

Make Russia Pay Protest Wave Shakes Europe: Civil Society Demands Unblocking of Reparation Loan for Ukraine

Belgium, Stop Blocking the Loan for Ukraine's Defence!

Across Europe, a wave of protests continues, demanding that Belgium stop blocking the European Union's decision on the reparation loan for Ukraine, secured by frozen Russian state assets. Demonstrations have already taken place in 13 European cities, including Brussels, where protests were held at the European Council and the Euroclear headquarters — the financial institution holding the bulk of frozen Russian assets. Today, Paris and London join the wave of protests.

Civil society organizations, activists, and friends of Ukraine have gathered outside Belgian embassies, consulates, and EU institutions, urging the Belgian government to stop blocking the European Commission's proposal — a critically important financial decision directly affecting the security of Ukraine and all of Europe. Activists publicly deliver letters to embassies and consulates calling for the unblocking of the loan.

"True solidarity is measured by actions, not rhetoric. Belgium cannot claim to stand in solidarity with Ukraine while blocking the only effective tool at its disposal and placing profits from frozen Russian assets above human lives", said Olena Kuzhym, coordinator of rallies in Brussels.

Separately, in Brussels, a symbolic action took place outside Euroclear headquarters, featuring a two-metre Christmas tree made of "blood money." Activists emphasized that while Ukrainian children face bombings, burns, and trauma this Christmas, Euroclear and Belgian authorities are choosing to protect profits from frozen Russian assets instead of children's lives.

"As a father, I cannot stand by while Ukrainian children are murdered and deported by Russia. Belgium has a moral choice to make: protect Russian money, or protect Ukrainian children," said Antonio Albaladejo Román, who lives in Brussels.

The reparation loan is a mechanism for sustainable financing of Ukraine's defense without direct confiscation of Russian state assets or additional burden on EU taxpayers. Under the loan's terms, frozen assets of the Russian Central Bank would serve as collateral and would only be repaid to Russia if it ends its war of aggression and compensates the damages caused to Ukraine. Belgium controls approximately €180 billion of the world's frozen Russian assets, but continues to refuse to allow their use as collateral, effectively blocking a key EU decision.

Vlada Dumenko, co-coordinator of the international protest wave, stated:

*"The reparation loan for Ukraine is truly a historic step. It can show the world that the European Union is capable of real leadership — that it is a consolidated, decisive force and a geopolitical actor with its own cards to play at the table.
The EU Council meeting on December 18–19 is a make-or-break moment for the EU. It will determine whether Europe can resist modern threats and deter Russian aggression.
A strong Ukraine on its path toward EU membership is an asset for the security of the entire*



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European Union. This decision will literally enhance the EU's own security while providing Ukraine with the strategic resources needed for effective self-defense. Failure to adopt the reparation loan would have devastating consequences not only for Ukraine's ability to resist Russia's war, but for Europe's unity, security, and prosperity for decades to come."

Participants call for:

- Belgium to immediately stop blocking the reparation loan for Ukraine;
- The EU to adopt the decision strengthening Ukraine's and Europe's security;
- Frozen Russian assets to be transformed from passive reserves into a tool to deter aggression.

The protests are organized with the participation of the European Network in Solidarity with Ukraine (ENSU-RESU), International Centre for Ukrainian Victory (ICUV), the Belgian-Ukrainian Advocacy Group, and partner organizations across Europe.

Photos from the protests:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1dOnLfIGSUmHCg6FaK0PfOdK4g8lfFKa>

Photo credit (Brussels): Anastasia Varvarina

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