

Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers Meeting on the conclusion of the work of the Core Group on the Establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine

(“Lviv Statement”)

(9 May 2025, Lviv, Ukraine)

We, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other representatives of the States participating in the Core Group on the Establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine (the Core Group), convened today, 9 May 2025, in Lviv, a city that has played a significant role in the formation of international legal scholars who laid the foundations of modern international criminal law,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/ES-11/1 of 2 March 2022, entitled "Aggression against Ukraine", which deplores in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine in violation of Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/ES-11/6 of 23 February 2023, entitled "Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine",

Expressing their appreciation for the work done by the legal experts within the Core Group on the draft legal instruments necessary for the establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine since January 2023,

Taking into account the Vienna-Riga Statement of the Core Group of 22 November 2024,

Guided by the shared objective of ensuring accountability for the crime of aggression committed against Ukraine,

We hereby declare the following:

1. We welcome the completion of the technical work on the draft legal instruments necessary to establish within the framework of the Council of Europe a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine.
2. We reaffirm the critical importance of the Special Tribunal in delivering justice by holding accountable those who bear the greatest responsibility for this most serious international crime committed against Ukraine.
3. We underline that once established, in accordance with its Statute, the Special Tribunal will conduct its proceedings in full respect of international law and human rights, with the aim of securing accountability for the crime of aggression and strengthening the international legal order.
4. We express gratitude to all those who have actively contributed to the preparatory work on the draft legal instruments necessary for the establishment of the Special Tribunal, in particular the legal advisers participating in the Core Group.

5. We underline the central role of the Council of Europe in establishing the Special Tribunal and acknowledge the significant contribution of the European Commission and the European External Action Service, including their work on the draft Agreement between Ukraine and the Council of Europe on the establishment of the Special Tribunal, the draft Statute of the Special Tribunal, and the draft Enlarged Partial Agreement outlining the modalities of support for the Special Tribunal, including its funding and other administrative aspects.

6. We reaffirm our continued commitment to the process of establishing the Special Tribunal within the framework of the Council of Europe, to the swift commencement of its operations, and to supporting its effective functioning.

7. With a view to broadening international support for the Special Tribunal, we call upon other states and international organizations to join our efforts and actively support the Special Tribunal's activities.

8. Those of us who represent member States of the Council of Europe look forward to the meeting of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Luxembourg on 13-14 May 2025, which will constitute the next step toward formalizing the establishment of the Special Tribunal within the framework of the Council of Europe.

* This statement was agreed in the presence of Kaja Kallas, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, and Michael McGrath, Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection.