



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  
1449<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**9 November 2023**

Mr. Chair,

Every week, we hope to have less to say on this topic. Yet, every week, we find ourselves in the opposite situation of having to choose among the atrocities the Russian Federation committed in Ukraine since the last time we've met.

War is ugly, even when fought within the boundaries of international law. The Russian Federation's actions in Ukraine far exceed the limits of legal warfare, inflicting unnecessary destruction and suffering. Day after day. And that's even leaving aside the question of the crime of aggression.

With its unprovoked and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine, Russia acts as though there are no legal or moral boundaries to respect. And when participating States in this Council present overwhelming evidence for its atrocities, the Russian Federation deflects, points fingers, and engages in whataboutism.

Mr. Chair,

As winter approaches, we are witnessing an increase in attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure indispensable to the survival of the population, to deprive people of light and heat in the darkest and coldest time of the year. The attacks are a *déjà vu* of last winter; and earlier this year, the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine concluded they were "disproportionate and [...] constituted the war crime of excessive incidental death, injury, or damage".

Thousands of children have been separated and forcibly transferred away from their parents and caretakers in Ukraine to locations in Russia, Belarus, and the illegally occupied territories of Ukraine where they have sometimes faced mistreatment and punishment.

The reports of sexual and gender-based violence documented by the Commission of Inquiry are horrifying. Victims include men, women and children and range from ages 4 to over 80. Rapes were committed at gunpoint, with extreme brutality and acts of torture.

Illegitimate courts under the Kremlin's control continue to prosecute political prisoners detained in the temporarily occupied territories, especially from the Crimean Tatar community. Russia's practice of oppressing dissident voices in temporarily occupied Ukraine is a carbon copy of its efforts to silence dissidents at home. We admire the courage of those who stand up against the Kremlin's illegal war, despite the risks to them personally.

Mr. Chair,

Russia's weaponization of food threatens food security around the world, leaving many hungry or unable to afford food. Just yesterday, Ukrainian authorities reported that Russia fired a missile at a civilian ship entering a port in the Black Sea in Odesa oblast, injuring crew members and killing one individual.

The rhetoric transmitted in Russian state and other media against Ukraine is dangerous and, according to the Commission of Inquiry, may constitute incitement to genocide.

Russia has turned an OSCE participating State, in the heart of Europe, into the world's most mined territory, which presents a threat to Ukrainians for generations to come.

The above-mentioned examples barely scratch the surface of Russia's track record in Ukraine.

The reports of the Commission of Inquiry reaffirm what has been documented by the ODIHR monitoring mission and multiple Moscow Mechanism reports: Russia has committed serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

We reiterate the importance of accountability for Russia's crimes and continue to support international initiatives and mechanisms to advance accountability and justice in Ukraine, with a strong focus on cases of sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence. This includes support for access to criminal justice through the OSCE Support Programme for Ukraine.

Finally, Mr. Chair,

Russia has regrettably chosen to drift further and further away from being a constructive and reliable partner for security and cooperation in our region. This is evident daily in Russia's deliberate actions that inhibit us from working together to build a stronger region through the OSCE.

Canada appreciates the pivotal importance of Ukraine's freedom for our collective security, especially in the OSCE region. Russia's allegations of fatigue are nothing more than wishful thinking. Nothing is more critical to the security and freedom of this region than Ukraine's victory. Canada will continue supporting Ukraine accordingly.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.