

Speech by President Charles Michel at the Summit on Peace in Ukraine

Let me thank you for organising this important summit. I would like to briefly focus on four points.

First, international law and the UN Charter must be the backbone of a 'just peace' in Ukraine. Whatever our continent, history, religion or skin colour, we all share the same guiding compass. This is the UN Charter and its principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, human dignity and the right to self-defence. These principles are universal, and we must uphold them.

Second, this war has one aggressor, Russia, and one victim, the people of Ukraine. They have the right to defend their children, their homes and their communities. It is our collective duty to protect a world based on the laws that govern how countries should live together.

This full-scale war is more than an attack on the security of Europe, on the idea of Europe. This is an attempt to drag us all back to a darker past, a world of nuclear confrontation and major food insecurity, with all the ensuing economic consequences.

This war is an odious attempt to replace the force of law with the law of force. We cannot give up. Russia's threats to use nuclear weapons are completely unacceptable and irresponsible. Russia's reckless actions are driving up the risk of a nuclear incident, which would have consequences for the entire world. This is why the EU strongly supports the work of the IAEA's Director General, Rafael Grossi, and its staff on the ground.

Third, there is no room for double standards. International law must be protected always and everywhere, without ambiguity - in Ukraine, in the Middle East and throughout the world. This is our global responsibility.

Lastly, a word about the future. Peace requires dialogue. Any future dialogue with Russia must be based on international law and the UN Charter. And it is up to Ukraine to decide when this may be possible. This war is a direct attack on the global rules-based order; we therefore need a global response. We all have a choice to make. Do we let the world slide backwards, or do we stand strong and go forward in the direction of international law, fundamental principles and the UN Charter?

We have made our choice. The future is in our hands. You can count on the EU.

Слава Україні!