

Open letter to EU heads of state ahead of the 11-12 March Informal European Council

Brussels, 8 March, 2022

As the world looks on in horror at Putin's invasion of Ukraine, Europe faces its biggest crisis in decades.

The outburst of solidarity and sympathy with Ukraine across much of Europe is heartening. But actions speak louder than words.

The rockets destroying Ukrainian cities were bought with money Putin and his cronies earned selling petrol and diesel to European drivers.

European oil money – oil historically accounted for 4 out of 5 dollars made on Russian oil and gas exports – has underpinned Putin's military spending for over two decades. Every day we send \$285 million to Russia to buy oil as explained in the annexed briefing.

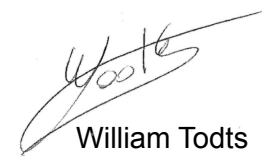
T&E and many other NGOs [have already called](#) on Governments to end Russian oil and gas imports to stop financing the war against Ukraine and to take decisive action to shield households and businesses from the negative impacts of the ongoing and worsening energy crisis.

On Thursday-Friday European leaders will meet at an informal European Council. We urge you to lead a call on the European Commission to propose an action plan by Easter to urgently end our dependence on Russian oil and reduce oil consumption. Language to that end should be included in the EU Council conclusions.

Ending our fossil fuel addiction, starting with Russian oil, gas and coal is no longer purely a climate objective, it is an urgent moral imperative. Many citizens want to show solidarity with Ukraine by saving energy - this sends a powerful signal - but the primary responsibility and power to act lies with governments.

The European Union and the entire free world are imposing exceptional economic sanctions on Russia. The partial exclusion of Russian banks from the SWIFT system is a major step.

We call on governments to take decisive action to shield vulnerable households and businesses from the negative impacts of the ongoing and worsening energy crisis. Freezing trade with Russia will have further negative effects. But Putin's extraordinary military aggression does require an extraordinary response. Inaction would be to condone the destruction of a free and democratic Ukraine and its people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W Todts', written over a white background.

William Todts
Executive Director