

STATEMENT BY THE EAP CSF STEERING COMMITTEE CONDEMNING RUSSIA'S LATEST LARGE-SCALE DRONE AND MISSILE ATTACKS ON UKRAINE'S CITIES

Brussels, 27 March 2024

The Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum strongly condemns the Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine and the people of Ukraine and is abhorred by the recent drone and missile attacks on numerous cities, energy sector and civilian infrastructure.

On March 22, Russia launched a large-scale drone and missile attack against numerous Ukrainian cities, namely Kharkiv, Kryvyi Rih and Zaporizhzhia, targeting their energy infrastructure. Over the next couple of days similar attacks were recorded in the Ivano-Frankivsk, Kirovohrad, Khmelnytskyi, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Poltava, Sumy and Vinnytsia Regions. These attacks caused the failure of the Ukrainian energy system leaving almost 1.5 million Ukrainians without electricity, water, and internet.

We stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine amidst Russia's latest criminal acts targeting the Zaporizhzhia's Dnipro Hydroelectric Power Plant.

We strongly urge the European Union and its Member States to:

- **Further strengthen the sanctions regime against Russia and put in place effective measures to prevent its attempts to evade these sanctions.** It is crucial to maximise the impact of sanctions, expand restrictive measures and adopt the 14th package of sanctions. In this new package, broader restrictions extending from individual companies to entire sectors and concrete measures halting the circumvention of sanctions through third-party "Kremlin-friendly" countries should be included.
- **Establish a legal framework and enact decisions enabling the use of frozen Russian assets** to address current humanitarian needs in Ukraine and support its green reconstruction efforts.
- **Significantly increase the volumes and speed of providing military support for Ukraine that could restore its entire legitimate frontier, and support Ukraine in its defence operations** by supplying, in particular, necessary air defence systems, ammunition, equipment, intelligence, cybersecurity, and any other required support.
- **Enhance financial support for independent media and civil society in Ukraine** and ensure that their voices are heard across the EU, at the highest levels of debate. Provide adequate assistance to civil society engaged in countering misinformation and disinformation. Encourage and facilitate the meaningful participation of **Ukrainian civil society** in processes related to **Ukraine's reconstruction**.

- **Hold Russia accountable for the violation of air space.** Russia keeps violating the air space of EU Member States and Eastern Partnership countries. The security of the EU is linked to the security of its neighbourhood. Recognising Russia as a common threat ensures the safety and stability of all of us, above and beyond Ukraine.
- **Enhance its commitment, both politically and financially, in assessing the severe environmental damage** as well as short and long-term **psychosocial impact** of the war on the Ukrainian population.

“Over the last few nights, we have been under constant shelling. Our cities have been left in complete darkness, without electricity, water, and internet. Under each attack, we live this war over and over again. And yet, we do not succumb to fear, although we are afraid for our lives and those of our loved ones each and every day.

Only with more military support we will be able to put an end, once and for all, to all these atrocities and crimes. Only with more military support, our cities will be safe. Only with more military support, our people will be able to safely return to our country and contribute to its reconstruction”, said **Ruslan Havryliuk**, EaP CSF Steering Committee Member and National Facilitator, Ukraine.

Members of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum