



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

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to the 1395th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

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Mr. Chairperson,

Every russia's missile attack confronts us with enormous level of uncertainty.

There is always hope that there are survivors.

How it happened in Mykolaiv on October 13.

An 11-year-old boy was alive after spending six hours trapped inside his destroyed home.

The whole country was relieved to see a farther kiss his son and cover him with a blanket.

A few hours later, after he was taken to the hospital for medical examination, the boy passed away quietly. His little heart could not take it anymore and just stopped.

This is an unbearable price that Ukrainian families have paid for russia's war of choice since 2014.

Esteemed colleagues,

On October 13, just like days before and after, Mykolaiv was hit with S-300 missiles.

Actually, S-300 system was designed to protect the sky and peaceful cities.

So, the russians managed to weaponize even this purely defensive system.

Likewise, they weaponize OSCE commitments to attack participating States.

Also, diplomacy – to cover russia's intentions to continue the genocidal war.

Here I find very telling the testimony in Foreign Affairs Magazine of a former russian diplomat who recently defected from the kremlin. And I quote.

“We [russian diplomats] were taught to embrace bombastic rhetoric and to uncritically parrot to other states what the kremlin said to us. In cables and statements, we were made to tell the kremlin that we had sold the world on russian greatness and demolished the West's arguments... Back in moscow, I read long cables from russia's delegation about how they had defeated the numerous “anti-russian” and “groundless” moves made by Western states”.

Haven't we been witnessing this for months here in this room?

Aggressive rhetoric peppered with endless accusations of Ukraine and threats against the West, and all this is covered by appeals for peace, of course on russia's terms and at the expense of our principles.

And the situation on the ground discloses true intentions of Putin.

Because, if Moscow was truly committed to peace, there would be no mock annexation, ill-prepared mobilization of 300 000 people and regular missile attacks on peaceful Ukrainian cities.

Just imagine - from October 7 to 18, Russia conducted more than 190 missile strikes and kamikaze drone attacks in 16 regions of Ukraine.

More than 380 objects were damaged. More than 240 people were injured. At least 70 people killed, including 34-year-old Vika and Bohdan with their unborn baby.

If Russia did not have genocidal intentions towards Ukrainians, there would be no illegal adoption of children, filtration procedures and widespread torture practices in the occupied territories.

Yesterday's report by Human Rights Watch about Iziurm, Kharkiv region, is chilling.

"The cruel violence and abuse in Iziurm were not random incidents. Multiple victims shared credible accounts with us of similar experiences of torture during interrogation in facilities under the control of Russian forces and their subordinates, indicating this treatment was part of a policy and plan... All the men said they were given electric shocks or beaten with hands, rifle butts, metal pipes, plastic pipes, a rubber hose ... Women were heard screaming and soldiers talking about sexual violence ... All of those interviewed who were detained said Russian soldiers stole items from them, including money, jewelry, electronics, and cars", the report says.

The report concludes that "Russian troops have committed horrific abuses in many areas they have occupied, and there is real concern about similar abuses in other areas they continue to control".

And yesterday's introduction by Putin of the martial law in the four Ukrainian regions means not only that pseudo-legal thinking is dominating in Moscow, it has been known for long, but what is more important it means that the Ukrainian citizens are going to face new human rights abuses and violation of international humanitarian law. And we call upon the OSCE and its institutions to react to this and closely follow developments on the occupied territories.

If Russia were serious about its international obligations and peace, there would be no attacks on Ukrainian nuclear power plants and attempts to seize the ZNPP, illegal detention of SMM national personnel and the ICRC would have full and safe access to all prisoners of war kept by Russia, especially to Olenivka facilities.

Being ill-advised, including by the Foreign Ministry, the Kremlin still believes that it can escape responsibility. And by shying away from accepting reality of already lost war, the Russian leadership is still trying to mobilize the resources of its only allies - Belarus and Iran.

In the last week alone, Russia has struck Ukrainian cities with more than a hundred Iranian kamikaze drones.

This makes Iran complicit in the crime of aggression, war crimes and terrorist acts of Russia against Ukraine. And now Kyiv is considering cutting diplomatic ties with Teheran. But we must ask ourselves, what did Moscow promise to Teheran? How will Teheran use its experience of operating its drones in this high intensity war? And what loopholes does Teheran use to develop its offensive technologies?

Against depleting of manpower, Moscow is making every effort to fully drag into the war its other accomplice - Minsk. And if Belarus does not have evil intentions, then why not agree with the initiative of deploying a border mission of international observers as suggested recently by the Ukrainian President? The time for games is over.

And losing on the battlefield, russia is doing exactly what we warned about. It wants to renew the hunger games against the whole world, threatening to quite the Black Sea grain initiative.

Ironically, the 'grain initiative' expires on November 22, just four days before Ukraine commemorates the anniversary of the Holodomor.

Since Ukraine knows all too well the horrors of famine, I would like to underline this as clearly as possible – Ukraine does not make any additional demands and we want the corridor to continue operating. The time has come to protect the Black Sea grain corridor.

We must make it clear to moscow: the blackmail must stop and russia must not be allowed to put millions of people at risk.

Dear colleagues,

We always admire those who take the decision to defend the country with arms in hands. Soldiers' letters from the front remain the best motivation for a generation through decades. And we always wonder what drives people to stand against an aggressor.

And here I would like to turn to Anton Drobovych, head of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory who volunteered for the Armed Forces on February 24. He had every reason to stay in office but he followed his duty, like thousands of Ukrainians from all walks of life.

His thoughts, which he shared, literally from the trench, on the occasion of the Day of Defenders of Ukraine, which we marked last Friday, give a simple understanding of what is at stake.

"We protect our people – adults and children. We know what is behind us, who we are defending. We love and protect them. They love and support us. Such is a cycle of love and goodness. And what is behind the russians? Indifference of millions, fear of mobilization, propaganda of russian TV, Kadyrov's TikTok and a new GULAG? Just emptiness... Our collapse will be the destruction of one of the most important hypotheses that justice exists and that the good prevails over the evil. We all have got into such a tricky situation – the stakes are high. And the worst thing is that the result is not guaranteed - the victory of good must be ensured by paying the highest price".

Therefore, colleagues, we must do everything possible for the victory of the good.

And weapons, sanctions and accountability remain the three ways to restore peace, security and stability in Europe. There are no other alternatives if we really want to pave the way for a lasting peace.

And it's a way to help our people pay less price, including families who continue to lose their kids because of russia's terrorist attacks.

The fewer terrorist opportunities russia, the sooner this war will end.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.