



Four years of war in Ukraine: A CEMR declaration

24 February 2026, Brussels

We, European local and regional elected representatives, on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, reaffirm our unwavering support for Ukraine and its people. We strongly condemn Russia's war, which is claiming countless victims.

We have not forgotten the elected representatives who have been kidnapped and held captive.

We denounce the abduction of Ukrainian mayors, and we support the call of the Association of Ukrainian Cities demanding the immediate release of those still detained:

- **Oleksandr Babych** – Hola Prystan City Mayor (abducted on 28 March 2022)
- **Ihor Kolykhaiev** – Kherson City Mayor (abducted on 28 June 2022)
- **Anatolii Siryi** – Starosta of Novi Borovychi Starosta District, Snovsk City Municipality (abducted on 29 March 2022)

We condemn the arbitrary imprisonment, torture and murder of Ukrainian people in Russian captivity, including **Yevhenii Matvieiev**, Mayor of Dniprorudne, and **Oleksii Vynnychenko**, Starosta of the Hrebenykyivka Starosta District of Boromlia Village Municipality.

We are committed to supporting peace and integration into the EU

We call for the immediate end to the war, and for decisive actions to enable the establishment of a just and lasting peace in Europe and the reconstruction of Ukraine. Achieving this requires the full engagement of the European Union and its member states at every stage within the process. European local and regional governments stand ready to support them in this endeavor.

We commit to continue fostering international cooperation and partnerships between local and regional governments through:

- [CEMR's Matchmaking Platform](#): A Platform aiming at strengthening cooperation by connecting towns, cities and regions across Europe.
- [Bridges of Trust Community](#): A network of local and regional elected representatives engaged in cooperation between local and regional governments in the EU and Ukraine to foster trust, resilience, and sustainable and democratic governance.

- [European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine](#): An Alliance uniting local and regional governments to support Ukraine's recovery through exchange of experience, partnerships and cooperation between local actors.

We stand firm in defending European values of democracy, peace, and the rule of law. We support Ukraine and are committed to accompanying it to full EU membership, ensuring a stronger and more secure Europe.



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