



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 4.1.2023
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*Ms Stéphanie D'HOSE
President of the Sénat
Place de la Nation, 1
B – 1009 BRUXELLES*

*Ms Liesbeth HOMANS
President of the Vlaams Parlement
B – 1011 BRUSSELS*

Dear Presidents,

The Commission would like to thank the Vlaams Parlement, acting as a component of the Belgian national parliamentary system pursuant to Declaration No. 51 to the Treaties, for its Opinion, forwarded by the Belgische Senaat, on the non-recognition of illegal 'referenda' in Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. In response to Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, the Union has been working on the points raised by the Vlaams Parlement in its Opinion.

The EU has been quick and firm in condemning in the strongest terms the announced illegal annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions¹ In addition, the High Representative and the Commission, together with Member States, carried out high-level outreach to secure the broadest possible support for the UN General Assembly resolution 'territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending principles of the UN Charter' on 12 October 2022, where 143 countries voted for the resolution, 5 against and 35 abstained.

On 8 December 2022, upon the proposal of the European Commission, the Council adopted a decision not to accept Russian travel documents issued in, or to persons resident in, Russian-occupied regions in Ukraine or breakaway territories in Georgia. Furthermore, President von der Leyen has recently made a statement on Russian accountability and the use of frozen assets² and in line with the 15 December European Council Conclusions, the Commission will take the work forward in accordance with EU and international law.

Finally, on 16 December we adopted the 9th sanctions package against Russia.

¹ Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union of 28 September and Statement by the Members of the European Council of 30 September.

² [President's statement on Russian accountability and \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/en/press-summaries/2022/12/15/Pages/President%20statement%20on%20Russian%20accountability%20and%20the%20use%20of%20frozen%20assets.aspx)

The EU will continue to stand resolutely with Ukraine and its people, and provide strong economic, military, social and financial support for as long as it takes.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future with the Vlaams Parlement.

Yours faithfully,

*Josep Borrell Fontelles
High Representative/Vice-President*

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*