



APPEAL

19.03.2014
Brussels

To the President of France Mr François Hollande

To the High Representative Madame Catherine Ashton

Under the leadership of President Putin, the Russian Federation has committed aggression against Ukraine, violating the very foundations of the European Security and Cooperation system, started in 1975. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of a member state of the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe has been violated by unilateral military action of the Russian Federation. Part of Ukraine's territory is in the process of being amputated.

We are seriously concerned about the mixed messages sent to Russia. EU governments have condemned Russian military aggression; nevertheless France is still considering delivery to Russia of ultramodern Mistral assault warships. The ships in question are specially designed to carry out rapid and manifold landing operations on enemy territory. If Mistrals are delivered to Russia under the present circumstances, the result would be a blow to the fundamental values and moral credibility of the European Union as a whole. Many citizens of recently reunified Europe endured for half a century the results of Soviet aggression in 1939 and 1940 and at present feel themselves especially vulnerable. If the West remains insufficiently determined now to stop Russian aggression against Ukraine, a Russia fortified with modern Western arms could well be tempted in the near future to continue enlarging its territory.

In 2008, immediately after the Russian invasion of Georgia, the commander of the Russian Black Sea fleet admitted that Russia badly needed Western advanced technology in order to achieve its territorial aims. He stated that if Russia had had in its disposal one Mistral, then his forces could have completed their mission against Georgia in 40 minutes.



Taking note of the French Foreign Minister's comments from March 18, according to which France will consider cancelling the plans to deliver two Mistral frigates to Russia, if the Kremlin provokes another round of sanctions, we ask that the French authorities cancel immediately the sale and delivery of Mistral frigates to Russia. Postponing such vital decisions to the „phase three of the sanctions» will only weaken the position of both Ukraine and the EU. President Putin has made it clear that Russia's aggressive actions will continue. The only move that could have sobering effect on Kremlin hotheads is to completely stop any military cooperation between the EU member states and Russia, whose military are in desperate need of modern Western military technology. Taking such a move will enhance European solidarity and send a clear message that the EU is serious in its opposition to aggression.

Members of the European Parliament:

Tunne Kelam, MEP, Estonia

Laima Liucija Andriekienė, MEP, Lithuania

Bastiaan Belder, MEP, Netherlands

Lajos Bokros, MEP, Hungary

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Sandra Kalniete, MEP, Latvia

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