

The CPMR stands by Ukraine in full solidarity

The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) brings together more than 150 Regions from 24 States from the European Union and beyond. It has campaigned in favour of a more balanced development of the European territory since its creation in 1973. The CPMR stands for European solidarity, cooperation between territories, and democracy at local and regional level.

We, the Member Regions of the CPMR Political Bureau:

1. **Condemn** with the strongest possible terms the unprovoked Russian Federation invasion of Ukraine.
2. **Stand** by Ukraine and its innocent people who are suffering unbearable acts of barbarism unleashed upon them in a war that no one wants but one man, resulting in millions of women and children having to flee their country.
3. **Stand** with Kherson Region, Ukrainian member of the CPMR, in solidarity and laments the eviction of the elected mayors by Russian occupation forces.
4. **Condemn** in that regard the recent kidnapping of the mayors of the cities of Dniprorudne and Melitopol by Russian forces
5. **Reiterate** our unwavering support for Ukrainian local and regional authorities and for the territorial integrity of Ukraine. We recall the illegal nature of the military attack, which is in clear breach of international law and greatly threatens peace, security and stability in Europe
6. **Stress** that local and regional authorities are at the frontline of the first reception of refugees and the importance of a true multilevel governance approach in that regard. The voluntary pledges and reception capacities of regional and local authorities willing to receive those in need of protection should be considered in any EU solidarity mechanism.
7. **Praise** the bravery of the Ukrainian people who are fighting for freedom and democracy and against a regime that rejects and actively tries to undermine our rules-based world order and values. We praise the few brave Russians who dare to make their protests heard.
8. **Commend** the EU for its unity in the face of the Ukraine war, and for stepping up solidarity through direct humanitarian aid, emergency civil protection assistance, and by allowing those fleeing the war to receive immediate protection.
9. **Welcome**, therefore, the European Commission CARE (Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe) package introducing flexibility for Cohesion Policy funding to be used towards emergency support to Ukrainian refugees. Cohesion Policy is the expression of European solidarity at its finest.
10. **Call**, consequently, on EU institutions:
 - **to boost** European strategic autonomy in the long-term to make Europe less vulnerable to external shocks. We acknowledge current efforts to develop a plan to make Europe independent from Russian fossil fuels (Repower EU).
 - **to consider** equipping itself with a permanent crisis reserve to cushion future emergencies complementing or reinforcing the existing contingency and flexibility instruments.
 - **to fully associate** local and regional authorities in any reflection leading to changes of EU policy direction and the development of new policies, following the recently introduced principle 'do not harm cohesion' in the 8th Cohesion report.