

Edgars Rinkēvičs: The EU must make every effort to provide military support to Ukraine

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On 12 and 13 May 2023, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Edgars Rinkēvičs, took part in an informal meeting of the foreign affairs ministers of the European Union (EU), or the so-called Gymnich, held in Stockholm, Sweden. The event featured a discussion on the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the EU's relations with China, as well as a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Dmytro Kuleba.

During the discussion on Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Edgars Rinkēvičs underlined the need to do whatever it takes to provide military support to Ukraine. "The Ukrainian forces are in an acute need of ammunition and equipment to succeed in fighting Russian troops and liberate the occupied territories. Therefore, there should be no delay in approving and enforcing the decisions taken," the Latvian Foreign Minister noted.

At the same time, Edgars Rinkēvičs noted that the EU should also keep up its political support to Ukraine, promoting Ukraine's integration into the EU, as well as providing long-term financial assistance. The Foreign Minister expressed support for the launch of accession negotiations with Ukraine by the end of 2023. Edgars Rinkēvičs emphasised that the EU should acknowledge reforms undertaken by Ukraine and expressed hope that the forthcoming report of the European Commission would give due credit to Ukraine's reform progress.

In addition, the Foreign Minister pointed to the need of continued pressure on Russia through introducing new sanctions, eliminating opportunities to circumvent sanctions already in place, as well as devising mechanisms that will ensure the accountability of Russia and its representatives for aggression against Ukraine and for war crimes committed. Edgars Rinkēvičs also said that contacts with global partners should continue to be actively maintained in order to strengthen support in international organisations and combat Russian disinformation.

On 13 May, Edgars Rinkēvičs also participated in the European Union and Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum taking place in Stockholm. During the forum, the Foreign Minister had bilateral meetings with the Foreign Ministers of India, Japan, Singapore, and Sri Lanka, as well as the Deputy Prime Minister of Fiji. Bilateral relations, opportunities to promote economic cooperation, cooperation in international organisations, and issues related to Russian aggression against Ukraine were discussed during the meetings.

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