



## How can the EU react on hybrid challenges posed by Russian Foreign Policy

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

*The unity among EU Member States is being increasingly put to the test by an aggressive Russian foreign policy with a severe impact on EU internal affairs and in the EU's eastern neighbourhood. Considering the frozen conflicts in Moldova and Georgia, the Russian annexation of Ukrainian Crimea and the support for pro-Russian separatists in Eastern Ukraine and beyond, are only the latest examples of Russia's destabilising involvement in post-Soviet states. Internally, undermining activities by the Russian Federation against EU Member States around the Baltic and Black Seas and the financial support of anti-EU parties is concerning. The EU and its Member States' reactions have been characterised by disunity and diverging interests, which consequently has weakened the common position vis-à-vis the Russian Federation. Taking into account our interest in rule of international law, democratic principles, the protection of the interest of the European people and fundamental values, JEF Europe calls for a common, clearly shaped long-term EU strategy towards Russia.*

JEF Europe,

- *Acknowledging* the EU's long-standing efforts to build a mutually beneficial strategic partnership with Russia based on shared values and principles, such as democracy and the rule of law, and on common interests;
- *Recalling* the JEF Europe Resolution on Ukraine, 3rd April 2016 which outlined a vision of peaceful transition of independent Ukraine striving for closer partnership with the EU;
- *Deploring* the illegal annexation of Crimea, the referendum of questionable legitimacy of March 16, 2014 and the violation of sovereign international borders by the Russian Federation;
- *Profoundly concerned* by the irresponsible and provocative actions by Russian air and naval forces near and in the airspace and territorial waters of EU and NATO Member States;
- *Alarmed* by the stationing of nuclear-capable missiles in the Kaliningrad exclave bordering EU Member States, violating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty which limit deployment of ballistic missiles of certain range;



- *Denouncing* Russia's military intervention, significant military presence and support for the regime in Syria, as well as its invasive and non-discriminatory intervention in the Battle of Aleppo;
- *Recognising* the over-dependency of some EU Member States on Russian oil and gas accounting for 70% of Russian exports; but similarly remembering the strong economic advantage the EU has over Russia illustrated both in the financial and industrial sector and by Russian dependency on EU Foreign Direct Investment;
- *Denouncing* the Russian policy to legitimise deliberate actions aimed at destabilising its neighbours (e.g. Ukraine and Moldova) through trade embargos or the conclusion of integration treaties in separatist or breakaway regions under the misguided notion that the Russian Federation is the protector of supposed ethnic or linguistic groups outside of the borders of its own state;
- *Emphasising* that restrictive measures and sanctions by the European Union are not directed against the Russian people, but only against certain individuals and enterprises connected to the Russian leadership, and that the projected impact upon Russian citizens should be minimised;
- *Denouncing* the wave of wide-ranging cyber-attacks, e.g. in 2007 by Russian state-sponsored hackers on Estonia, on government ministries, political parties, newspapers, banks, and companies.
- *Concerned* by the ever-growing restrictions on media and internet freedom, the tightening of online media control and condemning the ban on broadcasting of Ukrainian and Tatar TV channel; the tendency of the Russian state-controlled media to rewrite and reinterpret historical events, such as the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols, as well as the restrictive use of historical narratives for current political propaganda; and the condemnation of polarising indoctrination practices;
- *Deeply concerned* with the financial support and legitimisation Russia gives to extremist and nationalist anti-European parties (e.g. Front National, Alternative für Deutschland, Jobbik);
- *Adhering* to the EU-NATO joint declaration of 8 July 2016, calling for a series of actions the EU and NATO intend to take together in concrete areas, including countering hybrid threats, defence capacity building, cyber defence, maritime security, and military exercises.

JEF Europe,

1. *Calls* for a doctrine through which the EU can ensure and strengthen Member States' cohesion regarding Russia and promote its interest in the Eastern Neighbourhood without giving the impression of appeasement but striving for an approach that is in line with European principles and interests, while bearing in mind the illegality of the unauthorised use of force;



2. *Stresses* that Russia, because of its actions such as those in Crimea and in Eastern Ukraine, at the moment cannot be treated as, or considered, a trustworthy and reliable partner. Partnerships must be based on mutual trust, respect for international law and respect for the rule of law, human rights, and the principles of international diplomacy and trade;
3. *Calls* on the EU to remain open to such a relationship and to dialogue leading to it, and wishes to reach a cooperative relationship in certain areas with Russia under the precondition that the Russian authorities meet their international, moral and legal obligations;
4. *Reaffirming* in this regard its support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as set out in the Helsinki Final Act;
5. *Calls* on political leaders in EU Member States to avoid historical distorted analogies from the Cold War to promote a new appeasing policy;
6. *Calls* on the Member States to regard as an absolute priority the preservation of unity and to abstain from bilateral relations and agreements which could harm this common line or be interpreted as such;
7. *Considers* the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) to be not a regional cooperation to strengthen peace and prosperity of Post-Soviet states, but a tool serving largely Russian interests and dominance over neighbouring countries;
8. *Reiterates* that unity of action and solidarity amongst the Member States and with candidate countries is essential for ensuring the credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness of the EU's policies and its ability to withstand external challenges and pressures, while at the same time fostering a more profound, two-way and cooperative exchange relationship with the Eastern Partnership countries including stronger integration;
9. *Firmly supports* the swift creation of a European Energy Union, specifically the interconnection of national energy networks in order to reduce considerably the dependence of individual Member States on external energy suppliers;
10. *Calls* for the development of strengthened analytical and monitoring capabilities of Russian misinformation campaigns and calls on the Commission to set aside adequate funding for concrete projects aimed at countering Russian misinformation within the EU by promoting and strengthening media pluralism and objective information within the EU;
11. *Calls* on the EU to provide support to projects aimed at promoting and developing high journalistic standards, freedom of the media, and unbiased and trustworthy information, including in the Russian-language in Eastern Partnership countries and Russia in order to provide Russian-speaking audiences with credible and independent sources of information;
12. *Calls* on the Commission to propose legislation for full transparency of European political parties and mechanisms such as a transparency register, as recommended by the Council of Europe with regard to political and economic stakeholders outside the EU and calls on EU Member States to devise a coordinated mechanism to collect,



- monitor and report financial, political or technical assistance provided by Russia to political parties and other organisations within the EU;
13. *Stresses* the importance of continued support for independent civil society activists, human rights defenders, bloggers, independent media, outspoken academics and public figures and NGOs, with a view to promoting democratic values, fundamental freedoms and human rights in Russia and in occupied Crimea; underlines the need to promote people-to-people contacts and to maintain strong dialogue and cooperation between civil society actors and local authorities, with a view to improving mutual understanding;
  14. *Calls* on the European Cyber Crime Centre at Europol to spearhead and develop a “Cyber Threat Monitoring and Awareness programme” and to act as a ‘clearing house’ of information on unlawful cyber activities that either originate from or are abetted (material, technical, or financial) by the Russian Federation. Periodical information highlighting activity in which the Russian Federation was part should be included in the Europol online media section, infographics and online guides and mainstreamed for public awareness and prevention purposes.
  15. *Calls* on the Russian Federation to constructively engage in the ongoing discussions by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to modernise the Vienna Document, regarding military transparency.
  16. *Calling upon* the Russian Federation to fully comply with its international obligations as a member of the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and as a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, by which it has committed itself to the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights;
  17. *Calls* on the EU not to rule out prematurely foreign policy tools, including sanctions, should the Russian Federation continue to violate international law;
  18. *Calls* on the EU and its Member States to expand and strengthen security cooperation with NATO and reinforce the Euro-Transatlantic Partnership along the lines of the NATO Warsaw Declaration;
  19. *Is of the opinion that* a constructive and stable relationship between the EU and Russia is desirable for mutual benefit, also in view of existing political, trade, transport and energy relations; that common challenges and interests on the world scene must be addressed, and that the divisive nature of the perception of security in Europe can be overcome by increased dialogue;