



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1438th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
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Mr. Chairperson, dear colleagues,

This week many of us have brought our children back to school, where they will discover the world, make friends, and enjoy life.

However, this continues to be different for Ukraine because of russia's war of aggression.

Many mothers and fathers could not share moments of exploring this world with their children, because they are defending the future of their children on the frontline.

Hundreds of thousands of children, who, thanks to the support of our partners, found shelter in different countries, could not share moments of joy with their fathers as families remain divided because of russia's invasion.

Hundreds of children will never hear a school bell anymore, as their lives were cut short by russia.

And russia continues to destroy educational facilities in Ukraine.

So far, 3758 educational institutions have suffered bombing and shelling, - and 363 of them have been destroyed completely.

In violation of international humanitarian law, schools and universities, kindergartens and orphanages are the targets for russia's war criminals.

Therefore, thousands have no privilege to physically attend schools but have to rely on online education, thus, being dependent on russia's possible new attacks against energy infrastructure as winter is approaching.

Because of continued missile attacks, the latest one with 8 missiles and 25 drones happened on the night of September 6, the educational process is often interrupted, lack of sleep poses challenges to mental health, and many schools need new shelters to ensure that their doors are open during the school year.

Moreover, thousands of children have been traumatized as they were kidnapped and deported to russia, where they are exposed to assimilation and adoption policy.

Neither should we forget about children who remain in the occupied territories.

They are subjected to forced russification and military indoctrination. By doing so, russia mistakenly believes it can enroot its neo-colonial rule in Ukraine.

Also, in its futile attempts to legitimize the grab of lands, the aggressor is preparing to announce predetermined results of so-called "elections" on September 10.

Like in russia itself, democratic institutions, including elections, are exploited by invaders to consolidate the regime of lawlessness, dictatorship, and terror. However, we must not allow russia to act like this.

While these sham elections will not create any legal consequences for Ukraine, however, they must create legal consequences for russia itself.

Apart from the expected condemnation of this gross violation of international law, including by the OSCE, more sanctions against the regime in moscow and expanded military support for Ukraine would be very much helpful in restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity.

At the same time the consolidation of russia's rule on the occupied territories is accompanied by an unprecedented terrorist campaign of taking civilian hostages.

In this regard Crimea is a stark reminder of how far russia is ready to go.

Illegally detained persons are kept in inadequate conditions that may amount to torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, including complete isolation from the outside and lack of medical care.

Such inhuman treatment has already led to the death of two political prisoners from occupied Crimea, namely, Dzhemil Gafarov and Konstantin Shyring.

And as of now, we are aware of 21 more Ukrainian citizens illegally detained in Crimea who urgently need medical assistance.

This situation requires urgent and adequate actions on behalf of the international community.

In particular, we ask the OSCE and its institutions to use their mandates to facilitate the immediate and unconditional release by russia of all political prisoners from Crimea and civilian hostages taken in the context of the ongoing invasion, including the SMM personnel.

Thousands of people are missing in russia's prisons. Many more potentially would end up in this prison if russia's occupation lasts longer. We have to help to return freedom to these people.

Dear colleagues,

Every day proves that it was a strategic mistake to think that we could build security, including in the OSCE, together with such russia.

As we see, global food security remains at risk, as russia attacks the infrastructure of the Danube ports of the Odesa region. The latest attack happened this night. And this was the third night in a row that russia attacked the port infrastructure of the region.

The actions of the russian federation once again violate the interests and sovereign rights of the Danube States, stand against freedom of navigation on the Black Sea and Danube, and undermine the economic relations of the Danube States throughout the region.

In this context, we call our international partners, including Türkiye, to thwart russia's attempts to blackmail the world with new food crises.

Furthermore, russia is also engaged in creating human trafficking networks throughout the globe to sustain its war efforts.

Let me quote a statement done on September 4 by the Cuban Foreign Ministry.

Cuba's "Ministry of the Interior... is working on the neutralization and dismantling of a human trafficking network that operates from russia to incorporate Cuban citizens living there, and even some from Cuba, into the military forces participating in war operations in Ukraine".

But how many more such networks are operated by russia? Especially in the OSCE area?

What about russia's commitments before the OSCE to combat the trafficking in human beings? And what about statements delivered by the russian delegation when trafficking was discussed in the OSCE? As any such statements, they are just a cover-up for russia's criminal activities.

So, what is an added value of the presence of this delegation here? How it contributes to the OSCE comprehensive security? Their statements just mislead our efforts.

The whole 30-year history of the russian federation, after its appearance on the map as a political entity, is marked with horrendous crimes. moscow misused its chance to break with the past.

Chechnya, Georgia, Syria, Ukraine - all this is a consequence of moscow's impunity.

A few days ago, on 10th anniversary of the chemical attack in Ghouta, Ukraine's Prosecutor General met with leaders of the Syrian civil society to discuss a strategy how to bring russia to account for all its international crimes.

We have to act together to end this impunity as stipulated by Ukraine's Peace Formula.

Furthermore, activities of the kremlin-controlled Wagner group, a state-sponsored terrorist organization, clearly demonstrate a potential security threat the African countries would face, unless the russian regime is stopped now.

We do not have to guess about russia's future intentions. To understand them, it is enough to open a new history textbook for 11th-grade students written by Mr. Medinsky, a confidant of vladimir putin. One can see, that for russia, any fight for freedom and sovereignty is yet another "fascist uprising" supported by the West.

Recent antisemitic and conspiracy non-sense repeated by the russian president about Ukraine speaks volumes. He will continue the war as long as he has resources to do that. As long as he receives revenues from oil and gas sales. As long as foreign companies will pay taxes to the aggressor's budget. As long as he can get critical components for missiles in violation of existing sanction regimes.

Nationalistic agenda of russia's TV is the best evidence that the kremlin regime is totally focused on war efforts.

That's why we have to finally acknowledge that the previous policy of russia's engagement has failed.

All new attempts to talk with russia will be considered by moscow as weakness and a green light for new aggressive steps.

All hopes to engage russia in our Organization will be used by its delegation to kill the OSCE with endless technical amendments and references to procedures, while the Helsinki Final Act be attacked by the same russian delegation.

As President Zelenskyy stated, "if someone in the world still attempts to deal with anything russian, it means turning a blind eye to the reality".

Yesterday's terrorist attack on the central market in Kostiantynivka, a free and beautiful city in the Donetsk region, with 16 killed, including a child, and 33 injured clearly illustrates what kind of a reality russia, as OSCE participating state, suggests for us. It is the reality of terrorist attacks and deliberate killings of civilians. One must never get used to this. Condemnation of such crimes would never be enough. It's about people, isn't it?

This is why we have to grasp a chance to learn how to live and build our security without this russian regime. By approximating Ukraine's victory. By bringing the kremlin to account, including in a Special Tribunal. By cutting any ties with russia. By ensuring that moscow will never attack again.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.