

Gdańsk Declaration

Joint declaration from the Leaders of the Eastern Flank (Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Sweden)

1. Russia's hostile policy and war of aggression against Ukraine have confirmed that **Russia remains the most significant, direct, and long-term threat** to the security, peace, and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area. The Eastern Flank, stretching from the Arctic region through the Baltic and Black Sea constitutes the first line of defence in the event of armed aggression, thereby protecting not only its own borders, but also the security, stability and prosperity of the European Union and NATO, as a whole. Therefore, the security and resilience of the Eastern Flank is a common good and a shared responsibility. The threats posed by Russia must constitute a cornerstone for the upcoming European Security Strategy.
2. **Russia and its proxies continue to conduct persistent, coordinated and escalating hybrid and FIMI campaigns** aimed at threatening our unity, security and democratic values. Russia's goal is to undermine our support to Ukraine and its ability to defend itself. Those campaigns include acts of sabotage, disruption of critical infrastructure, including underwater, cyberattacks, violations of airspace, instrumentalisation of migrant flows, electronic warfare activities, manipulation of information and attempts to undermine the credibility of our democracies and the electoral process. **We condemn Russia's recent drone incursions into Eastern Flank Member States' airspace and security incidents in the maritime domain**, directly harming civilian populations and infrastructure. **Russia's exploitation of such violations, including Russian public threats against those countries, are unacceptable.** In this context, we emphasise the urgency of reinforcing drone and counter-drone systems, resilience and protection of critical infrastructure measures and defence capabilities including situational awareness, through coordination of activities and increasing technological development along with production capacity of European defence industry, under national and multilateral initiatives, supported by current (SAFE, EDIP, EDF, Action Plan on Drone and Counter Drone Security, BMVI) and upcoming EU instruments (such as the ECF).
3. **We are determined to act together**, in cooperation with our EU partners and NATO Allies, to prevent, deter and respond to those threats and to protect our societies. We must adopt a proactive approach starting from building solid situational awareness and resilience across the whole of society. We must respond more decisively by raising costs of hybrid activities for Russia, disrupting malicious activities by employing the whole range of targeted restrictive, regulatory and operational measures, including by public exposure, legal and regulatory tools, further sanctions, as well as diplomatic measures.
4. **We stress the need to continue supporting Ukraine**, which has been bravely facing Russia's full scale invasion for more than four years. We call on the whole transatlantic community to continue providing Ukraine with military, civilian, financial and political assistance and to support it in achieving just and lasting peace underpinned by robust and credible security guarantees. The Ukraine Support Loan adopted by the EU is critical to sustain the Ukrainian efforts. However, it should not be seen as a substitute to ongoing bilateral aid which is still extremely needed. We highlight the value of leveraging PURL mechanism to enhance Ukraine's capabilities. We will also strengthen cooperation on filling capacity gaps in NSATU and EUMAM Ukraine. We underscore the central role of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in deterring Russian aggression.
5. **We will continue to cooperate within the framework of the Coalition of the Willing** on security guarantees for Ukraine. **We support Ukraine's integration with Euro-Atlantic structures**, in line with merit-based progress and the fulfilment of necessary reforms, **as it is key for ensuring peace and stability on our continent.**
6. **We should make full use of lessons learnt from Ukraine's defence against Russia's war of aggression**, reinforcing our own resilience both in civilian and military domains. We will factor it in tightening governmental and defence industry cooperation with Ukraine, in particular in

drone and counter-drone technologies which are reshaping modern warfare. Additionally, we express our willingness to reinforce exchange of good practices in the field of building an effective societal resilience and a whole of government approach.

7. Reiterating the declaration adopted at the Eastern Flank Summit in Helsinki, **Europe's Eastern Flank is a common responsibility** and must be defended with urgency, leadership and resolve. A secure Eastern Flank is a priority goal that will benefit all of Europe in the short and long term. We therefore welcome the progress achieved in the preparation of the Eastern Flank Watch project within the framework of European Defence Projects of Common Interest (EFW EDPCI) under the European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP). The EFW EDPCI, as a comprehensive and multi-domain project, supports development of a broad spectrum of critical military capabilities, bolstering the European defence industry.
8. **We emphasise strategic importance of the Eastern Flank Watch project** for the security and defence interests of the whole Union, and the necessity to **secure appropriate scale of funding for its development**. EFW EDPCI, along with other projects, including national ones such as Baltic Defence Line, the Eastern Shield and the Black Sea Maritime Security Hub for enhanced situational awareness, will significantly bolster deterrence and defence posture and will support frontline states' defence readiness to be fully prepared to act. We acknowledge the importance not only in the establishment of defence capabilities, but also of the assurance of their long-term maintenance and sustainability, scaling up production capacity and innovation of European defence industry. Therefore, an adequate and forward-looking budgetary perspective is required with a special focus on the Eastern Flank countries and welcome an increased focus on security and defence in the next MFF.
9. Ahead of the NATO Summit in Ankara, we reaffirm our commitment to reaching the target of allocating 5% of GDP to **defence spending**. We will also encourage all Allies to implement their national paths to increase their defence expenditures as agreed at the 2025 The Hague NATO Summit. We stand ready to increase cooperation to further **strengthen NATO's presence, deterrence and defence on the Eastern Flank** in all operational domains and with continued engagement of all Allies.
10. While NATO remains the cornerstone of our collective defence, the **European Union must further define and strengthen its role** in responding to the evolving security crisis. We should invest in credible and robust EU preparedness, resilience and response, in coherence with the role, responsibilities and goals of NATO, while ensuring complementarity of actions. We acknowledge that further strengthening cooperation with our transatlantic partners is crucial for deepening mutual trust and ensuring credible deterrence from Russia.
11. In addition to the consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the global impact of the crisis in the Strait of Hormuz has once again highlighted the **vulnerability of energy supply chains and underscored the urgent need for diversification, protection and the development of resilient energy infrastructure**. The unrolling events have demonstrated the strategic importance of secure and interconnected fuel supply systems across Europe. In this context, we underline the necessity of sufficient fuel infrastructure in the Eastern Flank. We call on the EU to support Member States in this effort, including in developing of LNG/biogas capacity, electricity grid resilience and energy storage in line with the Communication on the EU's eastern regions bordering Russia, Belarus and Ukraine.
12. We underline the importance of further work on **improving military mobility**. We need to rapidly upgrade transport infrastructure to guarantee seamless, rapid movement of Allied military personnel and heavy equipment across the EU, while ensuring adequate EU support in this area.
13. We encourage efforts to deepen the EU security cooperation and resilience-building **assistance for regional partners** aggressively targeted by Russian actions. The security and stability of our partners is inseparably linked to our own security. By standing together, we send an unequivocal message of strong commitment to defend international law, democratic values and security of our citizens.
14. We look forward to the next meeting of this format in Romania.