

Statement of the ETF Executive Committee on Ukraine

More than one month since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, the ETF Executive Committee reiterates its strong call for peace.

We demand an immediate ceasefire, withdrawal of the Russian army from Ukraine and making all efforts for meaningful diplomatic talks to end this war. We also demand that humanitarian corridors are agreed upon and respected in order to organize safe escape for civilians.

In every war, 90% of the victims are civilians, and the war in Ukraine makes no exception. As in every war, the victims are the workers we represent. The workers we represent and their families are being killed, their houses and the buildings of our unions are being destroyed.

As trade unions, we have the duty to send a strong and united condemnation for this and every other war. This is the only possible choice if we want to stand by the values that we claim to defend: freedom, equality, brotherhood, solidarity and democracy.

Transport workers are particularly affected by war. Transport is crucial for access to food, medicine, and goods as well as work and leisure, and society's reliance on transport and transport workers becomes even more noticeable during war, as access to food, medicine, and aid becomes essential to survival.

The strategic importance of transport, to civilians and the military, means that transport routes and infrastructure – railways, highways, shipping lanes, airports, transport corridors, etc. – are under military threat, and transport workers risk their lives.

This war is also affecting workers in the whole of Europe. As prices of commodities and essential goods are raising sharply as a consequence of the war, the socio-economic consequences are heavy on working people. Mitigation measures directed at workers are urgently needed

Over the last month, the ETF and its affiliates have been actively supporting their members in Ukraine, assisting with humanitarian convoys and with the relocation of transport workers and their families fleeing the war. The ETF commits to keep supporting its members in Ukraine by all possible means, and a fund has been created to finance this support.

ETF and its members will also assist and support all refugees that will seek a job in transport, making sure that they benefit from the same terms and conditions and set of rights as EU nationals. The war should not be used as an excuse to exploit workers and put an even bigger downwards pressure on working conditions for all transport workers.

We keep standing in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, Russia and neighbouring countries calling for peace, dialogue and diplomacy.

We keep calling leaders on all sides to urgently show restraint, diplomacy and urgently de-escalate the conflict to minimise the threat to civilian lives and livelihoods.

All parties, including Russia and Ukraine, as well as across Europe and the NATO States, must do all in their power to de-escalate tensions and seek a peaceful, diplomatic end to this crisis.