September 25, 2026

No Reward for the Kremlin:
Keep EU Sanctions on Those Who Enable Russia's War

We, members of the United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network, Chairs of the Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and EU Integration Committees of national parliaments, express our grave concern regarding the removal of Alisher Usmanov and Mikhail Fridman from the list of persons subject to EU restrictive measures adopted in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

We recall that these individuals were designated under the EU restrictive-measures regime as key financial and material pillars of the Russian regime. For decades, they have directly benefited from the Kremlin system, contributed to the destabilisation of Ukraine, and supported the economic base underpinning Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

The Council sets out the grounds for their designation in the Statement of Reasons first adopted in Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/336 of 28 February 2022. Mr Fridman was designated as a leading Russian financier with longstanding ties to the Kremlin who engaged in the Kremlin's efforts to lift sanctions imposed on Russia. Mr Usmanov was designated as he owns and controls assets in key sectors of the Russian economy, including Metalloinvest and MegaFon, which provide substantial revenue to the Russian state. On these grounds, the Council determined that both individuals had supported, materially or financially, and benefited from the Russian decision-makers responsible for the annexation of Crimea and subsequent full scale aggression against Ukraine.

The delisting raises serious concerns about the consistency, credibility and effectiveness of the EU's restrictive-measures policy. Any decision to remove a designated person from the list must rest on a rigorous, individualised assessment of three things, namely, the applicable listing criteria, the evidence underlying the designation, and any subsequent developments that may constitute legally relevant grounds for delisting. We are not aware of any such developments in these two cases. Neither individual has distanced himself from the Kremlin or condemned Russia's war against Ukraine.

We therefore call upon the Governments of the EU Member States and the relevant EU institutions to ensure that decisions on the designation or delisting of Alisher Usmanov and Mikhail Fridman are taken strictly on the basis of the applicable legal framework, the available evidence and the established review procedures. Such decisions must not be made as part of any political, diplomatic or bilateral exchange unrelated to the substantive legal criteria for designation.

Sanctions relief that is traded for concessions unrelated to Russia's conduct undermines the very logic of the regime.

Such a delisting would also set a dangerous precedent. It would signal to the thousands of other persons on the list, and to the third countries acting on their behalf, that designations can be undone not through any change in conduct, but through sustained lobbying or diplomatic pressure. This would invite further delisting demands, expose individual Member States to coercion, and erode the deterrent effect of the EU's restrictive measures as a whole.

We commend the Republic of Latvia for its principled stance throughout these negotiations and for its enacted decision to impose national restrictive measures on Mr Usmanov and Mr Fridman. We urge all Member States that share our concerns to follow Latvia's example without delay.

We further urge the Member States to maintain a coordinated and effective sanctions policy towards all persons whose conduct continues to fall within the applicable criteria. Any weakening of the regime must be assessed in light of its implications for the credibility of the Union's response to Russia's aggression and for the enforcement of existing measures.

The EU's restrictive-measures policy must remain legally robust, evidence-based, consistent and effectively enforceable for as long as the circumstances giving rise to those measures persist.

Respectfully,

Žygimantas Pavilionis
Member of The Seimas of the Lithuanian Republic, Deputy Chair of Foreign Affairs Committee, Head of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Ruslanas Baranovas
Member of The Seimas of the Lithuanian Republic, Member of Foreign Affairs Committee, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze
Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Chair of the Committee on Ukraine's Integration into the EU, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Oleksandr Merezhko
Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Chair of the parliamentary Committee on Foreign Policy and Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Agnieszka Pomaska
Member of Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee at Sejm, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Rihards Kols
Member of the European Parliament, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Marko Mihkelson
Member of the Riigikogu, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Aleksi Jäntti
Member of The Parliament of Finland, Chair of the Finland–Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Laurynas Kasčiūnas
Chairman of Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrats, former Defence Minister of Lithuania

Sara Nanni
Member of Defence Committee, Bundestag

Dainius Žalimas
Member of the European Parliament

Eerik-Niiles Kross
Member of The Riigikogu, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee Investigating Russian Influence Operations, Chairman of the PACE Legal Committee, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Beata Jurik
Vice-Chair of the EU Affairs Committee, National Council of the Slovak Republic

Fatmir Mediu
Member of Defence Committee, former Defence Minister of Albania

Vadym Halaichuk
Deputy Chair of EU integration Committee, Ukraine

Marie Kršková
Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Vice-chair of the Committee on European Affairs

Lia Quartapelle
Deputy Chair of Foreign Affairs Committee, Italy

Lars-Christian Brask
Deputy Speaker, Danish Parliament

Henrike Brandstötter
Member of Austrian Parliament, Chair of the Austrian-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Marcus Knuth
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Danish Parliament

Anton Hofreiter
Member of German Bundestag, Chair of the European Affairs Committee

Hristo Gadzhev
Deputy Chair of EU affairs committee, Bulgarian Parliament

Hanah Lahe
Member of Parliament, the Republic of Estonia

Pavel Fischer
Senator, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations, Security and Defense, Czech Republic

Marek Ženíšek
Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee

Ann-Sophie Alm
Member of Parliament of the Kingdom of Sweden, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Member of the Swedish Defense Commission, Member of Nordic Council, Member of United for Ukraine inter-parliamentary network

Juris Vilums
Chairman of the United List parliamentary group in Saeima, the Republic of Latvia

Gustaf Göthberg
Member of the Swedish Parliament and General Rapporteur for a democratic Belarus in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Evika Siliņa
Chair of the European Affairs Committee, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia

Pavel Žáček
Deputy Head of the Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Member of the Security and Defence Committee, Czech Republic

Ināra Mūrniece
Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliament of Latvia

Axel Weydts
Member of Parliament, Chair of the Committee on Military Operations, Belgian Federal Parliament

Raimonds Bergmanis
Member of Parliament, Chair of the Defense, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Committee, Latvia

Oras Tynkkynen
Member of The Parliament of Finland, Co-Chair of the Finland–Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group

Heikki Autto
Member of the Parliament of Finland, Chair of the Defence Committee

Thomas Röwekamp
Chairman of Defence Committee, German Bundestag

Johannes Volkmann
Member of Foreign Affairs Committee, German Bundestag

Lucia Plavakova
Chair of the Human Rights Committee in the Slovak National Council, Vice Chair of the ALDE party and Vice Chair of the ALDE group in PACE

Peeter Tali
Chair of the EU Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu, Chair of the National Defence Committee of the Riigikogu

Frederic Petit
Member of the French National Assembly, Deputy Chair of European Affairs Committee, France

Petras Auštrevičius
Member of the European Parliament

Riho Terras
Member of the European Parliament

Michael Gahler
Member of the European Parliament, the European Parliament's Standing Rapporteur on Ukraine

Pekka Tovery
Member of the European Parliament, Chair of Parliamentary Association Committee in the European Parliament

Helmut Brandstätter
Member of the European Parliament, Co-chair of Parliamentary Association Committee in the European Parliament

Villy Søvndal
Member of the European Parliament, Co-chair of Parliamentary Association Committee in the European Parliament