



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE
1400th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

24 November 2022

Mr. Chair,

You and your delegation have been unwavering this year in defending the founding principles of this organization in the face of Russia's brutal and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, and concomitantly, of Russia's violation of its OSCE commitments. Canada thanks you for this. This morning your Deputy, a talented diplomat with the rare gift of brevity, summed this up in the PrepComm in a single sentence to the Russian Federation: "Your country has violated every principle of this organization." I will use my statement today to take a moment to reflect further on this point made by Ambassador Czaplinski.

Today marks nine long months of unnecessary pain and suffering since Russia launched its unjust, illegal, and premeditated invasion against Ukraine. In its war, Russia has violated the most basic principles of international law and has shown complete and utter disregard for its OSCE Commitments. A week before the Ministerial Council, and having repeatedly heard Russia questioning the existence of the "rules-based international order", it is important to remind ourselves of our commitments under the Helsinki Final Act.

In 1975, the participating States, recognizing the indivisibility of security in Europe, as well as their common interest in cooperation throughout Europe and the region:

- Reaffirmed their commitment to peace, security and justice;
- Reaffirmed their full and active support for the United Nations;
- Expressed their common adherence to a set of principles, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, set forth in the Helsinki Final Act;
- And declared their determination to respect and put into practice, each of those principles in their relations with all other participating States, irrespective of their political, economic or social systems, their size, geographical location or level of economic development,

The principles outlined in the Helsinki Final Act are rather straightforward, but I will repeat them here as it appears that there is at least one participating States that needs reminding

- I. Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty
- II. Refraining from the threat or use of force
- III. Inviolability of frontiers
- IV. Territorial integrity of States
- V. Peaceful settlement of disputes
- VI. Non-intervention in internal affairs
- VII. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief
- VIII. Equal rights and self-determination of peoples
- IX. Cooperation among States
- X. Fulfilment in good faith of obligations under international law

I do not have the time here to speak to all of these principles in-depth, but it is frankly deeply alarming to consider how - through its war of aggression against Ukraine beginning in 2014, the Russian Federation has thoroughly failed to uphold its commitments to other states' sovereign equality; to refrain from the use of force; to respect the territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders; and to pursue peaceful settlement of disputes.

Under the principle of "Sovereign Equality", the Helsinki Act clearly states that participating States will respect each other's right to define and conduct *as they wish* their relations with other States, yet Russia is forthright that their pretext for the invasion of Ukraine is their desire to not simply undermine Ukraine's sovereignty but to dictate Ukraine's relations with other states and organizations.

The Russian delegation is adept at putting forward false justifications for its invasion but consistently avoids the fact that the Kremlin made no real effort to resolve its supposed grievances by peaceful means, resorting instead to interference, armed force, sham referenda and attempts to illegally annex Ukrainian territory.

It also bears noting that the "Peaceful settlement of disputes" does not include trying to force another State to the negotiation table by attacking its civilian infrastructure including its economic and urban centres, and electric, heating and gas infrastructure, as a presidential spokesperson recently admitted Russia is doing, or its grain export and transportation infrastructure.

Finally, Russia has demonstrated clear contempt for human rights and fundamental freedoms, not only in territories under its temporary control, but also within its own borders. This has been extensively documented through the Moscow Mechanism report and the tireless work of human rights defenders.

Russia's disregard for the OSCE principles, and indeed the UN Charter is so blatant, that one wonders if they ever put down the Rules of Procedure to read the Helsinki Final Act.

Mr. Chair,

The pain and suffering of Ukrainian civilians due to Russia's disregard for international law, the UN Charter and its Helsinki Final Act commitments must end. Russia must withdraw its forces from Ukraine's internationally recognized borders, including Crimea. The Russian Federation must re-commit to peace, security and justice; it must refrain from the use of force and demonstrate respect for the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of its neighbours. It must fulfill its obligations under international law, including the UN Charter. Russia must end this war and realize that it too can benefit from a global order based on rules and the commitments that we have taken as participating States of the OSCE.

Thank you Mr. Chair.