



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
ON RUSSIA'S WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE**

1068th FSC Plenary Meeting
(31 January 2024)

Agenda Item 1, General Statements

Mr Chairperson,

On behalf of the Delegation of Ukraine, allow me to deliver a statement on the subject of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

On 23 January 2024, the 18th meeting of the Contact Group on the Defence of Ukraine took place in the Rammstein format. This meeting was a good opportunity for Ukraine to convey a number of important messages to our partners, in particular, to inform them about the situation on the front. We, in turn, heard important statements from our partners, sufficient to say that strong support for Ukraine will continue.

Military assistance to Ukraine is critical to the success of our efforts to defend the country from Russian invasion. Heavy armoured vehicles, including tanks, advanced air defence systems and combat aircraft are necessary to protect civilians and liberate the sovereign territories of Ukraine. We are grateful to our international partners for their assistance in increasing Ukraine's combat capability.

Broad international support for Ukraine's inalienable right to self-defence, exercised in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, sends a powerful message that cannot be replaced by Russia's attempt to unite other rogue states such as Belarus, Iran, and North Korea — virtually the only countries in the world, openly supporting Russia's illegitimate war of aggression against Ukraine.

Despite deploying all available resources, the Russian Federation is not making progress in achieving its imperial goal of dismantling Ukrainian statehood and destruction of the Ukrainian nation. Having a significant advantage in both manpower and weapons, Russian troops, nevertheless, continue to suffer significant losses. On average, the Russian armed forces lose 400

soldiers for every kilometre of advance. As Defence Minister of Ukraine Rustem Umerov recently noted: "Russian military machine is working at full power to attack small Ukrainian villages".

Simultaneously with ground operations, Russian armed forces continue to attack Ukraine, launching air and missile strikes against civilians. In just two months, December-January, Russian troops fired more than 600 missiles and 1000 Shahed-type UAVs against targets across Ukraine.

Trying to suppress the resistance of the Ukrainian military, Russian forces widely employ prohibited weapons. In violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, Russian troops use gas grenades and improvised explosive devices equipped with irritant substances, dropped from UAVs. Moreover, artillery shelling with chemically hazardous substances is being carried out, which is another gross violation of the rules of war by Russian troops. Ukrainian Defence Forces have already documented 626 cases of Russian use of ammunition containing toxic chemicals, of which 81 were in December alone. The frequency of such use is growing, with up to 10 cases recorded daily.

Esteemed colleagues,

The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine remains dire. Regular violations of International Humanitarian Law continue to be a systematic practice there. Russia continues to take actions aimed at tightening control over the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and their complete absorption. To this end, the Russian occupation administration imposes its national legislation, integrates the local economy and persecutes the local population for any suspicion of "disloyalty."

The occupiers introduced education in accordance with Russian educational standards, attempting to erase Ukrainian national identity of Ukrainian children. Propaganda textbooks and literature from Russia are being delivered to educational institutions. Instead, Ukrainian literature is being massively removed. Ukrainian children are widely exposed to the so-called "military-patriotic education", during which service in the Russian armed forces is actively promoted.

Trying to suppress any local resistance, the occupation forces continue to persecute people who disagree with the occupation for their pro-Ukrainian or simply anti-war views. People are detained for single-person protests or social media posts which address the real situation on the frontline – such actions are regarded as "discrediting the armed forces." These especially apply to local activists, representatives of ethnic minorities, and religious leaders.

Russia is taking measures to change the ethnic composition of the temporarily occupied territories. To this end, the occupying administration actively deports Ukrainians and forcibly relocates them to Russia, as well as carries out large-scale resettlement of people from remote regions of Russia to Ukraine.

Following the practice of Stalin's totalitarian times, so-called "show trials" of Ukrainian prisoners of war are regularly organised. Just since the beginning of this year, the so-called courts

in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions have organised 3 cases against the prisoners of war. The most recent case occurred on 16 January 2024, when the so-called court of the Russian occupation administration in the Donetsk region sentenced Ukrainian prisoner of war Serhii Mykhailenko, who was captured in Mariupol, to life imprisonment.

By doing this, the occupation administration not only deprives Ukrainian prisoners of war of their right to a fair trial, but also uses them as an instrument of propaganda, aimed at intimidating the civilian population and legitimising the war.

Ukraine will continue to exert all possible efforts to hold those responsible for their criminal actions, and we strongly believe that the international community will support Ukraine in its pursuit of justice, the protection of human rights, and the provision of appropriate compensation to the affected people. None of the 120,000 violations of the rules and customs of war registered so far by Ukrainian law enforcement agencies will go unpunished.

Mr Chairperson,

For almost two years, Ukraine and its people have been repelling the full-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation. Since February 2022, Russia's war claimed the lives of more than 10 thousand civilians, caused a severe humanitarian catastrophe in many parts of Ukraine, razed once flourishing cities and villages to the ground.

Having become a victim of Russia's terrible atrocities, Ukraine's greatest desire is to end the war. However, the peace we strive for does not come at any cost.

The peace we seek can only be achieved with the full restoration of the principles set out in the UN Charter, principles that all the sovereign countries worldwide have agreed to respect.

The peace we seek is the restoration of the territorial integrity of Ukraine within internationally recognized borders and the complete withdrawal of Russian troops.

Ukraine seeks for comprehensive, just, and lasting peace, as articulated in President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula.

We express gratitude to all nations worldwide that support Ukraine's peace initiatives as the sole viable path to restoring peace and stability in Europe.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.