

CPMR Baltic Sea Commission stands with Ukraine and its people

Approved by the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission Executive Committee on 8 March 2022

Since its establishment in 1996, the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission (BSC) and its Member Regions stand for peace, solidarity, cooperation and mutual respect between people, regions and national governments in the Baltic Sea Region and in Europe. Coming from Estonia, Finland, Germany and Sweden, the BSC Member Regions have specific geographic, historical, economic and social connections with Russia, in the framework of their bilateral relations as well as in the framework of Baltic Sea cooperation, including within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The unprecedented, brutal and unacceptable aggression by the Russian Federation on Ukraine is a threat to the security of Ukraine and the safety of its people. The Russian Federation has violated the principles of democracy, freedom, the rule of law and is a threat to the security of Europe and its people.

On behalf of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, the Executive Committee:

- **firmly condemns the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.** We support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.
- **urges the Russian Federation to stop immediately its aggression towards Ukraine.** We call for swift progress in the negotiations to find a peaceful solution as soon as possible that can be accepted by all partners, as an indispensable condition for a long-lasting peace in the Region.
- **stands with Ukraine and its people who are fighting for their lives, their country and their freedom.** Our thoughts are with the victims of this war: people who are threatened in their mere existence, who have lost family members and friends and who are losing their homes.
- **welcomes the acts of solidarity of regional and local actors to provide assistance to Ukraine's refugees.**
- **deeply deplores that the long-standing cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, in which Russia is an important partner, has seriously been affected.** For the last 30 years, from people-to-people cooperation to local, regional, and national cooperation, a lot has been built to create a prosperous and peaceful Baltic Sea Region, based upon mutual trust and solidarity.
- **reiterates the importance to keep peace in the Baltic Sea Region, and the EU as a whole, including in the European Arctic.** We underline the need to maintain the Arctic as a low-tension area, and therefore call on the European Union, in the framework of its revised Arctic Policy, to increase its presence in the Arctic through investments for sustainable development, as well as to encourage more people-to-people, research-to-research and business-to-business cooperation. The geopolitical situation requires all efforts to promote further multi-level cooperation and interregional cooperation to safeguard a safe living environment.
- **welcomes that the EU is showing its strength, unity and ability to support Ukraine through various actions, such as providing emergency humanitarian assistance to the people.** We support the European Parliament's resolution on Ukraine, as well as the decisions made by the European institutions. The European Commission proposal under development to grant higher co-financing rates for ESIF funded projects aimed at helping refugees from Ukraine is a step in the right direction.
- **urges the European Union, as well as member regions of the CPMR and its Baltic Sea Commission to prepare an active participation in supporting Ukraine in rebuilding its economy, infrastructure, institutions, education and civil society** when the aggression has ceased and the peace, security and freedom of Ukraine is restored.
- **stresses that Russia's unprovoked aggression in Ukraine exacerbates the unprecedented situation on the energy market, creating instability and volatility.** Therefore, we call on EU leaders to further develop European energy sovereignty and security, also as a means to achieve EU carbon neutrality.