

Remarks by H.E. Baiba Braže,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia,  
at the Third Parliamentary Summit  
of the International Crimea Platform

24 October 2024  
Riga, Latvia

*Check against delivery*

Madame Speaker Mierina,  
Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Mr. Stefanchuk,  
Dear parliamentarians,  
Dear friends of Ukraine,

Here in Riga, we know the importance of never recognising foreign occupation by an aggressor state, by a brutal colonial power. No matter how bleak the prospects for liberation may seem, no matter how long the occupation may last.

Let me be crystal clear from the start – Latvia will never recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea, Sevastopol or any other region of Ukraine.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Crimea is the symbol of Russian aggression. The war did not start in February 2022. It began in 2014, when Russia bluntly shattered international law by threat and use of force and attacked Ukraine's territorial integrity and independence.

To this day, the human suffering caused by Russian aggression continues to mount. Russia has murdered thousands of civilians, and it continues to attack energy infrastructure, seeking to freeze the Ukrainian people into submission.

Russia continues deportations, including those of Crimean Tatars as well as of stolen Ukrainian children, from the occupied territories to Russia and third countries. As the last remaining colonial power in Europe – Russia seeks to destroy fundamental freedoms, human rights, and our way of life. It is the greatest threat to not only Ukrainian, but European and global security – Russia must be stopped.

The spirit of the Ukrainian people will never be broken. Yet, today, in Riga, we must come together and energise our efforts to help Ukraine achieve victory.

The core purpose of the Crimea Platform is to put an end to the occupation of Crimea. The Third Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform reconfirms our commitment to stand with Ukraine in highlighting Crimea as an indivisible part of Ukraine. I appreciate the tireless work done by the Ukrainian President's Office and the Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea as well as of the Crimea Tatar community, and the Crimea Platform Expert Network.

We must provide justice to Ukraine and justice to the people of Crimea. There can be no justice for the Ukrainian people without accountability for crimes committed by Russia.

We know who they are – we know the names of the murderers, rapists, and the architects of this aggression. They will face their justice.

We must make progress in establishing a Special Tribunal with cross-regional support to hold Russia accountable. Failure to act would undermine the prospects for a just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

The principle of respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of states is a vital element of Ukraine's Peace Formula. In this regard, Latvia will host a high-level discussion on restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity, which will take place right after the Summit.

Dear friends,

Our objective has not changed – our support for a Ukrainian victory is unwavering. We will continue to provide Ukraine with military, financial and humanitarian support – and we will continue pushing our allies and partners to do the same.

Latvia's overall support to Ukraine will reach at least 830 MEUR [0.7% of GDP 2022 to 2024] by the end of 2024 committed to devote 0.25% of GDP to military aid; train over 4000 Ukrainian military both in 2024 and 2025;

We believe in a world where Ukraine has prevailed, in a world where every last occupant has been expelled from the Ukrainian territory in a world where Ukraine is whole and free, part of the EU and NATO.

Crimea is Ukraine!

Krima ir un vienmēr būs Ukraina!