

Speech

Taoiseach's Opening Remarks on Russia/Ukraine: Press Conference

From [Department of the Taoiseach](#)

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Today's invasion by Russia of Ukraine's sovereign territory, and its attack on its people, is an outrageous and immoral breach of the most fundamental and basic principles of international law.

Our thoughts must be with the innocent people of Ukraine in their most difficult hour. We stand with them.

The UN Charter requires all countries to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any state.

As a small country in particular, today's use of brute force in pursuit of a warped perception of national interest is a serious affront.

It presents Europe with the most grave security situation it has faced in decades, with repercussions for global security and for the world's economy.

It cannot and it will not go unanswered.

President Putin and those who support him will be held accountable.

This evening I will join our partners in the European Union in Brussels to adopt the most severe package of sanctions we have ever considered. This will be on top of the measures we have already announced.

They will be aimed to hit Putin and his henchmen where it hurts most.

They have been warned.

Actions have consequences, and the consequences for them will be severe, the cost will be high.

EU sanctions will target strategic sectors of the Russian economy, blocking access to markets and to technologies.

They will weaken Russia's economic base.

Assets in the EU will be frozen.

They will have impacts in the EU, including in Ireland, and I will work with fellow leaders to support those hit hardest.

This aggression by Russia will cause untold hardship and tragedy for the Government and people of Ukraine who have shown remarkable resilience and resolve.

We will not be found wanting in offering them the humanitarian support they will need.

We are also maintaining close contact with Irish citizens in Ukraine, whose safety is paramount, including the two Irish diplomats in our Embassy in Kyiv who are in a safe place with EU colleagues. I pay tribute to their commitment and to the work that they are doing.

Ends