

Press Statement United for Ukraine, 24 August 2023

We, members of parliaments representing Foreign Affairs and other parliamentary Committees of the EU Member States and NATO member countries, the United for Ukraine global parliamentary network, upon paying a solidarity visit to Ukraine on the occasion of the 32nd anniversary of the Act of Declaration of Independence of Ukraine of 24 August 1991 by the Supreme Council of Ukraine (Verkhovna Rada):

- congratulate the Ukrainian nation on the Independence Day and reiterate our strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, unity, territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and transatlantic vocation;

- express our support for the work of the International Crimea Platform (ICP) by taking part at the third ICP summit in Kyiv as well as our readiness to support the activity of the Platform in all its dimensions, including the parliamentary one;

- believe that Ukraine's decisive victory over Russia, aggressor and terrorist state, is critical to the European and global rules-based international order, therefore we call for immediate increased military and defense support to Ukraine, including long-range guided missiles and fighter aircrafts;

- We see Ukraine as a part of the European and Euro-Atlantic family, supporting its mutually reinforcing membership in the EU and NATO, which would be far more cost-effective than the financial and military assistance for 'as long as it takes'. The experience of Central and Eastern European countries shows that they first gained membership in NATO and then joined the EU or made it in parallel. The requirements and criteria for membership in the two organizations overlap in many areas. Therefore, Ukraine's current progress on its path to the EU demonstrates the need for NATO to take appropriate steps.

- We, the representatives of the national parliaments of the EU, underline that Ukraine is the only unique example of a State that, despite the full-scale aggression, maintains its institutional capacity and full control, fulfils all social obligations, and continues to successfully implement reforms identified by the European Commission as necessary in order to obtain a decision on starting accession negotiations with Ukraine. We hope that, based on the positive recommendations of the European Commission, the Council is going to recommend to start accession negotiations with Ukraine until the end of 2023 in order to consolidate the momentum for further EU-supported reforms and recovery.

- We, the representatives of the parliaments of NATO member countries, welcome the progress Ukraine has made on the path to NATO's membership as recognized at the Vilnius NATO Summit. Ukraine's transition to NATO principles and standards as well as to the armaments of the Alliance is proceeding at an accelerated pace. Russia's war against Ukraine, which has been ongoing since 2014, has significantly increased the level of combat readiness and combat capability of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, as well as their compliance with NATO standards. Today, Ukraine's ground forces are of the state of readiness that exceeds that of the majority

of the armed forces of NATO's European Allies. Ukraine not only shares the values and principles enshrined in the Washington Treaty, but is also defending them at the cost of lives of thousands of its citizens. Therefore, we call on NATO member countries to invite Ukraine for membership at the next NATO summit in Washington DC. We take full account that Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty will be applicable only after completion of negotiations and ratification of the accession protocol by all NATO member countries. Further delay in implementing the decisions of 2008 Bucharest NATO on Ukraine's membership in NATO will lead to further escalation in the region and globally with other autocratic states undermining the rules-based international order.

- We also confirm our readiness, within the scope of competence of our parliaments, to continue political, financial, humanitarian, and other support for Ukraine, including its critical infrastructure facilities, until Russia withdraws its forces from the temporary occupied territory of Ukraine.

- We underline the need to hold accountable all those responsible for war crimes and other serious crimes committed during Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and welcome efforts to establish a tribunal for the prosecution of the crime of aggression against Ukraine.