

Europe and NATO condemn the Russian attack on Ukraine

NATO will not send troops

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USPA NEWS - The European Union and NATO agreed on Thursday to condemn in the strongest terms the attacks against Ukraine ordered by Russian President Vladimir Putin. The bombardments by Russian aircraft and the missiles launched against military targets and strategic infrastructures in Ukraine caused, from the first hours, dozens of deaths and injuries, not only military but also civilians.

This Thursday the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen; the Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, and the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, just as the Spanish High Representative for Foreign Policy of the European Union, José Borrell, did hours before, the three leaders harshly condemned the Russian declaration of war, announced the adoption of unprecedented sanctions to stifle the Russian economy and confirmed that they will help Ukraine, both militarily and in the care of refugees. However, Jens Stoltenberg stressed that NATO will not send troops on the ground, as Ukraine is not a member of the Atlantic Alliance.

"We condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia's unprecedented military aggression against Ukraine. By its unprovoked and unjustified military actions, Russia is grossly violating international law and undermining European and global security and stability," said in a statement the European Council. "We also condemn the involvement of Belarus in this aggression against Ukraine and call on it to abide by its international obligations. We demand that Russia immediately ceases military actions, unconditionally withdraws all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respects Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. Such use of force and coercion has no place in the 21st century," they added.

"We will meet later today to discuss this blatant aggression and agree in principle on further restrictive measures that will impose massive and severe consequences on Russia for its action, in close coordination with our transatlantic partners. We deplore the loss of life and humanitarian suffering. The EU and its Member States are ready to urgently provide humanitarian emergency response. We call on Russia and Russia-backed armed formations to respect international humanitarian law," warns the European Council. And concluded: "The EU stands firmly by Ukraine and its people as they face this war. The EU will provide further political, financial and humanitarian assistance. We are coordinating our response with our neighbours and international partners, including NATO and G7 whose leaders will be meeting shortly."

"Last night a cataclysm shook Europe. Brutal aggression triggered by Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin against human beings. A large-scale military attack on the Ukrainian people," said Charles Michel. "This unprovoked and unjustified attack is unlike anything on European soil since the end of the Second World War. It is an attack on the free and sovereign state of Ukraine and its territorial integrity, a blatant violation of international law, replacing the rule of law with the rule of brutality. An attack on peace and security in Europe, it is also an attack on the foundations of our European Union, a project of peace and prosperity for all Europeans. The EU and its member states, together with our allies, will hold Russia accountable," he added.

Also the European Parliament Conference of Presidents was convened by President Roberta Metsola to discuss their response to Russia's invasion into Ukraine. An exchange of views was held with the President of the European Council Charles Michel and the President of the European Commission Ursula Von der Leyen.

"The Conference of Presidents condemned the Russian attack on Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. Ukraine is an independent and sovereign nation and its territorial integrity is non-negotiable. The invasion is unjustified and illegal. It is a threat to European and regional stability, as well as to the rules-based world order. The attack targets our model of democratic society. It cannot go unanswered. We remain firm in our unity, in our resolve and in our response to unprovoked Russian aggression. The European Parliament supports an unprecedented European and international response, including new and severe sanctions that will ensure the Kremlin will be held accountable for its actions," expressed the European Parliament. The Conference of Presidents expressed full solidarity and support for Ukraine and its people, and agreed to organise an extraordinary plenary debate on Tuesday March 1, 2022.

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