

# Alona Lebedieva: 30 Years of Ukraine in the Council of Europe — What's Next, When the Challenges Have Become Existential

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- Europe has marked the 30th anniversary of Ukraine's membership in the Council of Europe — an event symbolizing the long-term political, legal, and value-based integration of our country into the European community.

In his special address, Secretary General of the Council of Europe Alain Berset [recalled the historical context](#) of Ukraine's accession to the organization

in 1995. He emphasized that the meaning of this anniversary is especially profound today — amid Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine. According to him, the courage, resilience, and dignity of Ukrainians inspire the entire continent, and supporting Ukraine's freedom, independence, and the restoration of justice is "a shared duty of all Europe."

"Thirty years ago, Ukraine made its choice — in favor of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. At the same time, it was the Revolution of Dignity of 2013–2014 that became the moment when Ukrainian society clearly, consciously, and irreversibly confirmed its European civilizational choice. Therefore, any talk of 'Ukraine fatigue' or compromise with the aggressor — which we sometimes hear from certain politicians — contradicts the very principles on which the European continent stands. Europe cannot afford weakness: if international law is violated, punishment must be inevitable — otherwise wars will repeat themselves," emphasized Ukrainian businesswoman Alona Lebedieva, owner of the Aurum Group industrial and investment holding.

As part of the 30th anniversary of Ukraine's membership in the organization, Alain Berset also reminded that practical mechanisms have already been launched to support Ukraine. These include the Register of Damage Caused by Russian Aggression, the work of the European Court of Human Rights, which remains the only international court handling cases of war crimes against Ukrainians, as well as the creation of a special tribunal to prosecute the crime of



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aggression.

At the same time, the Council of Europe supports Ukraine not only in the judicial dimension. One of the key areas is assistance in reconstruction and strengthening democratic resilience. This includes the implementation of the most ambitious Action Plan for Ukraine in the organization's history, focusing on judicial reform, anti-corruption tools, ensuring fair and transparent elections, and supporting civil society.

"We have already proven that European values are not slogans but a conscious choice for which people fight and die," said Alona Lebedieva. "Ukraine is not asking for the right to be part of Europe — it proves every day that it already is an inseparable part of it. We do not seek pity — we expect consistency and strength in action."

She stressed that the war unleashed by Russia is not only an attempt to destroy Ukraine — it is a challenge to the very idea of a united Europe. And how Europe responds to this challenge will determine what kind of Europe it will be tomorrow — strong and united, or divided and paralyzed by fear of dictatorships.

"Europe cannot afford double standards. If international law has been violated, there must be punishment. If we are attacked, it is not Ukraine that must compromise. Every concession to the aggressor today is a new war tomorrow," Lebedieva stated.

According to her, Ukrainian society remains resilient under extremely difficult conditions precisely because it understands that the struggle is not only for territory, but for values, for a way of life, and for the future of our children. Therefore, support for Ukraine must remain not a matter of humanitarian aid, but of collective security and civilizational choice.

"If Europe truly wants a continent free of blackmail, dictatorships, and aggression — it must not simply stand beside us. It must stand with us. Until the end. Until recovery. Until a just verdict for the aggressor. Because this is not only what Ukraine demands — this is what Europe's conscience demands today," concluded Alona Lebedieva.

Alona Lebedieva  
Aurum Group  
[email us here](#)

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