



Ljubljana, 23 February 2022

Dear President of the European Council,

A good thirty years ago, at the end of the Cold War, we agreed to work together to meet the historic expectations of a new era of democracy, peace and unity in Europe. We thus laid the normative foundations of the post-Cold War order, which is based as well on the equal dignity of sovereign states. This in turn serves as the backbone for their cooperation to jointly address the needs and aspirations of our peoples as well as strengthen peace and security in Europe. The cornerstones of the security order of a Europe whole, free and at peace with itself include refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and fully respecting the freedom of States to choose their own security arrangements and relations.

Of particular importance in this regard is the Budapest Memorandum (1994), which is now being blatantly violated by one of its signatories, namely Russia. In exchange for Ukraine's elimination of all nuclear weapons from its territory, the signatories of the Memorandum offered Ukraine security assurances against threats or use of force against its territorial integrity or political independence. Furthermore, they committed to respect Ukraine's sovereignty and its existing borders as well as refrain from economic coercion designed to subordinate Ukraine to their own interests. However, Russia has been in breach of all these commitments since 2014. In addition, the recent Kremlin decision to recognise the two separatist territories in Ukraine as independent entities, as well as its already executed decrees ordering a so-called peacekeeping mission into these territories alongside the massive build-up of Russian forces near its border with Ukraine, represent further blatant violations of international law and an obvious escalation of aggression and hostilities against Ukraine.

All the above-mentioned actions, activities and decisions of the Kremlin pose a direct and immediate threat not only to Ukraine but also to peace and stability in Europe. This threat must be met with a strong and united response, including the introduction of immediate sanctions.

However, we have to go much further. **The European Council should strategically assess the matter and take bold political decisions.**

**His Excellency  
Mr Charles Michel  
President of the European Council  
BRUSSELS**

After World War II, it was the North Atlantic Alliance that established a military balance with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, thus securing Western Europe. However, final success in the Cold War was not won by the use of weapons but by the values of the West and its way of life. It was freedom and political pluralism exercised in democracies and protected by the rule of law, economic liberty that brought about prosperity and defeated Soviet communism. People tried to escape from East to West. "Return to Europe" was the rallying call of the era.

The Kremlin fears a repetition of this process. It fears comparisons in 10 years, when prosperity and freedom in Ukraine would directly affect the internal political developments in the Russian Federation.

Also now, we once again need to strike a balance, prevent a military threat, and defend European order. Strong and determined transatlantic unity is a necessary foundation for this. To this end, we need to upgrade and expand the European Union Advisory Mission Ukraine. However, this is not enough. Extraordinary circumstances require extraordinary action.

The EU must not be relegated to the side-lines in Russian-US talks. It has to respond to this challenge to the best of its ability, with courage and a strategic, long-term view. The EU needs to ensure that assisting, enabling, and protecting the call to "the return to Europe" continues to be its defining mission. It needs to provide the Ukrainians with the hope and motivation to persevere in their defence of their homeland, sovereignty, and democracy. It needs to help them continue building a strong, vibrant, democratic, and prosperous Ukraine.

**Can the EU successfully respond to this historic challenge? It can and it should. The EU possesses the knowledge and experience to carry out a strategic solution: the well-developed instrument called enlargement. We need to draw up an ambitious and tangible plan for Ukraine's rapid integration into the EU by 2030.**

The plan must be precise, with clearly defined steps, time lines, and a guarantee of membership by 2030 provided that the necessary conditions are met. The first phase of the plan must be the decision to immediately recognise European membership perspective for Ukraine and grant it EU candidate status after the submission of its EU membership application. The EU's procedural, administrative, and institutional framework should be adapted to this task. Massive financial resources need to be mobilized to assist the process. We are confident that the EU's rich experience with various enlargement waves and processes, which we now need to draw on, should ensure that we are ready to take on this historic challenge and responsibility.

The same plan needs to be drawn up for Georgia, Moldova and all of our Western Balkan partners, that already have a clear European perspective.

The reservations that may arise from the fact that Ukraine does not control all of its territory cannot be an argument against this. The EU has already proved that such obstacles can be properly addressed.

The process itself can only have positive effects:

1. In this manner, the EU focuses on continuing its fundamental historical mission in alignment with its values and principles.
2. The people of Ukraine will be given strategic hope as well as a motive to persevere in the defence of their homeland, sovereignty and democracy. Realistic membership expectations will help focus and motivate the efforts needed to resolutely pursue and implement the necessary reforms. This will contribute decisively to stopping the demographic decline and the flight of capital in Ukraine, which will render it attractive for foreign investments, and facilitate its economic and social development.

How would such a plan affect our relations with Russia?

The process of European integration and the accession of European countries that wish to be members of the European Union are not directed against anyone. They are not directed against the Russian people and do not threaten Russia in any way.

Ukraine's accession to the EU will contribute decisively to the growth of its prosperity, the well being of its population, and the strength of its economy. This will have a strategic impact on the attitude of the Russian population towards the EU and thus Ukraine, as Russia will also benefit from increased opportunities offered by increased economic and trade activity with an enlarged and vibrant EU.

Even after the accession of new members to the EU, including Ukraine, the EU will remain open to cooperation with the Russian people. The intensity of this cooperation will depend solely on its willingness to join the family according to the agreed common basis, which is also fundamental to the EU Member States. In this manner, it can also lead to constructing a strategic partnership between the EU and the Russian Federation, a goal we once set ourselves and for which the EU remains open. Above all, the EU's plan also leaves its doors open for Russia, if their citizens one day express the desire to "Return to Europe".

It is time for quick and courageous decisions. The struggle for Europe is ongoing. The historical lesson of the last two decades to be learned is that if the EU is not enlarging, somebody else is. Now we are paying a price for ignoring this. Let us learn from it, as the cost of ignorance will only increase in the future.

Please accept, dear President, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



**Janez Janša**  
Prime Minister



**Mateusz Morawiecki**  
Prime Minister

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