

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Declaration 5 (2022)¹ The Russian Federation's war against Ukraine

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (hereinafter "the Congress"):

1. bearing in mind the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers' Resolution CM/Res(2022)1 and CM/Res(2022)2;
2. bearing in mind United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/ES-11/1 on aggression against Ukraine, adopted on 2 March 2022;
3. condemns in the strongest terms the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine, which constitutes a blatant breach of international law and the Statute of the Council of Europe;
4. deplors the loss of life, human suffering and destruction caused by the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine, which has resulted in an unprecedented number of refugees and internally displaced persons on the European continent, not seen since the Second World War;
5. calls on the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally cease its war in Ukraine, stop the bombing of civilian infrastructures and residential areas, ensure humanitarian corridors for safe evacuation of civilians, stop human rights and international humanitarian law violations, and withdraw its troops;
6. expresses its full and resolute support to Ukraine and its solidarity with its people who demonstrate admirable firmness and courage in defending their country;
7. condemns the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol and the recognition by the Russian Federation of the Ukrainian oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent entities, and denounces attempts to establish a similar illegal entity in the Kherson oblast of Ukraine;
8. expresses its unwavering commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders;

9. underlines the fundamental role of the Council of Europe, as an organisation founded in the aftermath of the Second World War, to defend human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe, and ensure the peaceful coexistence of nations in Europe;

10. recalls, in this respect, that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, and facilitating their economic and social progress;

11. stresses that the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine constitutes an attack on the principles and values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law which the Council of Europe stands for, promotes and defends;

12. further stresses that the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine seriously undermines the capacity for local and regional authorities in Ukraine to operate and inflicts tremendous suffering on the Ukrainian people;

13. recognises the key role that local and regional authorities in Ukraine are playing in addressing the disastrous humanitarian consequences faced by citizens as a result of the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine;

14. condemns the intimidation, abduction and killing of Ukrainian local and regional elected representatives by the Russian forces;

15. calls for the immediate release of the abducted elected representatives;

16. underlines the role of the Congress in contributing to the aim and objectives of the Council of Europe and in building up local and regional democracy, the values of which are deeply rooted in the Ukrainian nation, identity and institutions;

17. welcomes the efforts of local and regional authorities of the member States of the Council of Europe and their associations in support for their Ukrainian counterparts and citizens;

18. calls for the Russian Federation to respect its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law.

The Congress stresses that democracy, multilevel governance and human rights are stronger than war, stands firmly by Ukraine and its people, and calls on all local and regional communities of Europe, and beyond, to stay united and determined in their solidarity and support for the Ukrainian nation, its people and its authorities.

1. Debated and adopted by the Congress on 22 March 2022, 2nd Sitting, rapporteur: Leen VERBEEK, Netherlands (R, SOC/G/PD).