



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**



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**Statement by the President of the European Council,
Herman Van Rompuy, on the downing of a Ukrainian
military aircraft**

Today, after the downing of a military aircraft transporting 49 persons, I wish to express my heartfelt condolences to the Ukrainian people and Government for all the lives lost in the dramatic violence which is affecting the eastern provinces of the country and which continues to worsen.

While legitimate force must always be used with restraint, there is no doubt that the Ukrainian Government has an obligation and a duty to restore order within its borders. There is equally no doubt that the armed fighters that are terrorising and disrupting the lives of citizens in Ukraine, are enjoying external support, including arms supply and reinforcement through foreign fighters.

As a neighbouring State Russia bears a primary responsibility in ensuring that any such traffic and external support through its borders is immediately stopped. Any other attitude, and public ambiguity in relation to what is happening, is not compatible with Russia's international obligations within the OSCE or the UN.

P R E S S

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