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## EU Foreign Policy towards Russia

6 Resolution submitted by: *Political Committee 3, Foreign Relations and Global Europe*

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8 *The unity among EU Member States is being increasingly put to the test by an aggressive*  
9 *Russian foreign policy with a severe impact on EU internal affairs and in the EU's Eastern*  
10 *neighbourhood. Considering the frozen conflicts in Moldova and Georgia, the Russian*  
11 *annexation of Ukrainian Crimea and the support for pro-Russian separatists in Eastern Ukraine*  
12 *and beyond, are only the latest examples of Russia's destabilising involvement in post-Soviet*  
13 *states. Furthermore, Russia has with its intervention in the Syrian crisis further amplified the*  
14 *refugee crisis by disregarding the lives of civilians in the conflict zone. Finally, the undermining*  
15 *activities by the Russian Federation against EU Member States, such as interference in the*  
16 *democratic process and the financial support of anti-EU parties is concerning. The EU and its*  
17 *Member States' reactions have been characterised by disunity and diverging interests, as well*  
18 *as a lack of appreciation of the gravity of the situation, thereby weakening the common*  
19 *position vis-à-vis the Russian Federation. Taking into account our shared interest in rule of*  
20 *international law, democratic principles, the protection of the interest of the European people*  
21 *and our fundamental values, JEF Europe calls for a common, clearly shaped long-term EU*  
22 *strategy towards Russia.*

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25 **JEF Europe,**

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- 28 ● *Acknowledging* the importance of Russia as a European nation in European history, and  
as a contributor to European culture and civilisation and a part of the European family;
  - 29 ● *Recognising* the EU's long-standing efforts to build a mutually beneficial strategic  
30 partnership with Russia based on shared values and principles, such as democracy and  
31 the rule of law, and on common interests;
  - 32 ● *Recalling* the JEF Europe Resolution on Ukraine, 3rd April 2016 which outlined a vision  
33 of peaceful transition of independent Ukraine striving for closer partnership with the EU,  
34 and the JEF Europe Resolution on the EU's potential reactions to the hybrid nature of  
35 Russian Foreign Policy;
  - 36 ● *Deploing* the illegal annexation of Crimea, lawfully belonging to Ukraine, as well as the  
37 referendum of questionable legitimacy of March 16, 2014 and the numerous and  
38 repeated violations of international borders by the Russian Federation;
  - 39 ● *Profoundly concerned* by the irresponsible and provocative actions by Russian ground,  
40 air and naval forces near and within the territory of EU and NATO Member States;



- 41 ● *Alarmed* by the stationing of nuclear-capable missiles in the Kaliningrad exclave  
42 bordering EU Member States, violating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty  
43 which limits deployment of ballistic missiles of certain range;
- 44 ● *Denouncing* Russia's military intervention, significant military presence and support for  
45 the regime in Syria, as well as its blatant disregard for human rights in the conflict;
- 46 ● *Recognising* the over-dependency of some EU Member States on Russian oil and gas  
47 accounting for 70% of Russian exports; but similarly remembering the strong economic  
48 advantage the EU has over Russia illustrated both in the financial and industrial sectors;
- 49 ● *Denouncing* the Russian actions aimed at destabilising its neighbours (e.g. Georgia,  
50 Ukraine and Moldova) through trade embargos or the conclusion of integration treaties  
51 in separatist or breakaway regions under the misguided notion that the Russian  
52 Federation is the protector of supposed ethnic or linguistic groups outside of the  
53 borders of its own state;
- 54 ● *Emphasising* that restrictive measures and sanctions by the European Union are not  
55 directed against the Russian citizens, but only against the political leadership, as well as  
56 certain individuals and enterprises connected to the Russian leadership, and that the  
57 projected impact upon Russian citizens should be minimised;
- 58 ● Denouncing the 'golden visas and passports' policies implemented by some Member  
59 States, undermining economic sanctions towards Russian oligarchs;
- 60 ● Deploing that Russia with its counter-sanctions has targeted agricultural products,  
61 further worsening the conditions of its own people with increasing food prices as a  
62 result, wrongfully blaming the European Union for the consequences;
- 63 ● *Denouncing* the wave of wide-ranging cyber-attacks on government ministries, political  
64 parties, NGOs, electoral processes, newspapers, banks, companies, and critical  
65 infrastructure in and beyond Europe, at times with material damage as result;
- 66 ● Considering such actions as aggression and parts of a destabilising effort;
- 67 ● *Concerned* by ever-growing restrictions on media and internet freedom, the tightening  
68 of online media control, the tendency of the Russian state-controlled media to rewrite  
69 and reinterpret historical events, such as the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact  
70 and its secret protocols, as well as the restrictive use of historical narratives for current  
71 political propaganda, amounting to disinformation, troll factories, propaganda and  
72 indoctrination practices;
- 73 ● *Deeply concerned* with the financial support and legitimisation Russia gives to extremist  
74 and nationalist anti-European parties (e.g. Rassemblement National, Alternative für  
75 Deutschland, Lega);
- 76 ● *Adhering* to the EU-NATO joint declaration of 8 July 2016, calling for a series of actions  
77 the EU and NATO intend to take together in concrete areas, including countering hybrid  
78 threats, defence capacity building, cyber defence, maritime security, and military  
79 exercises;
- 80 ● *Taking into account*, with concern, the Russian boycott of the Council of Europe through  
81 non-participation in the Parliamentary Assembly and the budget of the institution.



82 **JEF Europe therefore,**

- 83 1. *Encourages* the development of peaceful interpersonal relations between the EU and  
84 Russian citizens;
- 85 2. *Condemns* the reckless and illegal actions of the Russian authorities which have been  
86 the cause of the present state of tension which exists between the EU and the Russian  
87 Federation;
- 88 3. *Calls* for the EU to formulate a strategy that can ensure and strengthen Member States'  
89 cohesion regarding Russia and promote its interest in the Eastern Neighbourhood in  
90 line with European principles and interests, bearing in mind the wide range of tools that  
91 the EU can utilise vis-a-vis Russia;
- 92 4. *Stresses* that Russia, because of actions such as those in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine,  
93 as well as its continued provocations/aggressions, currently cannot be considered  
94 neither trustworthy nor a reliable partner. Partnerships must be based on mutual trust,  
95 respect for international law and respect for the rule of law, human rights, and the  
96 principles of international diplomacy and trade;
- 97 5. *Calls* on the EU to remain open to such a relationship under the precondition that the  
98 Russian authorities meet their international, moral and legal obligations;
- 99 6. *Urges* the EU, until the Russian Federation lives up to its obligations and partnership can  
100 be pursued, to remain firm and engage with Russia on a reciprocal level, rewarding  
101 positive behaviour while sanctioning misdemeanours;
- 102 7. *Reaffirming* in this regard its support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as  
103 set out in the Helsinki Final Act;
- 104 8. *Calls* on political leaders in EU Member States as well as the Russian Federation to  
105 refrain from making historically distorted analogies to the Cold War in the present-day  
106 context;
- 107 9. *Calls* on the Member States to regard as an absolute priority the preservation of unity  
108 and to abstain from bilateral relations and agreements which could undermine the  
109 common line;
- 110 10. *Questions* the purpose of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and whether it is a  
111 regional cooperation to strengthen peace and prosperity in the region or rather a tool  
112 serving largely Russian interests and dominance over neighbouring countries;
- 113 11. *Firmly supports* the swift creation of a European Energy Union, specifically the  
114 interconnection of national energy networks in order to reduce considerably the  
115 dependence of individual Member States on Russia, a country that has repeatedly  
116 shown its willingness to abuse its energy reserves as political weapons;
- 117 12. *Calls* for the strengthening of analytical and monitoring capabilities of Russian  
118 disinformation campaigns, such as the already existing East StratCom Task Force, and  
119 calls on the Commission to set aside adequate funding for concrete projects aimed at  
120 countering Russian disinformation within the EU and in the Eastern Partnership by



- 121 promoting and strengthening media pluralism and availability of factual information  
122 within these countries;
- 123 13. *Calls* on the EU to provide support to projects aimed at promoting and developing high  
124 journalistic standards, freedom of the media, and unbiased and trustworthy information,  
125 including in the Russian-language in Eastern Partnership countries and Russia in order  
126 to provide Russian-speaking audiences with credible and independent sources of  
127 information;
- 128 14. *Stresses* the importance of continued support for independent civil society activists,  
129 human rights defenders, bloggers, independent media, outspoken academics and  
130 public figures and NGOs, with a view to promoting democratic values, fundamental  
131 freedoms and human rights in Russia and in occupied Crimea;
- 132 15. *Underlines* the need to promote people-to-people contacts and to maintain strong  
133 dialogue and cooperation between civil society actors and local authorities, with a view  
134 to improving mutual understanding between Russia and the EU;
- 135 16. *Calls upon* the Russian Federation to fully comply with its international obligations as a  
136 member of the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in  
137 Europe, and as a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, by which it has  
138 committed itself to the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human  
139 rights;
- 140 17. *Encourages* a mediation between Russia and the Council of Europe to find a  
141 compromise and put an end to the Russian boycott;
- 142 18. *Is of the opinion* that a conflict-fostering zero-sum game perception of international  
143 relations in Europe can be overcome by increased dialogue and that the Russian  
144 political elite and their actions, not the Russian people, remain the key challenge for  
145 constructive cooperation.