EU joins agreement on Special Tribunal for Crime of Aggression vs. Ukraine and ratifies International Claims Commission for Ukraine

Tuesday's UK Defence Intelligence update on the battlefield situation in Ukraine.

In December 2025, the European Union, along with 35 other states, signed the Convention establishing the International Claims Commission for Ukraine. The Commission builds on the work carried out by the Register of Damage established in May 2023 to record claims involving serious injury, deprivation of liberty, sexual violence, loss of housing or residence, or deportation of children. Through the Register, Ukraine and its people can submit claims for 18 categories of damages. On May 11, the Council adopted a Decision, with the consent of the European Parliament, authorizing the EU to become a founding member of the Claims Commission. On May 14, the Commission ratified, on behalf of the EU, the Convention establishing the International Claims Commission for Ukraine, which will be responsible for reviewing, assessing, and determining claims for compensation for the damage, loss and injury caused by Russia to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. It will also be responsible for determining the amount of compensation due in each case. The Claims Commission will start its work once it has gathered 25 ratifications with sufficient financial contributions.

Also on May 14, the European Commission, on behalf of the EU, joined the Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, which sets out the institutional, financial, and administrative modalities of the Special Tribunal. Following the May 14 decision, participating states and organizations are able to ratify the Convention which will officially establish the Special Tribunal. The Special Tribunal will have the power to investigate and prosecute senior Russian political and military leaders for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

Following the Commission's decisions, Kaja Kallas, the Vice President of the Commission and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, said: "There will be no just and lasting peace in Ukraine without accountability for Russia and the perpetrators of the horrific crimes committed against the people of Ukraine. The European Union will support justice in every way we can, today by formally joining the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression and the International Claims Commission. Russia chose to attack and invade a sovereign country, kill its people, deport Ukrainian children and steal Ukrainian land. Russia must face justice and pay for what it has done."

She's right, of course. But unfortunately, there's no reason to think that Russia will in fact face justice and pay for what it has done.

David R. Cameron
May 15, 2026