

The Riksdag Committee on Foreign Affairs has examined the applications of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova for membership of the European Union.

The position of the Committee

The Russian invasion must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. The invasion is unprovoked, illegal and indefensible. The attack is a violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty and entails immense suffering on the part of the Ukrainian people. It is an attack on the peace and prevailing security order of Europe. Russia and President Putin are entirely to blame and bear full responsibility for the invasion. Sweden together with the rest of the EU and our transatlantic partners stand united in our support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian population.

Ukraine has, like Georgia and Moldova, clearly expressed its European ambitions. These three countries' applications for membership of the EU open a new stage in their ongoing association processes. It is now indisputable that the three countries see that this process will be concluded with EU membership. The Committee takes a positive view of this and considers, as it has previously stated, that the EU should give the three countries a clear membership perspective and as potential candidate countries they should be given access to all possible support for reforms that the EU has to offer future member states.

However, the Committee wishes to emphasise that the three countries' applications for membership must be received in a serious fashion and that current rules and procedures must be applied, including the revised enlargement methodology of 2020 which emphasises fundamental reform. Entering the EU as a member state entails substantial commitment and requires stable democratic institutions, respect for the rule of law, administrative capabilities and a well-functioning market economy. The Committee welcomes the fact that the Council has so promptly opened the procedure according to Article 49 of the EU treaty by requesting the Commission to deliver its opinion on the three applications. By means of dealing with this matter so promptly, the EU has confirmed the special status these three countries have regrettably found themselves in as a result of Russia's aggressions. This also means that the member states will be provided with a reliable basis to enable them to take a position on a realistic continuation to the process.

The Committee would like to underline how important it is that, while awaiting the opinions of the Commission, the EU intensifies its commitment for the reform efforts of the three countries with the ambition that they one day will become members of the Union. In the prevailing acute situation, it is primarily a question of going further with support to Ukraine, together with the member states and international partners, to resist Russia's invasion, sharpen sanctions against Russia and further isolate Russia internationally, receive all those who are fleeing from the war and continue to place demands on Russia to allow humanitarian access and safe passage for those wishing to leave Ukraine. The EU and its Member states also have to meet Georgia's and Moldova's need for support in coping with the consequences of the war, for instance when it comes to hosting refugees in Moldova.

In the opinion of the Committee, in order to support Ukraine in their resistance, it is also necessary that the EU now immediately makes a long-term extensive commitment to providing support for the reconstruction of a free and democratic Ukraine. The Committee considers that a position to regard Ukraine as a potential EU candidate country would demonstrate unshakable support for the Ukraine's right to make its own foreign policy choices independently and without interference.