



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**



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**Joint statement on Crimea by
President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy
and President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso**

As stated by all 28 EU Heads of State or Government on 6 March 2014, the European Union considers the holding of the referendum on the future status of the territory of Ukraine as contrary to the Ukrainian Constitution and international law. The referendum is illegal and illegitimate and its outcome will not be recognised.

The solution to the crisis in Ukraine must be based on the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, in the framework of the Ukrainian Constitution as well as the strict adherence to international standards. Only working together through diplomatic processes, including direct discussions between the Governments of Ukraine and Russia, can we find a solution to the crisis. The European Union has a special responsibility for peace, stability and prosperity on the European continent and will continue pursuing these objectives using all available channels.

We reiterate the strong condemnation of the unprovoked violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and call on Russia to withdraw its armed forces to their pre-crisis numbers and the areas of their permanent stationing, in accordance with relevant agreements.

In advancing these goals, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs will evaluate the situation tomorrow in Brussels and decide on additional measures in line with the declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the EU of 6 March.

P R E S S

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