
Council of Europe: anniversary of Russian aggression against Ukraine. Pejcinovic Buric, “united in our support” for Kiev

The Ministers' Deputies of the Council of Europe held an extraordinary meeting in Strasbourg today to mark the second anniversary of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine. They recalled the measures already taken by the Council of Europe and adopted a series of decisions, including calling on the Russian Federation to “cease the aggression against Ukraine and withdraw completely from its territory”. They then expressed support to Ukraine and its people, and welcomed “the measures taken to ensure Russia's full accountability”. The representatives of the 46 member countries then called for “the release and return of deported and transferred civilians, particularly children”; they condemned “Russia's illegal conduct of so-called elections within the internationally recognised borders of Ukraine, as well as its attempt to prosecute judges and prosecutors of the International Criminal Court and officials of Council of Europe member States”. Marija Pejčinović Burić, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, then took the floor, saying: “Two years ago, the Committee of Ministers”, the highest body of the CoE, “met to address the illegal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. Many of you were here that day to reflect on how we would respond to this tragic turn of events. You were right to quickly decide to exclude Russia from this organisation”. The violation “of our statutes – and our values – was crystal clear”. Since then, I have been struck by the unity of our member states in supporting Ukraine. This applies to the work of the Committee of Ministers. As well as to the efforts of the Parliamentary Assembly” and other CoE institutions. The Reykjavik Declaration, adopted by European leaders at our summit last May, was particularly powerful. The declaration also emphasised the goal of unity in solidarity with Ukraine. This will remain the priority of this organisation”.

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