



European Organisation of  
Military Associations and  
Trade Unions

Brussels, Belgium  
<http://euromil.org/>

## **Declaration of the 129th EUROMIL General Assembly**

26 April 2024, Lisbon (Portugal)

On the occasion of the 129th General Assembly of the European Organisation of Military Associations and Trade Unions (EUROMIL), which represents military associations and trade unions from all over Europe, and in the presence of invited representatives of the Ukrainian Union of Military and Security (UUMS), the situation in Ukraine was discussed. In the spirit of solidarity and our common goals, participants reaffirm their commitment to defending the rights, dignity and well-being of military personnel as civilians and workers in uniform.

### ***We stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.***

Acknowledging the challenges facing military personnel across the European Union and beyond, we reaffirm our commitment to defending the fundamental rights, dignity, and well-being of all those who serve in the armed forces.

In light of recent developments and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, and being aware of the pressing challenges facing our fellow servicemen and women, we acknowledge the gravity of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. We echo and endorse the principles and objectives outlined in the ETUC Ukraine Summit Declaration from 23 April 2024 in Lublin (Poland). EUROMIL and the UUMS stand united in support of the principles and goals outlined therein.

We stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and express our unwavering support for their right to sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination.

Furthermore, we condemn all acts of aggression, violation of international law, and infringement upon the sovereignty of Ukraine. We call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and urge all parties involved to seek peaceful and diplomatic solutions to the conflict.

### ***The importance of dialogue, cooperation, and international solidarity.***

We emphasize the importance of dialogue, cooperation, and international solidarity in resolving conflicts and promoting peace and stability in Europe and beyond. It is imperative that all stakeholders engage constructively through collective efforts, and genuine commitment in good faith to de-escalate tensions and work towards a sustainable and just resolution to the crisis in Ukraine.

Moreover, we reaffirm our commitment to the principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, which are the cornerstone of the European Union. We call on EU institutions, member states, and international organizations to uphold these principles and to support efforts aimed at promoting democracy, safeguarding human rights, and fostering inclusive and sustainable development



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in Ukraine and across the region, included the accountability of perpetrators of international law, as non-compliance can only lead to serious consequences.

For EUROMIL, it is essential that the justice and fairness advocated in principle by the trade unions includes the restoration of rights and freedoms for all Ukrainians throughout Ukraine, without exception.

***Military personnel are not separate from society, they are citizens and workers in uniform!***

However, the 129th General Assembly of EUROMIL also especially underscores the critical importance of ensuring the active involvement and representation of military personnel, combatants, and both current and future veterans in Ukraine. The example set by Ukraine vividly illustrates that military personnel are not separate from society; rather, they are ordinary individuals, citizens and workers in uniform, who, in the face of crisis, courageously take up arms to defend their homes, families, and way of life.

In Ukraine, as in any conflict zone, the men and women serving in the armed forces come from diverse backgrounds and professions. Yesterday, they may have been businessmen, doctors, metallurgists, electricians, builders, or professionals in any other field. Today, they are soldiers, compelled by circumstances to defend their nation against aggression. This reality underscores the profound truth that military personnel are not distinct from civilian society; they are an integral part of it.

The conflict in Ukraine highlights the reality that no professional army, regardless of its strength or capabilities, can single-handedly withstand the onslaught of an aggressor. The resilience and determination displayed by Ukrainian military personnel serve as a testament to the indomitable spirit of ordinary citizens when faced with extraordinary challenges.

Furthermore, the implications of the Ukrainian conflict extend far beyond its borders, affecting not only Ukraine but the entire civilized world, particularly Europe. The threat of war spreading to other European nations looms ominously, underscoring the urgent need for proactive measures to prevent further escalation.

In contemplating the aftermath of such conflicts, it becomes evident that the challenges faced by returning military personnel are profound and multifaceted. Physically and mentally scarred by their experiences, these individuals often struggle to reintegrate into civilian life and return to their former professions. Employers, trade unions, and industries across Europe must recognize and address these challenges, ensuring that returning veterans receive the support and assistance they need to rebuild their lives.



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Moreover, the potential ramifications of war on European industries and economies cannot be understated. The disruption caused by conflict threatens the stability and prosperity of entire sectors, exacerbating existing socio-economic inequalities and vulnerabilities.

***Europe must honour the sacrifices made by its servicemen and women.***

As such, it is imperative that European governments, employers, and civil society organizations proactively address the needs of military personnel and veterans, both during and after conflicts. By fostering inclusivity, providing support services, and implementing policies that facilitate reintegration and rehabilitation, Europe can honour the sacrifices made by its servicemen and women and build a more resilient and cohesive society.

In conclusion, the 129th EUROMIL General Assembly and UUMS calls upon all stakeholders to recognize the intrinsic connection between military personnel and civilian society. By acknowledging the shared humanity and commonality of experience among all citizens, we can collectively strive towards a future where conflicts are resolved through dialogue and diplomacy, rather than violence and warfare. Together, let us work towards a Europe where peace, prosperity, and solidarity prevail.