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Permanent Mission  
of the Republic of Poland  
to the Organization for Security  
and Co-operation in Europe  
in Vienna



**1358th (reinforced) Meeting of the PERMANENT COUNCIL  
24 February 2022**

**POLISH OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP 2022  
ADDRESS BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
H.E. ZBIGNIEW RAU**

*Excellencies,*

*Dear Colleagues,*

This is not only a prerogative, but in fact **an obligation of the OSCE Chairmanship**, appointed by all participating States, to **react immediately** to the security challenge of a scale we see today.

February 24<sup>th</sup> will go down in history as one of the darkest days for Europe and the world. A day of disgrace.

**Russia has decided to attack Ukraine** - its neighboring peaceful country.

No words are strong enough to condemn this unacceptable act of aggression, blatant violation of international law and total disregard for the human values we hold so deeply.

It is an attack not only against Ukraine, **but against the whole OSCE community**.

It stands against the basic fundamentals on which the security of Europe is built.

I also **condemn the involvement of Belarus** in this aggression against Ukraine.

My thoughts today are with people of Ukraine, including the families of all those killed and injured. Their tremendous suffering is a desperate cry for justice and peace.

I express full solidarity with Ukrainians and their democratically elected authorities.

**I strongly support territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.**

As the OSCE Chair, **I call on Russia for the immediate cessation of all military activities against Ukraine.**

**All Russian forces must be immediately withdrawn from the territory of Ukraine.**

The Russian unprovoked attack on Ukraine violates the core principles of international law. It puts the lives of millions of people at grave risk.

By this act of military aggression **Russia broke virtually all international treaties, rules and commitments**, including the fundamentals of this Organization - the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris.

This behavior is a proof that Russia has rejected all international efforts, including within the OSCE, to engage in dialogue.

Although in this dark moment hope seems to be lacking, **I urge Russia to turn back from the path of violence and war.**

As the Chair-in-Office, we express our **grave concern about the safety of the OSCE personnel in Ukraine.**

Appropriate OSCE structures are closely monitoring their situation and reacting accordingly.

The Secretary General will address this critical issue in more detail.

*Dear Colleagues,*

We must pursue diplomatic solutions. However, currently, there is no way of going back to the spirit of trust and cooperation which was the cornerstone of this Organization.

**Let me finish by asking Russia directly - what is your vision of further interaction at this forum?** It has been created for peaceful cooperation, but currently it has been used by your representatives only to **justify military aggression against the sovereign neighbour.**

*Thank you.*