

## **Speech by President von der Leyen at the Summit on Peace in Ukraine**

*Bürgenstock, 15 June 2024*

### **“Check against delivery”**

President Amherd,

President Zelenskyy, dear Volodymyr,

Vice-President Harris,

Presidents and Prime Ministers,

Ministers,

Excellencies,

We have all come to Switzerland from different places, with different histories. We may not always see the world in the same way. But there is something all our countries have in common. We all value our independence and freedom. We all expect our borders to be respected. We all yearn to be masters of our own destiny. Some, indeed many countries have had to fight for this. For independence, for self-determination, for freedom. This is also what Ukraine is fighting for. This is also what the people of Ukraine desire. And their greatest aspiration is to be independent and free, in peace. They want the missiles to stop hitting their cities. They want to live free from fear. They want their children to be safe, not constantly worrying about the next air raid siren. Surely this is the right of all countries, and all peoples. And this is why we are here today. We are here today to help bring an end to a brutal and unjust war. A conflict that has shattered lives and displaced millions.

The echoes of Russia’s war of aggression reverberate across the globe. Energy prices have soared. Food prices have exploded. And it is a cautionary tale for the entire world. Is it right that a larger country can invade and take territory from a smaller neighbour? The answer is of course no. It is written in the Charter of the United Nations. And that is why it is vital that we reaffirm that Charter. It is vital that we pledge again to uphold firmly the principles of the UN Charter. Freezing the conflict today, with foreign troops occupying Ukrainian land, is not the answer. In fact, it is a recipe for future wars of aggression. Instead, we need to support a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace for Ukraine. One that restores Ukraine’s sovereignty and its territorial integrity. The inviolability of all borders. The sovereignty of all nations. This is at stake.

History teaches us: the quest for peace is fraught with challenges. But it was precisely from the ashes of World War II that the United Nations was born. Today, we need once again to light that beacon of hope for global peace and security. We, the international community, must stand together to support Ukraine in its pursuit of peace. That is how we open the path to peace. That is how we open the path that will allow lives and homes to be rebuilt. And that is how we open that path to restore international peace and security. Our common task is to reaffirm the primacy of the United Nations Charter.