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## **Ukraine: statement by the 27 leaders of the EU. “Russia’s aggression is a crime against peace. Putin will be held to account”**

“One year ago, Putin’s Russia started its brutal war of aggression against Ukraine. The Ukrainian people have shown incredible strength in defending their homeland and the core principles of international law against the Russian aggression. They have shown resolve in defending democracy and freedom, resilience in the face of hardship and dignity when confronted with Russia’s crimes”. This is written in a joint statement posted last night by the European Council, the EU institution which the 27 Heads of State and Government are members of. “The Ukrainian people have shown the world that the future of Ukraine is for the Ukrainians to decide. No country has the right to invade its neighbour or violate its sovereignty and territorial integrity. This aggression is a crime against peace. It violates the UN Charter, the UN principles and the values of mankind. We cannot and should not remain passive in front of such crimes”. The statement says that “Russia has systematically targeted civilians, destroyed cities and attacked Ukrainian identity. We are determined to ensure that all those who are responsible for war crimes and other most serious crimes committed in connection with Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine are held to account”. Russia has “weaponised food and energy, made deeply irresponsible nuclear threats and spread false narratives about the war. Russia’s war of aggression and its consequences have significantly affected many countries notably through its impact on the global economy, food and commodity prices. The European Union will continue to work with partners to mitigate these effects and to provide assistance to the countries and people most in need”.

Valentina Bombelli