

## ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)

24 February 2023

*English only*

### **Statement of the Advisory Council on Youth on the first anniversary of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine**

Today, on 24 February 2023, we remember the beginning of the ongoing Russian military attack against Ukraine, in flagrant violation of the Statute of the Council of Europe and the European Convention on Human Rights, and recommitted to the [statement of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe](#) and [our own statement](#).

Reiterating that “these attacks have devastating effects on the young people living in the conflict areas, displacing them and their families, disrupting their lives and development, and infringing on their access to rights” and that “the attacks directly contradict the enduring work on youth policy development and human rights education in the Council of Europe and its member States”, we reaffirm our solidarity with Ukraine and its young people. Additionally, as youth representatives, we are shocked by the “credible allegations” of deportation and simplified procedures to grant citizenship which would mean Ukrainian children without parental care would be eligible for adoption in contravention of Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.<sup>1 2</sup> We demand all parties involved to respect the principle of the best interests of the child.

The Advisory Council on Youth reaffirms its full support to the youth organisations in Ukraine and its neighbouring countries, who are committed to the Council of Europe's values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and we continue through the Council of Europe youth sector to promote active co-operation - highlighting the swift efforts made by local, national and international youth organisations, both by responding with humanitarian support as well as actively working together and supporting youth civil society in Ukraine.

On this first anniversary of the attack on Ukraine, we call on the Council of Europe member states to continue to show solidarity with the young people whose lives have been struck by the devastating effects of the ongoing war, and to actively support the right to a life and upbringing in peaceful societies.

We wish for the aggression to end immediately and call on the Council of Europe member states to continue their efforts aimed at securing peace and moving towards a post-war reality based on Council of Europe values.

*The opinions expressed in this statement are those of the Advisory Council on Youth and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Council of Europe or its member states.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/09/human-rights-concerns-related-forced-displacement-ukraine>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0320\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0320_EN.pdf)