



Delegation of Canada  
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Délégation du Canada  
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR  
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE  
1376 MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
JUNE 2, 2022**

"МИР УКРАИНЕ! СВОБОДА РОССИИ!"

Dmitry Skurikhin wrote this in bright red paint on the side of the shopping mall he owns in a small town north of Moscow. The slogan was followed by the names of Ukrainian towns that have been ruthlessly attacked by the Russian army: Kharkiv, Kahovka, Mariupol, Bucha, Severodonetsk, Chernihiv, Izum – sadly, as we know, the list goes on...

We all remember the sign that Marina Ovsyannikova, a Russian journalist from Channel 1, held up in March during a live broadcast to protest the Kremlin propaganda machine and its lies to the Russian people. She was arrested, detained, harshly interrogated, and fined thousands of rubles for her brave and selfless action.

Maria Ponomarenko, Vladimir Kara-Murza, Ilya Krasilshchik, Lev Ponomarev and many others were detained and/or sentenced by the Kremlin, in its attempt to hide the truth from the Russian people about what the Russian army is doing in Ukraine. Despite such repression, courageous Russians are finding ways to spread the truth about the atrocities, tactics, injustice, and illegality of the Russian forces' invasion of Ukraine. Under threat to personal security and intimidation from their government, tens of thousands of Russians are bravely protesting the war that is being waged in their name.

They are bravely protesting despite Kremlin actions that have ensured a lack of functioning political opposition, the dearth of a free press, and an increasingly more repressive political environment.

We see oligarchs, diplomats, journalists, and government officials leaving the regime because they understand how unconscionable and damaging this war is, not just for Ukraine, but also for Russia itself.

Mr. Chair,

Ethnic Russians and Russian speakers around the world have also been protesting this war and demonstrating fierce solidarity with Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

It is not only the Russian people courageously protesting their government's aggressive and illegal conduct. Many brave Belarusians are also protesting Putin's war and Lukashenka's complicity. Hundreds of Belarusians, who have been living in Ukraine due to political prosecution at home, have joined the Kastus Kalinowski battalion. This volunteer unit is courageously defending Ukraine as part of the official army – these Belarusians recognise that the fight for freedom in Ukraine is also a fight for freedom in Belarus.

Belarusians inside Belarus are also actively and courageously protesting – under the threat of death now that the Lukashenka regime has expanded the grounds for using the death penalty in order to target and repress any opposition. From the early days of Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine from Belarus' territory, we have seen Belarusians gather in the streets to protest the war and valiantly strive to prevent the transport and launch of Russian weapons against the Ukrainian people from Belarus' territory.

Mr. Chair,

I would be remiss not to recognize the immeasurable support and dedication of the people in Poland, Moldova, Romania, and other bordering countries, along with so many others across the region, who are tirelessly welcoming millions of Ukrainian refugees fleeing the atrocities of Putin's war. These generous neighbours are on the frontlines too, as first responders to the greatest humanitarian crisis in Europe since the end of WWII.

Last week, our Russian colleague tried to tell the Council that the countries holding Russia to account for the illegality of Russia's war on Ukraine represent less than a billion people of our global community. We disagree. Recall the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolutions with the support of 141 countries. Recall the largest ever referral to the International Criminal Court, to hold Russia to account. Recall the Human Rights Council resolution on the deteriorating human rights situation in Ukraine stemming from Russian aggression. Last week, the Ukraine-led resolution at the World Health Organisation on the health sector crisis in Ukraine stemming from Russian aggression was adopted with wide support. Russia's counter resolution was voted down. At all levels, the Kremlin's war in Ukraine is met with condemnation. It is condemned by the Ukrainians who are fiercely fighting to defend their country. It is condemned by many brave Russian and Belarusian citizens, despite risks to their personal security. It is condemned by the European states helping millions of Ukrainian refugees. And it is condemned by most of the countries in the global community and across multilateral fora.

Mr. Chair,

We hear billions protesting this war.

We call on Russia to stop. It must cease hostilities, withdraw its troops, and respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

We are relieved to hear that one of the four detained SMM staff members is free. Three others are still detained and we call for their immediate release.

We were also saddened to learn of the death of Frederic Leclerc-Imhoff, a French journalist who was killed while travelling aboard a humanitarian bus with other civilians looking to escape Russian bombs. The bravery of journalists who risk their lives every day, so that the world can know the truth about Putin's war cannot be understated.

There is a lot of courage in this war – courage from the Ukrainians fighting to defend their freedom from an aggressive neighbour, courage from the Russian and Belarusian people rejecting the aggression of their oppressive regimes, and courage from the journalist, activists, and regular people across the world who support Ukraine.

Alongside all these people Canada continues to stand firmly with Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.