

European Council: Russia's assets should remain immobilised until it ceases its war against Ukraine

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The European Council, gathered on 20 March in Brussels, has said that the EU remains ready to step up pressure on Russia, including by applying new sanctions and by strengthening the enforcement of existing sanctions.

The Council's conclusions on Ukraine were "*firmly supported*" by 26 heads of state or government, excluding Hungary.

"Subject to EU law, Russia's assets should remain immobilised until Russia ceases its war and compensates Ukraine for the damages caused by the war," the conclusions on Ukraine say.

EU leaders reiterated that the EU was committed to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, based on the UN Charter and international law. They

welcomed the joint statement by Ukraine and the US, including the proposal for a ceasefire agreement, humanitarian efforts and the resumption of US intelligence sharing and security assistance. The European Council called on Russia “*to show real political will to end the war*” and called for the exchange of prisoners of war, the release of civilians, and the return of all Ukrainian children and other civilians unlawfully deported and transferred to Russia and Belarus.

With regard to security guarantees, EU leaders welcomed the efforts that have been initiated in this regard with like-minded partners and NATO and expressed their readiness to contribute, in particular to support Ukraine’s ability to defend itself effectively. They also called on Member States to urgently step up efforts to meet Ukraine’s pressing military and defence needs.

The EU leaders called on the Commission to swiftly frontload financing under the Ukraine Facility and the G7 extraordinary revenue acceleration loan, and to use all options under the Ukraine Facility to increase support.

To date, the EU has provided €139.2 billion to Ukraine, including €49.3 billion in military support.

EU leaders also said the EU would intensify support for Ukraine’s reform efforts to become a member state, starting with the fundamentals’ negotiation cluster as soon as possible.