



2022 NORTHERN NEIGHBOURS PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUÉ: STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEES FROM NORTHERN EUROPE ON RUSSIA-UKRAINE

We, the chairs of the parliamentary foreign and international affairs committees of Northern Europe, met in London on 16–17 June to discuss Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine and its far-reaching implications for security and stability within Europe and beyond.

We continue to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We pay tribute to their extraordinary sacrifices in the pursuit of freedom, the territorial integrity of their country and the sovereignty of their democracy. It is incumbent on us to respond collectively and decisively to a war that seeks to change the status quo through force, and which is already redefining the future of Europe.

1. We therefore **welcome the international community’s support to Ukraine, which it must continue and intensify**—speeding up the delivery of heavy weapons and other military assistance to the Ukrainian Armed Forces, in addition to increasing financial support to the Ukrainian Government for its day-to-day spending and to neighbouring countries hosting nearly 5 million Ukrainian refugees. We further **call on governments to begin planning, in close cooperation with the Government of Ukraine, for the long-term reconstruction of Ukraine.**
2. We **condemn in the strongest possible terms the serial breach of international law and the perpetration of war crimes in Ukraine by the Russian Armed Forces and their proxies.** We are extremely concerned by their mistreatment of prisoners of war—including the sham trials of active-duty soldiers under the Ukrainian military chain of command, who are protected under the Geneva Conventions. We reaffirm our complete opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances.
3. We **call on the international community to take all necessary steps to deter Russian military personnel from the further terrorisation of the people of Ukraine, ensuring that those responsible are held to account.** This includes the **establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Punishment of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine.** Evidence of war crimes continues to mount, from the deliberate military targeting of civilians and hospitals, to the use of civilians as human shields, sexual assault and rape, torture, abduction, forced deportation and forced passportisation. Investigators working in support of the International Criminal Court must have immediate access to all relevant sites in Ukraine to preserve and record evidence, as well as the resources to sustain their work in the long term. It is also essential that the International Committee of the Red Cross and other impartial international humanitarian organisations are granted access to places such as Mariupol to provide relief—food, water and medicines—to citizens under occupation, as is incumbent on Russia under international humanitarian law.
4. We **wholeheartedly condemn Russia’s weaponisation of food and hunger as tools to increase its power and leverage.** The UN Secretary-General has warned



that hundreds of millions of people are at risk of “hunger and destitution” because of food shortages caused by the war. Some 750,000 are already experiencing starvation and acute malnutrition in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen. Yet Russia continues its blockade of Black Sea ports, is conducting sustained attacks on grain silos, fertiliser stores and farming infrastructure, and is stealing grain from occupied areas for its own consumption or profit.

5. We **call on our governments to work with likeminded partners to enhance our collective security against military and nuclear threats in Europe, linking the High North with the Baltics and the Black Sea, and urgently acting to reduce nuclear risks.** Russia is among the hostile states capable of cutting the undersea fibre-optic cables that are vital to our communications and our economies. President Putin recently restated his ambition to return Russia to imperial glories through territorial conquest, while the threat of a nuclear strike by Russia hangs over the current conflict. We therefore also **urge our governments to implement strategic and nuclear risk-reduction measures.** We also **reaffirm the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.**

6. We **pledge to build our countries’ resilience to the more insidious influence of hostile states and their proxies, learning from each other** how we can better protect our politics, societies and economies against the range of tools used by hostile states to coerce, and to undermine our cohesion and prosperity. Our open societies and economies are also vulnerable to methods of exploitation that we have not yet identified. We therefore **call on our governments to establish horizon-scanning mechanisms for insidious state threats to our democracies and free-market economies, and to share the insight generated with allies and likeminded partners** to create a common threat picture.

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