

**Eröffnungsrede
des Bundeskanzlers
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Olaf Scholz, MdB,**

**anlässlich der
International Expert Conference
on the Recovery, Reconstruction and Moderni-
sation of Ukraine**

**am 25.10.2022
in Berlin**

Excellencies,
Honoured guests and delegates,
Friends in and from Ukraine,
Ladies and gentlemen,

President von der Leyen and I welcome you to Berlin – to support our Ukrainian friends in realising their vision for their future. For the recovery, reconstruction and modernisation of Ukraine. For a peaceful, prosperous and resilient Ukraine, with whom we share a joint European future.

As we speak, Russia's vicious war of aggression is once again intensifying. The latest indiscriminate attacks, including the use of kamikaze drones against civilians and civilian infrastructure in Ukraine, mark a new low in Russia's despicable effort to wipe Ukraine off the map.

This abhorrent way of warfare only demonstrates one thing: Putin's Russia is desperate. The proud and brave nation of Ukraine will prevail! To ensure that it does prevail, together with all our friends and partners we will resolutely continue to support Ukraine: politically, financially, in terms of humanitarian assistance – and also with arms. For as long as it takes! For as long as that support is needed!

In particular, Germany will continue to provide Ukraine with the air defence systems it so urgently needs. The best reconstruction is the reconstruction that does not have to happen at all, because Ukrainian cities and power stations are protected from Russian bombs, drones and missiles.

Today, we do not yet know when this war will end. But end, it will. And when it does, we will continue to stand by Ukraine in its struggle for security, freedom and democracy. We know that no two countries' histories are the same. But from our own historical experience, we also know that reconstruction is always possible – and that it is never too soon to tackle this task.

- Now is the moment to convene the brightest and best minds to provide expertise and recommendations to start rebuilding Ukraine.

- Now is the moment to use the world's collective knowledge to contribute to Ukraine's future.
- Now is the moment to develop the institutional framework to govern and deliver Ukraine's reconstruction.
- And now is the moment to discuss how Ukraine's future can be built and financed.

That is why we gather here today: To discuss how to ensure and how to sustain the financing of the recovery, reconstruction and modernisation of Ukraine – for years and decades to come.

So, let me stress what this conference is not: It is not a regular donor conference. It is more fundamental than that. This conference is about developing the structures and the mechanisms that will help to facilitate and finance what John Maynard Keynes in 1944 called “permanent reconstruction”.^{*} So that's what is at stake here: nothing less than creating a new Marshall Plan for the 21st century. A generational task that must begin now.

The recovery, reconstruction and modernisation of Ukraine will indeed be a challenge for generations – one that will require the combined strength of the entire international community. But it is also an opportunity for generations to come – if we get it right. So, let us not just focus on reconstructing what was – as important as this is at present. But let us also think about what can be: a more advanced, sustainable and resilient Ukraine: A Ukraine that will be an important producer of green energy; an exporter of high-end industrial and agricultural products; a digital powerhouse with some of the world's best IT experts; an EU member with infrastructure and a legal framework to match.

^{*} Statement by Lord Keynes on the proposed Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Bretton Woods Conference 1944).

For me, the European Union's commitment to Ukraine as a future member is one of the most consequential geopolitical decisions of our times. Our global endeavour to both re-construct Ukraine and pursue the EU accession process will yield enormous synergies: Not just Ukraine but Europe as a whole will be the stronger for it!

We also need to combine the various international strands in support of Ukraine:

- During our Presidency, the G7 has taken unprecedented steps to impose economic costs on Russia and on those supporting its war of aggression. Based on the commitments we made for Ukraine at the Elmau Summit in June, we are now looking to our Japanese friends as the incoming G7 Presidency to ensure the continuity of our support.
- G20 leaders will meet in Bali next month, and we encourage our Indonesian friends to address Ukraine's needs as well as the imperative to defend the international rules-based order.
- The international community established a vision for Ukraine's future in Lugano last July. I congratulate our Swiss and British friends on the progress made and look forward to the follow-up event next year.
- Last but not least, we come together here in Berlin today as a global community, ready to pool our knowledge and convene the expertise needed to transform Ukraine.

In its fight for freedom, independence and sovereignty, Ukraine is not alone – nor will it be alone. Yet at this turning point in Ukrainian history, Ukrainian ownership and agency are key. Therefore, I welcome President Zelensky's keynote speech and Prime Minister Shmyhal's participation today. Together, we are looking forward to the insights that the participating experts bring to the table.

We want to gather pathways for financing Ukraine's future – not just for months, but for years to come.

In order to be able to live up to this gigantic endeavour, we need to develop even better ways to bring together public and private funders from around the world to invest into a sustainable future of Ukraine. We should discuss what a transparent, effective and inclusive governance framework could look like – one that all our partners and the international institutions present here today can subscribe to. And we will hear from the very best, on aspects such as decentralisation and regional development, on anti-corruption, investment promotion and macroprudential practices. The better the set-up we create for Ukraine's reconstruction now, the more international support Ukraine will enjoy in the years to come.

In convening this excellent and diverse international group, we demonstrate once again our unwavering support for Ukraine – and our full confidence that the values we all share with Ukraine will prevail. Thank you all for joining us, for thinking big and outside the box – just as the scale of the task ahead requires.

Thank you very much!