

Speech

National Statement by Tánaiste Micheál Martin at the Ukraine Recovery Conference, London, 21 June 2023

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I would like to thank the British and Ukrainian governments for convening this important and timely conference.

Ireland's support to Ukraine, a sovereign and independent country, is unwavering.

We have stood with Ukraine since the earliest days of Russia's brutal war of aggression. Today, I affirm our commitment to support them for as long as necessary.

I have witnessed at first hand the destruction that Russia has wrought on its peaceful neighbour. There is no doubt that Russia's targeted and indiscriminate attacks on residential neighbourhoods and civilian infrastructure are designed to terrorise the people of Ukraine.

The destruction of the Kakhovka Dam is yet another war crime which shows the depths to which this desperate authoritarian regime is willing to go.

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They want us all to grow tired of the conflict. They want us to let them repeat the model of stolen territories, expelled populations and frozen front lines which they have implemented so often in the past.

It is over sixteen months since the Putin regime launched this phase of their imperial assault against the values of democracy.

Yet the will of the people of Ukraine remains as strong as ever – and our commitment to standing with them must not waver.

This latest humanitarian crisis in southern Ukraine is placing extraordinary pressure on an already vulnerable population. We responded immediately in Ireland by allocating one million euro to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This will support the Ukrainian Red Cross in providing much-needed assistance locally to those most impacted by this catastrophe.

Overall since February 2022, Ireland has provided 185 million euro in bilateral assistance to Ukraine. This includes 63 million euro in stabilisation and humanitarian support and approximately 122 million euro of non-lethal military assistance via the European Peace Facility.

In addition, as a country and as a people, we are hosting almost 90,000 Ukrainians displaced by this war. For context, this represents 1.8% of our national population.

Time and time again, we have been inspired by the tremendous resilience shown by the people of Ukraine. That same determination and resolve will be needed to rebuild their country, with support from international partners, including Ireland. Each of us bringing our national strengths and capacities to bear.

Civil society and the private sector will also have an indispensable part to play. Ireland is a strong advocate for civil society's role in ensuring that our collective efforts are transparent, accountable, and truly inclusive.

As I informed both the European Parliament and European Council last year, Ireland strongly supports Ukraine's European future. Investments aligned with the EU reform agenda will be key to supporting its accession process.

While Russia's reprehensible campaign of destruction and devastation continues, we must remain focused on putting in place the necessary structures and mechanisms for a successful reconstruction effort. Today's conference is an important further step in that process.

I am in no doubt as to the scale and complexity of the task before us. But together we will rebuild Ukraine's infrastructure, its culture, and its society. Together, we will ensure that a free, independent and prosperous Ukraine is firmly anchored in its European path. We will ensure that Ukraine's wonderful and diverse culture is protected and that its recovery will stand as a monument to a moment when we all stood together in support of shared values and the freedom of a proud and historic European nation.

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