

European Council Confirms Unity against Russia



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News

Following the Council conclusions on the fight against impunity regarding crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine of 9 December 2022 (→ separate news item), the Heads of State or Government of the EU Member States adopted conclusions on further issues regarding Russia's war in Ukraine and its consequences for the EU at their summit on 15 December 2022. Next to Russia's military aggression against Ukraine and support measures to Ukraine, the [conclusions of the European Council](#) related, *inter alia*, to energy and economy, security and defense, the Southern Neighbourhood partnership, and transatlantic relations.

With regard to Ukraine/Russia, the European Council reiterated its resolute condemnation of Russia's war of aggression and reaffirmed the Union's full support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. It also fully backed Ukraine's inherent right of self-defense against the Russian aggression. EU leaders invited the European Investment Bank, in close cooperation with the Commission and international financial institutions, to step up its support for Ukraine's most urgent infrastructure needs.

They welcomed and encouraged further efforts to ensure full accountability for war crimes and the other most serious crimes in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and underlined the Union's support for the investigations by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. They also welcomed the reinforcement of EU restrictive measures against Russia, including through the EU's ninth package of sanctions, and underlined the importance of ensuring the effective implementation of restrictive measures.

On the question of energy and economy, the European Council stressed the importance of strengthening coordination with regard to the next storage filling and heating season. It called for the swift finalization of discussions on the Renewable Energy Directive, the Energy Efficiency Directive, and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive. In light of the impact of high energy prices in Europe, the European Council emphasised the importance of safeguarding Europe's economic, industrial, and technological base and of preserving the global level playing field. In this respect and in response to the impact of high energy prices, the Commission should conduct an analysis and make proposals by the end of January 2023 with a view to mobilizing all relevant national and EU tools as well as improving framework conditions for investment, including through streamlined administrative procedures.

In order to enhance security and defense, EU leaders called on the European Parliament and the Council to swiftly adopt the European Defense Industry Reinforcement through the common Procurement Act (EDIRPA). They also recommended that implementation of military mobility infrastructure projects, including

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dual-use infrastructure projects, be further accelerated. Lastly, the conclusions called for a strong EU policy on cyber defense, building on the recent joint communication of the Commission and the High Representative.

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