

June 2025

Declaration of the Union of Cities THE HANSA on Russia and Belarus

The Union of Cities THE HANSA stands for a united and peaceful Europe based on democratic values, cooperation across borders and international understanding. Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine was also an attack on the values of the Union of Cities. All cooperation with the Hanseatic cities in Russia and Belarus was stopped after the beginning of the war. Representatives of those cities were released from official functions, the cities were suspended from participation in any activities, and all communication was cut off.

More than three years have passed since the unprovoked Russian attack and the large-scale invasion of Ukraine. The hope for peace has not yet been fulfilled. On the contrary: parts of Ukraine are occupied, countless people have lost their lives and the war continues to bring great devastation and suffering to the Ukrainian people.

This makes it all the more important for the Union of Cities to stand firmly together in solidarity with Ukraine. Europe's freedom and democratic system are threatened for the first time in decades. It is our responsibility to defend the principles of freedom, democracy and international law.

Since the beginning of the war, many Hanseatic cities have been committed to providing humanitarian aid and a wide range of support for the refugees. We would like to thank all Hanseatic cities for their continued solidarity with Ukraine. We appeal to the people in the Russian and Belarusian Hanseatic cities to oppose their criminal regimes and to stand up for peace.

The hosting of the International Hanseatic Days 2033 (Pskov) and 2034 (Kaliningrad) will be withdrawn from the cities.

As long as there is no peace, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine are not fully re-established, we do not see a basis for any cooperation with the Russian and Belarusian Hanseatic cities.