

Statement by Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on the Destruction of the Kakhovka Dam in Ukraine by the Russian Federation and its disastrous environmental and humanitarian consequences

Brussels, 9 June 2023

The Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum calls on to the international community, including the European Union and its Member States, to provide prompt and swift financial and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine to address the consequences of the destruction of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant.

We express profound condemnation of the recent act of ecocide perpetrated by the Russian Federation that led to the explosion of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP) on June 6, 2023. It poses unprecedented environmental and humanitarian threats to the South of Ukraine and the entire Black Sea region, creates unprecedented new risks for the safety of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

The destruction of the Kakhovka HPP has resulted in severe, complex and far-reaching consequences for the environment. As detailed in a [joint statement by Ukrainian environmental civil society organisations](#), the immediate repercussions of this criminal act entail the potential mass mortality of aquatic organisms, such as fish, leading to a rapid deterioration of water quality due to the decomposition of dead organisms. The destruction of terrestrial areas which will be flooded as a result, poses significant risks to rodent populations, including endemic species listed in the Red Book of Ukraine and endemic species listed in the IUCN Red List that exist nowhere else in the world.

Additionally, the destruction of the Kakhovka HPP has had severe effects on the population, creating a humanitarian crisis. The destruction of the Kakhovsky Reservoir led to severe pollution of the Dnipro River's waters, disruption of water supply sources in the Kherson, Mykolaiv, Dnipro and Zaporizhzhia regions. Houses, buildings, civil infrastructure and enterprises have been flooded, resulting in substantial property loss and destruction. The death of cattle, livestock, domestic animals, and animals in zoos pose a severe risk of contaminating water, soil, and air, as well as spreading infectious diseases. Water supply for agricultural needs in the south of Ukraine has been disrupted which will negatively affect food security in Europe and the world, and mine risks increased due to the resulting erosion and displacement of mines.

We express our full solidarity and closeness to the people of Ukraine, who are forced into withstanding yet another criminal act of barbarism perpetrated by the Russian Federation.

We call onto the international community, particularly the International Criminal Court, to thoroughly investigate the destruction of the dam and consider it as a potential war crime, crime against humanity, and ecocide. Russia's destruction of the Kakhovka HPP flagrantly violate the principles enshrined in international agreements pertaining to human rights, humanitarian law, and environmental protection.

We call upon the international community, including the European Union and its Member States, to provide prompt and swift financial and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine in assessing the full environmental impact of this incident and addressing its wide-reaching consequences. It is also evident that it is not enough to just express concern and help with humanitarian cargo - Ukraine needs to win on the battlefield as soon as possible. The longer Ukraine fights, the more destruction Russia will create. Therefore, Ukraine needs to be helped with the necessary military equipment, including aviation.

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