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**Statement by the Members of the European Council
meeting in Prague on 7 October 2022**

Russia/Ukraine

1. Russia's latest escalation is putting European peace and security at risk. [p.m. *possible further Russian escalation*]
2. Recalling our statement of 30 September 2022, we reiterate our firm rejection and unequivocal condemnation of the illegal annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. We will never recognise this illegal annexation or the sham referenda that Russia uses to justify it.
3. Russia's unilateral decisions are contrary to the UN Charter and blatantly disregard the rules-based international order; they cannot and do not give Russia a legitimate basis for any further action on the territory of Ukraine. We demand that Russia immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine.
4. We reaffirm our full support to Ukraine's independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty in its internationally recognised borders. In line with the UN Charter and international law, Ukraine is exercising its legitimate right to defend itself against the Russian aggression to regain full control of its territory and has the right to liberate occupied territories within its internationally recognised borders. We see Russia's threats as a further escalation of the conflict but will not be deterred from our determination to support Ukraine. We will stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes. We will continue to provide financial, political and military support to Ukraine and step up humanitarian and winter preparedness response.
5. In response to Russia' illegal actions, we have strengthened our restrictive measures to further increase pressure on Russia to end its war of aggression.

Food security

6. Russia's actions have triggered disruptions of agricultural production, supply chains and trade that have driven world food and fertiliser prices to unprecedented levels. We call for the continuation of the successful UN Black Sea Grain Initiative. The European Union will in parallel continue to maximise the export of Ukrainian crops and other products via the Solidarity Lanes and facilitate global access to agriculture products and fertilisers to the countries most in need.

Energy

7. We discussed the impact of high energy prices on the cost of living, on businesses and on the competitiveness of European industry. Russia is weaponising energy to undermine the economic power of the European Union and to threaten our economic and social fabric.
8. We are determined to counter this with a well-coordinated European response, reducing our energy demand, ensuring our security of supply and alleviating the impact of high prices on consumers.

Demand – Supply – Price

9. We welcome the recent agreement in the Council to reduce electricity demand during peak hours. This complements the agreement in July on the reduction of gas consumption. We will continue to monitor these efforts and take further measures as necessary.
10. We welcome the additional supply of gas from our partners. The gas storage levels achieved so far are a step in the right direction. We need to keep up our effort and prepare for the next filling season. Pooling our demand through the EU Energy Platform will allow making full use of the Union's collective political and market weight.
11. We welcome the quick adoption by the Council of a regulation to collect surplus revenues from the production of electricity and to introduce a solidarity contribution from the fossil fuel sectors' surplus profits to partially alleviate the burden on citizens and businesses.
12. Our efforts to ensure the security of supply and to reduce energy prices need to be continued. Recalling our conclusions of March, May and June 2022, we invite the Commission to work, as a matter of urgency, on the following actions so as to develop a roadmap for the months ahead:
 - speeding up negotiations with our partners to look for mutually beneficial partnerships that lead to security of supply and lower import prices for the European Union, notably through the EU Energy Platform;
 - proposing workable solutions to reduce prices through gas prices cap;
 - developing a more representative benchmark for LNG that more accurately reflects the market conditions;
 - speeding up work to ensure the good functioning of financial markets and to limit excessive price volatility.
13. In addition to tackling immediate term challenges, we need to discuss at our next meeting in October the necessary next steps for achieving a full Energy Union serving our objective of European energy sovereignty and climate neutrality.

Critical infrastructure

14. We strongly condemn the acts of sabotage against the Nord Stream pipelines. Any deliberate disruption of European infrastructure will be met with a united and determined response.

15. We call on the Council to step up cooperation for the protection of European critical infrastructure.

Economy

16. Addressing high prices for households and businesses, supporting growth and jobs, keeping the integrity of the Single Market and protecting the most vulnerable remains our primary concern.

17. We are determined to stand united and coordinated in our policy response. We will mobilise the tools at our disposal in defence of our interests.