

EU, Ukraine Back Prosecutor to Probe Russian Aggression

By [AFP](#)

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Meeting of the President of Ukraine with the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen in Kyiv. president.gov.ua

The European Union and Kyiv on Friday backed plans to set up an international prosecution office in The Hague to help investigate Russia for the "crime of aggression" in Ukraine.

The move — announced in a joint statement at an EU-Ukraine summit in Kyiv — is seen as an interim step before the creation of a special tribunal capable of prosecuting the Russian leadership.

"We support the development of an international centre for the prosecution of the crime of aggression in Ukraine (ICPA) in The Hague with the objective to coordinate investigation of the crime of aggression against Ukraine, preserve and store evidence for future trials," the statement said.

Kyiv is pressing for a special tribunal to be set up to prosecute Moscow for the crime of aggression because it sees this as a way to achieve faster justice and more easily target the Kremlin's top officials.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is currently probing possible war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the war on Ukraine but it has no mandate to pursue the broader crime of aggression.

The EU — along with key member states including Germany — have backed setting up a special tribunal but there are complex legal disputes over how it could work.

Ukraine favors obtaining a resolution from the United Nations General Assembly to set up a one-off tribunal capable of prosecuting President Vladimir Putin.

But some of Kyiv's Western backers argue it may be hard to get broad international backing for the move at the UN.

They say a more feasible approach could be to set up a "hybrid" court under Ukrainian law, which would have a combination of Ukrainian and foreign judges.

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