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World news story

WTO Ministerial Conference: Joint Statement on Russian aggression against Ukraine

Over 40 WTO Members agreed a UK-led statement following the conclusion of the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12), condemning Russian aggression against Ukraine.

From:

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Statement from Albania; Australia; Canada; Costa Rica; European Union; Iceland; Japan; Republic of Korea; Republic of Moldova; Montenegro; New Zealand; North Macedonia; Norway; Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu; Ukraine; United Kingdom; and the United States:

“We, the Ministers of the undersigned WTO members, stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. At the 12th Ministerial Conference of the WTO we engaged in finding multilateral solutions to pressing global issues and negotiated to deliver for communities across the globe. This does not represent a normalizing of trading relations with Russia.

We condemn in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine, assisted by Belarus. Belarus’ accession to the WTO was halted in 2020 and we will not consider it further. We stand in unwavering support of Ukraine and will

work together to find ways to use trade to support Ukraine to rebuild its economy and society. The Russian Federation's actions, which have continued unrelenting for more than 15 weeks, are an unprovoked, premeditated attack against a sovereign democratic state. They also constitute an egregious violation of international law, including the UN Charter, and undermine fundamental principles of international peace and security. These actions show the Russian Federation does not respect international institutions, disciplines, and norms.

Russia's indiscriminate attacks on Ukraine's civilian infrastructure and blockades of Ukraine's seaports have also exacerbated pre-existing problems affecting supply chains in multiple sectors, with 1.7 billion people in over 100 countries now facing severe food, energy and commodity supply issues and price rises.

Together, we insist that the Russian Federation must urgently stop its military aggression against Ukraine and immediately withdraw its troops. We are firmly convinced that the Russian Federation must be held accountable and must cease its actions, which undermine global peace, security and international law.

We will continue to take actions, as WTO Members, that we each consider necessary to protect our essential security interests, and we will continue to impress upon the Russian Federation the urgent need for it to live up to its responsibility to restore and maintain international peace and security."

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