

Joint statement by the Ministers for European Affairs of the Weimar Triangle

Looking at the major challenges ahead, we, the Ministers for European Affairs of France, Germany and Poland reaffirm our joint commitment to take responsibility, to promote answers meeting our citizens' concerns, to strengthen resilience of the European Union and to secure our European future based on EU common founding values.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has most brutally attacked peace and security in Europe. This war is an attack on our European model based on freedom, democracy and a rules-based order. A firm and united reaction of the European Union and its Member States condemning the war, offering shelter to refugees, adopting restrictive measures against Russia and providing support to Ukraine notably in the form of significant military assistance, has been and remains key. It is crucial to continue on this path since the European assistance is essential for Ukraine to continue its fight in defence of its sovereignty and European values. We recognize that helping sustain Ukrainian forces in the long run entails going beyond the provision of equipment, notably by setting up a dedicated European training and assistance mission in the EU for Ukrainian forces that would also ensure maintenance and repair of military equipment.

France, Germany and Poland also reiterate their support for Ukraine's legal proceedings against the Russian Federation including by intervening in Ukraine's proceedings before the International Court of Justice under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which seek to establish that Russia has no lawful basis to take military action in Ukraine on the basis of false allegations of genocide. Moreover, Russia is using hunger as a weapon and taking the world hostage with a food security crisis it has caused and exacerbated. We strongly support the EU initiative "EU Solidarity Lanes" which helps to export Ukraine grain as well as other products and cherish the special commitment of all EU Member States neighboring Ukraine in this regard. France, Germany and Poland reiterate their firm stance with Ukraine and continuous strong support for Ukraine's overall economic, military, social and financial resilience. The European Union civil protection mechanism [EUCPM] proves to be an important tool for coordinated support and united action beyond its borders. We stay committed to continue our humanitarian assistance for the people of Ukraine. As Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine marks a fundamental turning point in EU-Russia relations, we need to re-define key guiding principles of the European Union's policy towards Russia. We also advocate for a strategic approach involving international partners to address the reconstruction of Ukraine in a concerted and sustainable manner. We welcome the agreement by EU Finance Ministers to provide an additional macro financial assistance package of 5 billion Euro, as a clear sign of the EU's continued commitment to support Ukraine's resilience and call to further step up our endeavors in order to reach an expeditious agreement on the remainder of the European Council's 9 billion euro European Council's pledge.

Additionally, our countries are convinced that we have to join efforts to enable the European Union to defend our core values and secure stability against challenges from the outside. Referring to the European Council Conclusions of 23 and 24 June 2022 - which recognized the European perspective of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia and granted the status of candidate country to Ukraine and Moldova - , France, Germany and Poland jointly state that enlargement of the European Union is an important element in this context. Thus, we have

discussed ways to support these countries on their reform path to meet the Copenhagen criteria. We have also agreed on the need to further reflect on internal reforms and compromise solutions to ensure the European Union's capacity to maintain and deepen its own development. In this context, we also see merit in following up on and discussing the final proposals of the Conference on the Future of Europe. Poland, France and Germany attach great importance to the integrity of national and European elections and better resilience against disinformation and interference. We therefore support the Commission's proposal for a regulation on the transparency and targeting of political advertising. We also support a coherent electoral law to be in place for the next European elections 2024.

We reaffirm our full and unequivocal commitment to the EU membership perspective for the six Western Balkans countries. France, Germany and Poland welcome progress reached in the accession process of Albania and North Macedonia. We stand ready to support the reform processes in the region, where progress, notably in the area of rule of law and the fight against corruption, as well as in reconciliation and resolving outstanding bilateral and regional disputes, is of particular importance. We are concerned about the political crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina and call on all parties to ensure fair and free elections on 2 October 2022. We fully support the EU-led Kosovo-Serbia dialogue and stress the need for a comprehensive agreement that allows for Kosovo and Serbia to advance on their respective European paths and contributes to the stability in the region. We call for progress regarding the visa liberalization for Kosovo. Our countries are strongly committed to the Berlin Process as an additional means to foster regional cooperation and EU accession of the Western Balkan countries; we highlight the importance of implementing the historic decision by the six Western Balkan countries to create a Common Regional Market. Given the importance we attach to the region and as a sign of our joint support, we have agreed on a trilateral visit to this region and advocate for further strengthening the ties between the EU and the Western Balkans.

France, Germany and Poland share the view that fostering a wider area of stability and economic prosperity and strengthening resilience in Europe is in the EU's core interest. Thus, we welcome the objective to foster political dialogue and cooperation through a European Political Community that acts as a broader platform to address issues of common interest for European countries across the continent, as discussed at the European Council of 23 June 2022. Reaffirming that this shall not generate a substitute to the EU enlargement process nor double existing institutions, alliances or platforms in Europe, we jointly look forward to continuing this strategic discussion with our EU partners and welcome the holding of a first meeting on 6 October 2022 in Prague.

Russia's war of aggression and use of energy as a geopolitical weapon, notably the stop or significant reduction of gas supplies to certain member states, has raised concerns of people across the EU regarding a possible gas shortage paired with already high energy prices. We share the view that security of supply for our countries, affordability of energy for citizens and economies, and climate and energy transition in line with the Paris Agreement get ever more urgent.

While France, Germany and Poland agree on the need to join efforts also in countering Russian disinformation on the cause of this crisis, we advocate for a concerted approach based on the spirit of European solidarity to develop a successful answer to this immediate and essential challenge to our economies and societies.

We, the Ministers for European Affairs of France, Germany and Poland, aspire the Weimar Triangle, founded as a means to strengthening links between our people and countries in all aspects of life as well as promoting sustainable common structures in Europe, to be a driving force in developing answers to the challenges Europe is confronted with within and beyond its borders today.

Thus, we will continue close political coordination, look forward to our next meeting and will further strengthen civil society cooperation with concrete projects and exchanges to foster bridges and strengthen unity in Europe. We will strive to further develop cooperation between our civil societies, especially between the youth of our three countries, as well as cultural projects and European memory and reconciliation projects, as well as exchanges between young diplomats. We commit ourselves to support decentralized cooperation and we welcome the fact that the cooperation in the Weimar format between our cities and communities has been given new impetus with the reception of refugees from Ukraine. We encourage meetings of young people in the Weimar format with Ukrainian refugees hosted in our countries on EU-related topics and Ukraine's accession to the EU.

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