applause. What you need is our support - our support with material and with training, with weapons, with equipment and training your soldiers to face this war."

That is what we are doing. That is what I told to the Ukrainian soldiers: "We try to support you as much as we can, for as long as you need." We are providing weapons. We are financing weapons from all Member States and also here providing military know-how. I have seen how here, in this very specialised training camp, the soldiers learn how to fight.

Today, everybody agrees that the Ukrainian army is one of the best armies in the world. They have shown, they have proved that they are, in the real fight, one of the best armies in the world. They have been resisting the Russian aggression [like] nobody could have expected. At the beginning of the war, most people were afraid that Russia could conquer Kyiv in a couple of weeks. And, quite some time later, they are resisting, and not only resisting - they are pushing back the Russian army. Despite the [Russian] aggression [which] has been cruelly attacking them, and now trying to push Ukrainian people into the darkness and the cold, trying to destroy all electricity systems in Ukraine by bombing

systematically all civilian infrastructure.

This EU Military Assistance [Mission] for Ukraine is a very tangible proof and illustration of the overall European will to support Ukraine: militarily, financially, economically and politically. Our support is being developed and will continue [being] developed.

This Mission is an unprecedented Mission from many points of view. It is pushing the boundaries of the European Union military cooperation [to] new levels.

First, it has been established in a record time – only a few weeks – on 15 November [↗](#), and I am glad to announce today that the Mission Commander, Admiral [Hervé] Blejean – who is accompanying me today and is the head of the Mission –, has declared its full [initial] operational capability.

This Mission is already working. This Mission will train 15,000 Ukrainian soldiers, it is going to cost to the European Union budget [around] €100 million and, already, now, 1,100 soldiers are being trained in different camps.

20 Member States participate in this Mission. It is the widest military mission that the European Union has ever done for any partner. This Mission will generate additional training offers to address the Ukrainian needs. I have seen here not only EU Officers, but also British and Canadians.

I have to thank Poland, I have to thank a lot Poland for the big effort that the Polish Army and the Polish people are doing. Without them, without the strong support of the Polish government, it would not be possible to develop in such a short time this Mission and to make it operational.

We are also going to provide resources: €16 million for lethal equipment for training purposes. [↗](#) And more will come. Other countries will join us: Norway, for example, not a European Union member, has announced they will be supporting this Mission [↗](#) financially with [around] €15 million in order to provide the required ammunition and training material.

I want to thank the Combined Arms Training Commander of the Polish Army, Major General [Piotr] Trytek, who is here with us. Thank you for hosting me. Thank you for showing me the work that you are doing here. Thank you to the Polish Army and thank you to you, Major General, for the extraordinary work that you are doing.

We are doing a lot of things in supporting Ukraine. In terms of figures, I can say that the military support to the Ukrainian army is more than the €3.1 billion coming from the European Peace Facility (EPF). If I add up to this figure the amount of bilateral support that

Member States are providing to Ukraine, we are reaching almost €9 billion – three times more, which is an impressive amount in such a short period of time.

War has also a cyber dimension. Today, when I am here visiting this training camp, in Kyiv, we are opening the Cyber Lab on Defence, together with the Minister of Defence of Ukraine [Oleksii Reznikov], and also financed by the European Peace Facility.

This Cyber Lab Defence will help to advance on the skills needed to defend Ukraine from the cyber-attacks that they are suffering.

All and all, my presence here today is a good example of how the European Union is supporting Ukraine as much as we can and for as long as needed, in order for the Ukrainian soldier to defend their country.

This Mission is a good example of the European Defence capabilities and the will of the European Union Member States to work together in order to offer a united support to Ukraine. There are many other things that are being done by Member States, each one on their side in other parts of the European Union, but here is the value added of all of us working together. Training Ukrainian units, as a unit, looking for the specialised knowledge that they have to know in order to have a high intensity war – as is this war.

This mission makes us proud of what the European Union represents today. And I want to thank, from the bottom of my heart, the Ukrainian soldiers for the courage that they are showing and for their will to defend their people.

This mission has a logo, which puts together the colours of Ukraine and the European Union.

And with that, this Mission, dear General, is becoming fully operational.

I thank you, and the Polish army for your support.

Q&A

Q. Does this Training Mission, along with the EPF funding for weapons sent to Ukraine, amount to a shift in the EU's Defence Policy? Is this EU mission more efficient than the bilateral support and training that individual countries are offering to Ukraine?

This Mission is being funded by the European Peace Facility. As I said, the common cost of the Mission will be about €100 million plus about €16 million for ammunition, plus the individual costs which are supported by the Member States who provide the training camps. It is part of the whole effort that we are doing from the European Peace Facility.

The European Peace Facility until now has provided €3.1 billion, but certainly more will come. Member States are still studying the next steps and I am sure that this support will be continuing from the European Peace Facility. But I want to stress the importance of what the Member States are doing on their side, bilaterally. It is not fair to say that the European Union's support to Ukraine is just €3.1 [billion]. As I said, we are closer to €9 billion, at least.


Q. Is this Mission more efficient than this individual support that countries are also providing?

They are different things. First of all, there are so many things to do to train the Ukrainian army in front of the Russian aggression, that there is work and jobs for everybody. It is not a matter of “doing instead of you” but in complementarity with you. For example, if some Member States are doing basic training of individual soldiers. Here there are training units – not individual soldiers, but units with a specific task. As you have been seeing, demining and some things that require specific skills – not of one individual soldier but of a unit, and how this unit works together in a combined manner. If I am not wrong, this training here is, maybe, at the upper level of the individual training that many Member States are doing.

Q. You have mentioned that this Mission includes also weapons supply. Can you tell more in detail what kind of weapon and equipment supply you will provide? And how long this Mission will last?

The Mission will last as long as needed to train 15,000 soldiers. This is the purpose. Right now, there are 1,100 soldiers being trained. The average training is about – I am not going to say to you how long the training lasts because I suppose that this is restricted information. But the purpose is to train 15,000 soldiers. Now, there are 1,100 soldiers being trained, so it has to last at least 15 times more in order to fulfill the objectives. We are just providing the arms [and ammunition] necessary for the training.

Q. President Zelenskyy is calling for setting up a Special Tribunal to ensure all those responsible for the war crimes are being held accountable. I wonder, what do you do to answer this call?

Yes, this is something on which we have been working, attending the request from President Zelenskyy. Some days ago, the [European] Commission together with the High Representative [for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy], both bodies of the European Union, has [presented a proposal](#)  to the Member States, and the Member States will have to decide. But the proposal is to work on three strands of work, which are complementary. First, to continue supporting the International Criminal Court (ICC). To continue supporting it in order to collect evidence on the ground. Second, to support the

Prosecutor [General] of the Ukrainian Justice Administration – the Ukrainian people are the most directly impacted, and the Ukrainian Prosecutor is working on that. Third, to present the purpose, the objective for the creation of a specialised court – which has to be done under the umbrella of the United Nations and will require a wider international consensus. This is going to be discussed by Member States but this is the proposal presented together by the Commission and the High Representative.

Secondly, accountability is not just penal accountability; it is also financial accountability. Ukraine is being destroyed. Russia is trying to destroy Ukraine. They are not able to conquer, they failed. Their offensive trying to take Kyiv has failed, they are being rejected. Russia is losing this war. They are not able to conquer Ukraine and they want to destroy it: that is what they try to do. And it is going to cost a lot of money to repair all this damage, to rebuild Ukraine is going to cost a lot of money. Who is going to pay for it? Russia has to pay for it. This is part of the accountability. We have €300 billion seized from the assets of the Russian Central Bank. And we have seized €20 billion from the Russian oligarchs. We are studying all legal procedures in order for this money to be used on rebuilding Ukraine and repairing the damage that the Russians have caused. There may be legal difficulties, but they could be overcome. There are precedents of assets of Central Banks that have been seized in order to pay for war damages.

Q. What is your feeling – because you met some Ukrainian soldiers? Some European leaders speak of peace negotiations. Is it time for peace negotiations or not the time for peace negotiations? What conditions could bring peace negotiations? How do you qualify the Russian aggression? Is it a genocide – as Zelenskyy said – or it is other things?

Look, let's go to the core of the issue. This is a military training camp. Ordinarily, I do not have the habit of talking to soldiers and much less with the soldiers being trained to go to the battlefield. The only thing I can say is that the whole world is looking at what is happening in Ukraine, and everybody is admiring the courage of the Ukrainian soldiers. I came here just to show the support of the Europeans to the Ukrainian people.

I do not want to get lost on qualifications because Ukrainians do not need applause, they have [received] a lot [of applause]. What they need is effective support: they do not need [us] to say "oh, how courageous you are". What they need is effective support in terms of military equipment that has to come quickly because there is no time to lose; they need anti-aerial support because they are being bombed with hundreds of rockets everyday. This is my call: my call is to support these men and women who are going to fight; to support the Ukrainian people who are going to be freezing this winter without electricity, without heating, without water, without glasses in their windows. This is the important

thing. I am not going to get lost into considerations about when and how the peace talks have to start. The important thing today is to face a war, a cruel war, a deliberate attempt to annihilate the capacity of people, ordinary people – men, women, children – to put the Ukrainian people into the cold and darkness. This is our work. This is our commitment. That is what I came here to show.

Thank you for your attention.

Link to the video: <https://audiovisual.ec.europa.eu/en/video/I-233801> 