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## **Background Note**

Session 4

"The European Union's action in support of Ukraine's sovereignty  
and territorial integrity"

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**Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security  
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## **The European Union's action in support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity**

On 7 May 2009, EU heads of state and government alongside representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, adopted the conclusions of the first Eastern Partnership Summit, which was held in Prague. This partnership's goal is to strengthen the political partnership and economic integration between the European Union and its five partners<sup>1</sup> in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, and it is the framework for the bilateral relationship between Ukraine and the European Union. The Eastern Partnership is based on differentiated, mutually beneficial cooperation. To this end, the European Union offers partner countries complete and comprehensive free trade agreements and a more flexible visa regime in exchange for carrying out political and economic reforms.

At the European Council summit in June 2014, EU leaders signed the European Union-Ukraine Association Agreement (AA) on 27 June 2014, which structures bilateral cooperation between the EU and Ukraine. This agreement, which fosters deeper political ties, a respect for shared values and a stronger economic relationship, fully entered into force on 1 September 2017 once its ratification process finished.

In 2014, the EU reacted to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and voluntary acts to destabilise Ukraine by adopting diplomatic measures and individual and economic sanctions.

First, the EU suspended the periodic bilateral summits with Russia.

Secondly, on 17 March 2014 the Council of the European Union adopted Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 as an initial set of individual sanctions by prohibiting 21 people from entering EU territory and freezing their assets due to their efforts to compromise or threaten Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. The EU has progressively expanded the list of natural and legal persons targeted by the sanctions; as of 1 January 2022, this list included 51 entities and 203 people. On 10 September 2021, the Council of the

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<sup>1</sup> Belarus suspended its participation in the Eastern Partnership on 28 June 2021.

European Union decided to extend this regime of individual sanctions until 15 March 2022.

Thirdly, on 23 June 2014, the Council of the European Union adopted Regulation (EU) No 692/2014 concerning restrictions on the import into the Union of goods originating in Crimea or Sevastopol, in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, which prohibits imports coming from these regions, restricts investments, prohibits tourism services and the export of certain goods. On 21 June 2021, the Council extended these measures until 23 June 2022. Additionally, on 31 July 2014, the Council adopted Regulation (EU) No 833/2014, which imposes sanctions on economic exchanges with Russia in certain sectors, limits access to the EU's primary and secondary capital markets for certain Russian companies and banks, places an embargo on arms imports and exports, prohibits the export of dual-use goods, and restricts Russia's access to certain sensitive services and technologies. On 13 January 2022, the Council extended these measures until 31 July 2022 based on the assessment of the implementation of the Minsk peace agreements in eastern Ukraine made by the European Council on 16 December 2021.

In response to Russian troop movements, which since December 2021 have seen around 100,000 troops placed within 250 km of the line of contact separating Ukrainian-controlled territory from the territory claimed by separatist forces, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell visited Ukraine as early as 5 January 2022 and stated that *"any discussion of Europe's security must include the European Union and Ukraine"*.

On 10 January 2022, bilateral talks were held between the United States and Russia in Geneva. These were followed on 12 January by a NATO-Russia Council meeting, the first in this format since summer 2019. Meanwhile, on 14 January 2022, several Ukraine government sites were subject to a widescale cyberattack. In response, High Representative Josep Borrell announced that he was sending a person to Ukraine to participate in the investigation to identify who was responsible for the attack, and he confirmed that the Member States of the Permanent Structured Cooperation on the Cyber Rapid Response Teams were ready to support Ukraine if necessary.

In an informal meeting in Brest on 13 and 14 January 2022 and then at the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) meeting in Brussels on 24 January 2022, Member States' foreign affairs ministers reaffirmed their unreserved support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and stressed that any military

aggression from Russia towards Ukraine would have far-reaching consequences and significant costs. On 14 January 2022, after the informal meeting, the High Representative summed up Member States' position in ten points that constitute, in the words of the French Foreign Minister, the 'Brest Decalogue':

- the rejection of Russia's attempt to build spheres of influence in Europe,
- the reassertion of the major principles of European security, especially as laid out in the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter,
- the reassertion of our solidarity with Ukraine and our support for the existing mechanism for a peaceful resolution of disputes,
- the call towards Russia for a de-escalation,
- the reassertion of our determination to respond to any aggression against Ukraine,
- the solidity of our partnership with the United States,
- the reinforcement of the EU's coordination with the United States, NATO and the OSCE,
- the desire to strengthen mechanisms of transparency and predictability of military activities,
- the resumption of arms inspection and disarmament work,
- the preparation of potential new sanctions in cooperation with our allies.

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### Questions

*What instruments does the EU have to assert its viewpoint in the framework of the dialogue between the United States and Russia on Europe's security, in order to defend the fundamental principles of "Nothing about Europe without Europe" and "Nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine"?*

*What assets do the European Union and Member States have to ensure that the Minsk Agreements of 5 September 2014 and 12 February 2015 are implemented? How can the European Union support a return to diplomatic dialogue in the "Normandy" format that brings together Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France?*

*What assessment can we make of the effectiveness of the diplomatic measures and the individual and economic sanctions that the EU has adopted against*

*Russia since 2014? What avenues are there for making these measures more effective?*

*What kind of support can the European Union provide to Ukraine within the CSDP, either in addition to or as a reinforcement of the existing civilian mission (EUAM)?*

*What instruments does the EU have to reinforce support for Ukraine in the field of cyberdefence, and how can we ensure that these instruments are complementary to the support provided by NATO?*