# EU Commences Membership Talks with Ukraine and Moldova Amid Ongoing Conflicts



The European Union (EU) officially commenced membership talks with Ukraine and Moldova on June 25, 2024, marking a significant step in the countries' EU accession process. The discussions were initiated at an intergovernmental conference held in Luxembourg. This development comes amid ongoing conflicts between Ukraine and Russia, following Russia’s 2022 invasion.

In a video address, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal called the day "historic" and emphasized Ukraine's readiness to meet the necessary criteria for EU membership. Some hours earlier, the International Criminal Court (ICC) had issued arrest warrants for former Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov over alleged war crimes in Ukraine.

The ICC claims Shoigu and Gerasimov are responsible for directing attacks on civilian infrastructure, resulting in substantial harm. Russian officials dismissed the warrants as part of a "hybrid war" by the West. Despite Russia not recognizing the ICC's jurisdiction, the warrants restrict international travel for those indicted.

Belgium, currently holding the EU’s rotating presidency, underscored the significance of the membership talks. Belgian Foreign Minister Hadja Lahbib highlighted ongoing EU support for Ukraine. Moldovan Prime Minister Dorin Recean echoed these sentiments, affirming Moldova's commitment to EU integration amid regional instability.

Ukraine and Moldova's accession processes will involve aligning their national laws with EU standards across 35 policy chapters. These negotiations are expected to be long and complex, with Ukraine specifically aiming to join by 2030.