EU-Western Balkans Summit

Brussels Declaration, 18 December 2024

We, the leaders of the European Union (EU) and of its Member States, in consultation with our Western Balkans partners, today concluded the following:

1. In the context of the radical change of the global geopolitical situation, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East, and at the start of the new EU leadership cycle the strategic partnership between the European Union and the Western Balkans is more important than ever.
2. We share a common future and face urgent challenges that we can only overcome together. We owe it to our citizens to build a future of peace and prosperity, based on shared principles and values, and common interests.
3. The future of the Western Balkans is in our Union. We once again reconfirm our full and unequivocal commitment to the European Union membership perspective of the Western Balkans.
4. Enlargement is a geostrategic investment in peace, security, stability and prosperity, as stated in the Granada Declaration. There is a new dynamism in the enlargement process and notable progress since our last Summit. The acceleration of the accession process, based on credible reforms by partners, fair and rigorous conditionality and the principle of own merits, is in our mutual interest.
5. The EU welcomes the resolve of the Western Balkans partners to respect and commit to core European values and principles, in line with international law and the restated commitment to the primacy of democracy, fundamental rights and values and the rule of law. The rule of law, freedom of expression, independent and pluralistic media, gender equality, and a strong role for civil society are crucial to ensure a functioning democracy. In this respect, actions will speak louder than words as partners take ownership and implement the necessary reforms, notably in the area of fundamentals. The EU calls on partners to guarantee the rights and equal treatment of persons belonging to minorities. We will continue to support our partners' efforts to fight organised crime and corruption.

6. The geopolitical context in Europe demands unity and solidarity from us all, in firm support of Ukraine and in defence of the international rules-based order. Standing together with the EU remains a clear sign of our Western Balkan partners' strategic orientation. The EU will continue to invest in multilateralism and cooperate with partners to uphold international law. In this respect, we commend those Western Balkan partners that are already fully aligned with the EU's CFSP and urge those that have not yet done so to follow suit. We stress the importance of full implementation and improved enforcement of restrictive measures and the prevention of their circumvention. We welcome partners' continued commitment to the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), including the contribution to EU's missions and operations.

7. We need to strengthen our cooperation and strategic partnerships in migration management, which is a shared challenge and responsibility and a key priority. While acknowledging progress made, further resolute action is needed to align visa policy, combat the smuggling of migrants, trafficking in human beings and all forms of serious and organised crime. We commit to reinforce our cooperation on counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism.

8. The EU is committed to bringing the Western Balkans closer to the EU already during the enlargement process. Their gradual integration has already started in different policy areas, preparing the ground for accession and bringing concrete benefits to citizens, in a reversible and merit-based manner.

9. The Growth Plan for the Western Balkans has the potential to double economic growth in the region over the next decade. It will accelerate socio-economic convergence between the Western Balkans and the EU, provided partners implement the EU-related reforms. We commend five of the partners for the preparation and submission of their Reform Agendas, approved by the Commission, which will be the basis of implementation of the Growth Plan. We commend and congratulate those partners who have already joined the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA), which will lower the costs of transactions for people. We look forward to others joining soon. We welcome the joint work done towards the modernisation of 11 priority crossing points in the region and encourage its continuation at an accelerated pace. The EU counts on the Western Balkans partners to advance regional economic integration through the Common Regional Market (CRM), which is a stepping stone and a precondition for closer integration with the EU single market.

10. The EU will continue to support its Western Balkan partners to help mitigate the impact that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has on their economies, societies, and security. We will continue our support through the Instrument of Pre-accession assistance, the Economic and Investment Plan, the Energy Support Package, and the European Peace Facility.

11. The EU reaffirms its commitment to further develop and strengthen dialogue and cooperation in security and defence with the Western Balkans. We welcome that **Security and Defence Partnerships** were agreed with the first partners this year, and that the European Peace Facility support is reinforcing security and resilience in the region. The EU will continue to support the region in tackling hybrid and cyber threats as well as foreign information manipulation and interference such as Russian narratives and disinformation about Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

12. Reconciliation, inclusive regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are at the heart of the European Union. Implementing international agrements in good faith and with tangible results, including the Prespa Agreement with Greece and the Treaty on Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation with Bulgaria, is therefore essential. Decisive further efforts are still required to foster reconciliation and regional stability, as well as to find and to implement definitive, inclusive and binding solutions to partners' regional and bilateral disputes and issues rooted in the legacy of the past, in line with international law and established principles, including the Agreement on Succession Issues, and the remaining cases of missing persons and war crimes issues.

13. The absence of a normalisation of relations between Pristina and Belgrade is holding back both partners. The Agreements reached in the EU-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue must be implemented, in particular the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation and its Annex. The EU recalls that a precondition for the support under the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans is for the parties to engage constructively with measurable progress and tangible results in the normalisation of their relations.

14. The EU remains the region's closest partner, main investor and trading partner and its main donor. We count on our Western Balkan partners to make this visible with the public and to demonstrate their commitment to EU values and reforms through words and actions, supported by EU strategic communications.

15. We look forward to the first European Political Community Summit to take place in the Western Balkans region, in Tirana next year, following the successful Summit held in Budapest in October, as this platform continues to provide an important forum for in-depth exchanges between the leaders on peace, security, stability and economic development for our continent.

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16. We welcome our Western Balkans partners' alignment with this declaration and its Annex on deliverables and priorities.

Annex to the Declaration

DELIVERABLES AND PRIORITIES

1. ENHANCING INTEGRATION WITH THE WESTERN BALKANS THROUGH THE GROWTH PLAN

- Under the EUR 6 billion **Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans,** each partner needs to ratify the two agreements, which are necessary to receive the initial pre-financing payments.
- The Western Balkans partners are to implement their respective **Reform Agendas** and progress on conditionality specified under the Reform and Growth Facility. The one Reform Agenda still missing should be submitted to the Commission as soon as possible.
- The Western Balkan partners are to continue implementation of the **Common Regional Market** under the coordination of the Regional Cooperation Council, and maintain constructive cooperation in the context of the **Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA**).
- The Western Balkans partners are to swiftly ratify and implement the **fifth mobility Agreement on Access to Higher Education and Admission to Higher Studies in the Western Balkans**, and to fully implement without any further delays the previous agreements that are still outstanding. The missing ratification of the agreement on travel with ID cards should take place as soon as possible.
- The EU stands ready to examine further proposals for enhancing the economic integration of the Western Balkans with the EU made under the Growth Plan, subject to the partners' implementation of their Reform Agendas, alignment with the EU's single market rules and the opening of their relevant sectors and areas to all of their neighbours, in line with the CRM, while fully preserving the integrity of the EU single market and a level playing field.

Transport

- To advance their integration, the Western Balkans partners should proceed in an ambitious manner with reforms in the area of sustainable **transport,** in line with their commitments under the Transport Community Treaty. The Western Balkans partners are expected to adopt the new action plans for acquis alignment on rail, road, road safety, waterborne transport and transport facilitation.
- The EU will support the Western Balkans partners' **integration in the EU road and rail transport** market on the basis of the adoption of the relevant EU *acquis*, with particular focus on reform measures under the Reform Agendas.
- To make border crossings faster, more efficient, safe and secure, the EU and Western Balkans partners should work to implement **EU-Western Balkans Green Lanes**, with a view to applying those on all relevant borders, while fully respecting the EU *acquis* and procedures.
- In coordination with neighbouring EU Member States, the Western Balkans partners should work on implementing **the Roadmap for Enhancing Green Lanes, Improved Customs Cooperation and Modernisation of Border/Common Crossing Points,** laying the groundwork for the modernisation of the 11 priority crossing points.
- The Commission is invited to make funding available under the **Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme** for the 11 priority crossing points.
- To advance sustainable connectivity, the Western Balkans partners should undertake further efforts towards the modernisation of their transport **networks**, based on TEN-T standards. They should prioritise projects on extended core and comprehensive TEN-T network, thereby rehabilitating and further expanding passenger rail connections in the region and towards EU neighbours. The EU will support this work.

Green Agenda

- The Western Balkans partners should **fully implement the Green Agenda** for the region, including the climate commitments under the Paris Agreement, the Energy Community and the Sofia Declaration on a Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. The Western Balkans partners should agree a new Action Plan targeted to key reforms and projects.
- The EU will continue to support this work, including through the **EU4Green** project. In the context of revising the Action Plan, the Western Balkans partners should identify strategic needs that could be covered by EU4Green.
- The EU will continue to support the region in order to further develop the **circular economy**, addressing in particular waste, recycling, sustainable production and efficient use of resources, to protect their **biodiversity** and the ecosystem services, aiming to protect and restore the natural wealth of the region, and **fight the pollution** of air, water and soil, a matter of high concern for citizens of the Western Balkans.
- The Western Balkans partners should work on **decarbonising** the region. The EU will support this work, including through technical assistance.
- The EU will support the region in developing and implementing **climate and energy transition policy**, including carbon pricing based on robust monitoring, the reporting and verification of emissions in order to accelerate the green transition and deliver the necessary emissions reductions in a reliable, cost-efficient, and just manner and to ease convergence towards the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS). The Western Balkans partners should further align their climate laws with the *acquis*, and adopt National Energy and Climate Plans. The Western Balkans partners shall advance on the alignment with EU energy *acquis* for integration of their market into the single European market, including for electricity via market coupling.
- To deliver on the ambitious and vital objectives of the Green Agenda, Western Balkans beneficiaries are called upon to dedicate sufficient and skilled human resources to this project.

Digital Single Market

- The EU and the Western Balkans partners should pursue work on integration in the EU's **Digital Single Market** and continue the incorporation of the relevant digital *acquis*.
- In keeping with the **reduction of data roaming costs** between the EU and the Western Balkans partners as of 1 October 2023, the Western Balkans partners should continue implementing the agreed glidepath of voluntarily lowering charges. Further efforts are needed to develop a long-term roaming arrangement that would include the region in the EU's "Roam like at Home" area.
- The Western Balkans partners should step-up their efforts in the area of **digital transformation and media**, notably in the area of cybersecurity reforms, by aligning their legislations with the NIS2 Directive and ensuring the secure deployment of 5G networks through the comprehensive implementation of the EU 5G Cybersecurity Toolbox.
- The Western Balkans partners should advance implementation of the **WiFi4WB initiative** that provides free access to WiFi connectivity for citizens and visitors in public spaces in municipalities across the region. The Commission will support the roll-out of this initiative in 2025-2026 through the EU4Digital project.
- The Western Balkans partners should operationalise the **EU Digital Innovation Hubs**, which will serve as centres of excellence designed to provide expertise and assistance to SMEs on digitalisation also building on the experience of Member States in that regard. The EU will provide the financing for this from the Digital Europe Programme funding.
- **Data flows** between the EU and the Western Balkans should be facilitated, through the alignment of the partners on the EU's personal data protection standards and relevant acquis.

Industrial supply chains

- The **Western Balkans partners** should pursue work towards becoming part of the EU value chain for **Critical Raw Materials**, including by developing relevant industries, aligned with EU standards and opportunities for market access.
- The Western Balkan partners should pursue closer cooperation in relevant industrial sectors with the EU in order to strengthen synergies and business integration. This integration would support national industrial objectives and targets, enhance regional competitiveness, and attract sustainable investment in the region.

2. BUILDING A ROBUST ECONOMIC FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE AND TACKLING TOGETHER THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF RUSSIA'S WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

Energy

- The EU will continue its engagement through the Instrument of Pre-accession assistance, the Economic and Investment Plan, and the Energy Support Package.
- The Western Balkans partners should use the EU's mechanism for joint **purchases of gas and LNG** in order to reduce their dependency on Russian gas.
- The Western Balkans should use the opportunity of the EU opening its **electricity market** to the Western Balkans partners, subject to their pursuit of necessary regulatory reforms.

Economic and Investment Plan (EIP)

- The **support provided through the EIP** comprises of EUR 9 billion in grant funding from IPA III and up to EUR 20 billion in investments for the period 2021-2027, and is in an advanced stage of implementation. Of the almost EUR 30 billion investment package for the region, the EU has so far approved EUR 5.4 billion in grants for investments worth more than EUR 17.55 billion, including for 68 flagship investment projects under the EIP.
- Implementation of the **Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) and the Green and Digital Agendas for the Western Balkans** partners will continue and should build on best practices in the EU to ensure the cost-effectiveness of the Plans. The Western Balkans partners will continue to prepare relevant investment and project proposals for implementation, including through the Western Balkans Investment Framework.

3. ACCELERATING AND FURTHER DEEPENING EU'S POLITICAL AND POLICY ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WESTERN BALKANS, INCLUDING ON COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY (CFSP)

Political engagement

- The EU will **accelerate and further deepen its political and policy engagement with the Western Balkans partners**, including, inter alia, through the holding of regular EU-Western Balkans Summits, the participation of partners in high-level EU events and regular CFSP dialogues, increasing cooperation in multilateral fora, and the exchange of information ahead of and after the Foreign Affairs Council meetings.
- The Western Balkans partners who have not yet done so should make swift and sustained progress towards **full alignment with and implementation of the EU's CFSP**, including with the EU's restrictive measures and their enforcement.

Cooperation in security and defence

- The EU will contribute to security in the region, including through its CSDP operation **EUFOR Althea and its EULEX** mission.
- **The first Security and Defence Partnerships** covering the full spectrum of bilateral cooperation in security and defence were agreed upon with two partners this year. The EU stands ready to expand this new political framework to other partners that align fully with the EU's CFSP.
- The EU will continue to work with the region to further develop its defence capabilities and capacities, including through the **European Peace Facility**. To date, three Western Balkans partners benefit from **bilateral support** under the European Peace Facility. The European Peace Facility also supports the Balkan Medical Task Force. Since 2022, an assistance measure worth EUR 6 million contributes to the capability and capacity development objectives of the standing organisation and its non-EU participating nations. In total, since its creation in 2021, European Peace Facility support to the Western Balkans has amounted to EUR 61 million, in line with the **mutual commitment to strengthen dialogue and cooperation in security and defence.**
- The Western Balkans partners should continue the development of effective instruments for **Western Balkans regional cooperation in the area of security and defence**.

Building resilience

- **The EU will continue to enhance collective cybersecurity in collaboration with the Western Balkans partners**, including through coordinated diplomatic efforts, operational and technical support, and the involvement of the region into EU structures, policies and processes.
- The Western Balkans partners are encouraged to benefit from the **EU Cybersecurity Reserve** in the event of significant or large scale cybersecurity incidents. The Reserve will become available to them upon formal adoption of the Cyber Solidarity Act. In this regard, they should consider initiating the amendment of the current association agreements to the Digital Europe Programme in order to enable them to use this mechanism.
- The Western Balkans partners should step up their efforts to establish **cybersecurity legal frameworks**.
- Partners who have not yet done so, are invited to appoint **Cyber Ambassadors** as soon as possible to further enable cooperation in the area of cyber diplomacy.
- The **Western Balkans Cyber Capacity Centre**, which aims at becoming a regional hub for cyber capacity building, with and for the benefit of the Western Balkans region, will continue to promote regional cooperation and coordination in building cyber resilience, through trainings in cybersecurity, the fight against cybercrime and cyber diplomacy.
- The EU will step up cooperation with the region in the context of the **EU Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox**, notably on tools to prevent, deter and respond to malicious cyber activities, including through diplomatic measures.
- The Western Balkans partners should increase cooperation with the **European Union Agency for Cybersecurity** (ENISA) and the **European Cybersecurity Competence Centre** (ECCC), and facilitate the role of the **Regional Cooperation Council**.

- The EU will support the Western Balkans partners in countering hybrid threats, in particular **Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI)**, such as Russian narratives and disinformation about Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. In this respect, the EU will further strengthen cooperation with Western Balkans partners to **build resilience**, also by fostering media professionalism and media literacy, and by increasing the impact of **strategic communication** about EU-Western Balkans relations and the enlargement process in particular.
- The Western Balkans partners should **communicate** objectively and unambiguously on the EU, and further engage in closing space for foreign interference and information manipulation, including disinformation.

Social dimension of EU integration: People to people contacts and measures for young

- The new branch of the **College of Europe** in Tirana has been launched, and has started to provide students with expert knowledge on EU affairs while aiding in the dissemination/harnessing of regional expertise. The College of Europe will also launch the first Diplomatic Programme for enlargement partners in February 2025, with the participation of young diplomats from the Western Balkans and with the support from the EU.
- The alignment with the **European Pillar of Social Rights** is key for a people-centred approach on the path to the EU integration of future Member States. Well- functioning labour market structures and institutions, effective social protection systems and strong social dialogue are crucial for a successful EU accession process.
- The EU will continue to support the reforms and **capacity-building of public administrations** in the Western Balkans, notably through grants and twinning, and through the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA).
- The Western Balkans partners should accelerate implementation of the **Western Balkans agenda on innovation, research, education, culture, youth and sport**.
- The EU will continue to gradually involve the Western Balkans partners in EU programmes such as **Erasmus+** and **the European Solidarity Corps** and to open participation under the **European Universities initiative** to all Western Balkans partners with the aim of creating further opportunities for **young people**.

- The Western Balkans partners should implement the **Youth Guarantee** and the Innovation Support Measures, aiming to reduce skill-mismatch and brain drain in the region.
- The **Regional Youth Cooperation Office** (RYCO) will work to enhance cooperation and the active participation of young people in the Western Balkans, supporting dialogue towards reconciliation.

4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION, COUNTERTERRORISM, FIGHT AGAINST ORGANISED CRIME AND CORRUPTION, AND JUSTICE

Migration management

- Significant progress has been made on the implementation of the EU Action Plan on the Western Balkans. Thanks to coordinated action, the overall **migratory pressure** on the Western Balkans route has decreased by 80% in the first ten months of 2024 compared to 2023. However, additional efforts are required to further **align with the EU acquis and the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum,** as the route remains active.
- Important EU financial support is allowing partners to strengthen their migration systems based on a comprehensive approach that reflects their accession perspective. Support is provided to **enhance asylum and reception systems**, **strengthen border protection**, **fight organised crime** groups and other criminal networks, in particular those engaged in migrant smuggling and work towards returns from the Western Balkans to the countries of origin. The EU welcomes the signing, with some of the partners, of administrative agreements granting them the observer status in the European Migration Network.
- The EU welcomes the fact that people from the entire Western Balkans region are now able to travel **visa free** to the Schengen area.
- The EU welcomes the progress made towards the swift alignment with **EU visa policy** by several Western Balkans partners, including the commitments taken in the Reform Agendas under the Growth Plan, and on the rolling out new Frontex Status Agreements. These efforts should continue.

Irregular migration

- The EU and the Western Balkans partners will continue their joint efforts to fully implement the **EU Action Plan on the Western Balkans**, including on border management, combatting the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking, developing returns to countries of origin, and ensuring access to international protection for those in need.
- The Western Balkans partners should further strengthen their involvement in the **European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats** (EMPACT).
- The Western Balkans partners who have not yet done so should sign administrative agreements for observer status in the **European Migration Network**.
- The Western Balkans partners should progress further on their swift **alignment with the EU visa policy**, in particular for countries presenting irregular migration or security risks to the EU, in order to prevent abuse of EU Member States' migration and asylum systems.
- Western Balkans partners will, in close cooperation with the EU, continue to **enhance their return systems**, including by increasing cooperation with key countries of origin. The EU will continue providing financial and technical support including through **European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).**
- The pending status agreements allowing the **Frontex** to deploy additional European Border and Coast Guard teams in the Western Balkans should be concluded as soon as possible and all status agreements should be used to the maximum in order to ensure strong cooperation, including effective deployments of Frontex personnel to support the partners.
- The Western Balkans partners should further intensify cooperation with the **EU Agency for Asylum and with Europol.**

Fight against terrorism

- The EU will continue to cooperate with the Western Balkans partners in countering terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms, including to address the threats related to **violent right-wing extremism**, **violent extremist content** spreading online and **possible attacks on critical infrastructure and public spaces**.
- A new **Joint Action Plan on Counter Terrorism for the Western Balkans** will be proposed to the Western Balkans partners in the first semester of 2025, and it is to be endorsed at the next EU-Western Balkans Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs.

Fight against organised crime

- The EU and the Western Balkans partners will continue to address serious and organised crime, in particular **money laundering, corruption, firearms trafficking and drug trafficking**, through cooperation facilitated by EMPACT, while focusing on the most threatening criminal networks.
- The Western Balkans partners should increase proactive **participation in EMPACT** activities and **cooperation with Europol**.
- The EU will support the Western Balkans partners in stepping up their efforts to implement relevant reforms and in **enhancing cross border law enforcement** and **criminal justice cooperation** within the region, within Europe and beyond, notably with Latin America. The Western Balkans partners should use all of the training opportunities provided by the EU law enforcement training agency.
- The Western Balkans partners should establish a **strong track record** of investigation, prosecutions and final convictions related to corruption, organised crime, and money laundering cases, while improving cooperation between different jurisdictions and ensuring both the rights of victims of crime and the rights of suspects and accused persons, in line with the EU acquis and international standards.
- The Western Balkans partners' law enforcement agencies and judiciary systems should systematically use **financial investigations** in organised crime cases, and have the **necessary powers** to trace, identify, freeze and confiscate assets in line with the EU acquis.

- In the context of the devastating consequences of drug use and **drug trafficking** for the health and security of our societies, the EU and the Western Balkans partners will continue and intensify joint efforts through an evidence-based, integrated, multidisciplinary and balanced approach, which should be enshrined in our respective drugs strategies.
- The Western Balkans partners should establish and fully operationalise **National Drugs Observatories and National Early Warning Systems** in order to further develop their cooperation with the European Union Drugs Agency, with which additional Working Arrangements should be concluded.
- The Western Balkans partners should eradicate the **trafficking and proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW)** and cooperate at a high level to tackle firearms smuggling within EMPACT, i.e. through an active commitment to the Joint Action Days Southeast Europe. The EU will continue to support the Western Balkans, including, through two recently adopted regional projects worth respectively €4 million and €3.8 million for the implementation of the WB SALW Roadmap and for support to arms control in general.
- The Western Balkans partners should pursue implementation of the revised roadmap regarding the small arms and light weapons, recently endorsed at the 2024 EU-WB Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home affairs in Budva.

Justice

- Following their inclusion for the first time in the **Commission 2024 Rule of Law** report, four candidate countries from the Western Balkans were invited to the September 2024 General Affairs Council to discuss their respective rule of law trends. The EU looks forward to including the remaining partners in this exercise, once the necessary conditions have been met.
- The Western Balkans partners should adopt or maintain a **regulatory and institutional framework**, including an independent data protection supervisory authority, to implement effectively the **data protection standards** necessary for operational cooperation with Eurojust, in line with the 2018 Joint Action Plan on Counter-Terrorism for the Western Balkans.

- The Western Balkans partners should enhance their cooperation with Eurojust and use all of the opportunities offered to form Joint Investigation Teams on cross-border criminal cases.
- The Western Balkans partners who have not yet done so should establish working arrangements and pursue cooperation with the **European Public Prosecutors Office** (EPPO).
- The Western Balkans partners should ratify and implement international conventions in the field of **judicial cooperation in criminal and in civil matters**, in particular those developed by the Hague Conference on Private International Law.
- The Western Balkans partners should adopt **e-justice strategies**, update existing ones, and continue to advance steadily in the **digitalisation of the judicial systems**, including the establishment of fully functioning case management and information systems, making full use of all available funds.
- The Western Balkans partners should adopt the rules and administrative practices required to ensure that **victims of crime** can **access justice**, receive the necessary **support and protection** and may **participate in criminal proceedings**.
- The Western Balkans partners should **support Eurojust** in the coordination of investigation and prosecution of war crimes and the other most serious **crimes committed in Ukraine**, and to contribute in-kind expertise.