

## **Joint Communiqué of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Ukraine following the second Intergovernmental Conference, held in Breda, the Netherlands, on 30-31 March 2026.**

1. The Conference was established by the Governments of the Netherlands and Ukraine to build on existing cooperation, further develop bilateral relations and support Ukraine in implementing reforms and fulfilling accession criteria for its future EU membership. At the first Conference in Lviv in April 2025, it was agreed to meet annually, alternating between the Netherlands and Ukraine.
2. The Government of the Netherlands was represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Tom Berendsen, and the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Mr Sjoerd Sjoerdsma. The Government of Ukraine was represented by the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Mr Taras Kachka. Both Governments were further represented by officials from line ministries and institutions, forming thematic Working Groups on Rule of Law & Accountability, Agriculture, Energy and Social Affairs.
3. The Netherlands reiterated its resolute condemnation of Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a manifest violation of the UN Charter. The Netherlands reaffirmed its support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial sea, and Ukraine's inherent right to self-defence as enshrined in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, and its efforts aimed at restoring a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.
4. Ukraine expressed its appreciation for the EU's support and for strengthening pressure on and restrictive measures against Russia. Both sides reiterated that work must continue on sanctions against Russia, including by strengthening implementation, preventing circumvention and, where necessary, adopting further measures. Both Governments highlighted the ongoing threat posed by Russia's shadow fleet, used to support Russia's war machine and to sustain its hybrid threats against EU countries. Ukraine expressed its readiness to provide all necessary information to facilitate legal processes and support coordinated efforts to neutralize these illicit activities of the Russian Federation.
5. On EU-accession, the Netherlands acknowledged the progress made by Ukraine towards its future within the EU, especially given the challenging context of Russia's ongoing war of aggression. Both Governments recalled the merit-based nature of EU accession and importance of the Copenhagen criteria. Both sides expressed their commitment to advance Ukraine's accession trajectory and underlined the need for sustained progress on the fundamental requirements for EU accession, in particular on the rule of law. The Netherlands reiterated that it stands ready to support Ukraine in meeting accession criteria and will continue to provide training and expertise to strengthen the capacity of Ukrainian public administration and institutions.
6. Both Governments looked forward to the next formal steps in Ukraine's EU accession process, including the opening of all clusters in line with the enlargement methodology, starting with Cluster 1. Ukraine reiterated its unwavering commitment to meet the benchmarks for all clusters. Both Governments will continue to encourage gradual integration, merit-based and subject to alignment with EU acquis, and underlined Ukraine's EU-aligned reconstruction and modernisation as priorities of the bilateral agenda.
7. On the **Rule of Law**, the Netherlands and Ukraine agreed to continue cooperation on key areas within the 'Fundamentals' Cluster of the EU accession process, including expert-level meetings to exchange best practices on policy development, reform implementation and alignment of Ukrainian legislation with the EU acquis. Both parties underlined the importance of progress in implementing

the benchmarks of Cluster 1 to maintain momentum in the process. The Netherlands expressed its continued support for Ukraine's efforts to implement the Rule of Law Roadmap and will continue to offer expertise, including to support Ukraine in meeting the requirements of the OECD Working Group on Bribery and the Anti-Bribery Convention. The Dutch Council for the Judiciary and Ukraine's High Council of Justice continue their partnership on strengthening the Rule of Law and judicial independence in Ukraine, and note the initiation of cooperation with the High Qualification Commission of Judges of Ukraine in support of these shared objectives. Through its MATRA programme and other instruments, the Netherlands will continue to support civil society organisations in Ukraine working on rule of law and judicial independence in Ukraine.

8. On **Accountability**, the Netherlands and Ukraine reaffirmed their commitment to continued cooperation in ensuring accountability for Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine. Both sides condemned in the strongest terms the atrocities committed by Russia, notably in the temporarily occupied territories, as well as the unlawful deportation and forcible transfer of Ukrainian children. They agreed to cooperate on the safe return of deported children, family reunification and psychosocial support.

The Netherlands and Ukraine will continue to support Ukraine's national investigations, prosecutions and consideration of international crimes, and to work jointly through the Dialogue Group to coordinate and enhance synergies between accountability initiatives, with a particular focus on strengthening Ukraine's capacity to sustain its efforts. The 2026 Ministerial Dialogue Group will address two thematic areas: (1) harmonisation of Ukrainian legislation with the Rome Statute and other international standards, including relevant EU directives and the Ljubljana–The Hague Convention; and (2) prioritisation of cases within the large caseload of international crimes in Ukraine. The Netherlands will continue to support capacity-building for Ukrainian actors across the accountability chain to ensure concrete results at national level.

9. On **Agriculture**, Ukraine and the Netherlands reaffirmed and enhanced the main priorities for bilateral cooperation, building on the Joint Statement signed by the respective Ministries in 2025. This includes exchanging experiences on the implementation of EU standards, such as veterinary and phytosanitary requirements; promoting the transfer of innovative practices and development of sectoral strategies in priority sectors such as horticulture, dairy, seed production and climate-smart agriculture.

The Governments welcomed the continued initiative for direct dialogue and follow-up of their Joint Statement and concrete cooperation, and underlined that restoring and further developing Ukraine's agricultural potential is essential for its economic resilience, EU integration and global food security.

10. On **Energy**, during a special Roundtable on Winter Resilience, the Netherlands and Ukraine agreed to strengthen their cooperation for in-kind support and decentralization of Ukraine's energy infrastructure, including renewable energy. To put words into practice, Ukraine and The Netherlands agreed upon a 'roadmap' for winter resilience, wherein concrete agreements reflect the strengthened cooperation. Therefore, Ukraine will provide the Dutch side with a non-paper containing a list of critical needs, a list of equipment manufacturers of interest to Ukraine, and a list of power plants in the Netherlands from which Ukraine is interested in dismantling equipment.

Moreover, The Netherlands recalled its substantial support for Ukraine's energy sector since the start of the Russian Federation's full-scale military invasion, including emergency repair support,

delivery of in-kind equipment and contributions to gas purchases as well as contributions to the Ukraine Energy Support Fund.

The Netherlands can learn from Ukraine's extensive expertise to strengthen the physical and digital protection of its critical energy infrastructure and enhance its system resilience. The Netherlands confirmed to continue mobilising public and private instruments to support investments in Ukraine's energy sector, while Ukraine is committed to continue its reforms, including corporate governance standards within the energy sector. This will also help Ukraine to meet the requirements as part of EU accession.

Both sides agreed to continue cooperation on repairing and restoring critical energy infrastructure damaged by Russian attacks, including support for nuclear safety and security through cooperation with the IAEA. Russian Federation's energy terror and indiscriminate attacks against Ukraine underlines that the resilience of our energy systems is becoming increasingly important.

The parties confirmed the importance of holding international events in Ukraine on 26 April 2026 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. The International Donor Conference, organized jointly with the EBRD, should help mobilize funding for the restoration of the New Safe Confinement (NSC), damaged by a Russian attack in February 2025. The Netherlands will consider joining the Conference at the ministerial level.

11. On **Social Issues**, the Netherlands and Ukraine agreed to continue cooperation in the field of human capital, particularly in terms of exchanging experience to build an inclusive, European society, taking into account preparations for the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Gdansk. The approach on human capital is based on a dual intent approach: giving Ukrainian Displaced Persons the skills that can be provided through the Dutch market, as well contribute to Ukraine's reconstruction and future labour market needs.

12. Both Governments further discussed reintegration assistance for voluntary returnees as well as internally displaced persons, veterans and others who have remained in Ukraine, with tailored support to turn short-term aid into long-term stability. The exchange focused on addressing the needs of different communities, the role of civil society and local governments, and the sustainable (re-) integration of different groups of Ukrainians, among which returnees. Discussions continued on the social dialogue, with the Netherlands sharing its experience with collective bargaining between employers and trade unions, and reflecting on how these experiences could inform policy-making and build broad consensus on structural reforms in the context of Ukraine's EU accession process.

13. The Netherlands and Ukraine reaffirmed that the private sector plays a crucial role in Ukraine's recovery and long-term reconstruction, as underlined during the **Business Forum** held alongside the Conference. Both sides welcomed the strengthening of bilateral economic ties and the engagement of Dutch and Ukrainian companies in sectors such as energy, life sciences and health, agriculture, water and infrastructure. They noted the signing of several memoranda of understanding and productive matchmaking between businesses, and welcomed the extension of the Ukraine Partnership Facility and new partnerships supported under its subsequent rounds. Both sides will continue to work together to improve the investment climate, mitigate risk and mobilise private capital for recovery and reconstruction projects, in line with Ukraine's EU-aligned recovery and reform agenda.

14. The Conference reaffirmed the strategic and forward-looking nature of the partnership between the Netherlands and Ukraine. Both Governments reiterated their unwavering commitment to

deepening cooperation across all areas of mutual interest in the spirit of shared values and a united European future.

15. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Conference will take place in Ukraine in 2027.