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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
1410th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

9 February 2023

Mr. Chair,

The 24th of this month marks one year since Russia's premeditated invasion began to wreak devastation on Ukrainian lives and livelihoods. Yesterday was the one-year anniversary of the launch of the Renewed European Security Dialogue. The proposed framework for discussions on the concept of "comprehensive and indivisible security and peaceful coexistence" was a good faith attempt by the Polish Chair-in-Office to engage in Russia's expressed security concerns through dialogue. 56 participating States agreed to discuss this topic, and almost all engaged at a high senior officials' level from capital. Russia did not send a high-level delegate to the Dialogue. And Russia was the one participating State who refused to support the initiative. This was a clear signal to participating States that Russia refused to engage in de-escalation, and this was because it was preparing for an imminent invasion. Russia obfuscated, and instead of engaging in discussion of its security concerns, it demanded that Western participating States explain how they "intend to fulfil their commitment not to strengthen their security at the expense of the security of other states".

President Putin's interpretation of the term "indivisibility of security" appears to be a zero-sum approach whereby its neighbours are not allowed the capability to defend themselves from Russian aggression – not allowed to exercise their inherent right to self-defence against an armed attack, a right enshrined in Article 51 of the UN Charter. This is what President Putin seeks in "demilitarizing" Ukraine. Instead, President Putin continues to move further away from this and all goals of his supposed "Special Military Operation". While President Putin apparently wanted to move NATO farther from Russia's borders, he has instead so severely compromised the security situation in Europe that more countries are applying for NATO membership. His violation of Ukraine's sovereign territory has caused more advanced armaments to flow to Ukraine to enable it to defend itself against Russian attacks. President Putin is further away from overthrowing what he calls the "Kiev regime" – and the rest of us refer to as the democratically elected Government of Ukraine – which has seen its domestic and international solidarity and support continue to increase steadily over the past year. President Putin wanted to achieve the subjugation of the Ukrainian people, couched in flagrantly disingenuous terminology of "denazification", but President Putin underestimated Ukrainian's determination to fight for their freedom, democracy, and human rights. He underestimated others' appetite to support this existential self-defence. And he overestimated his own military's power and the resilience of his generals to withstand corruption and graft. President Putin wanted to demonstrate to others the power of the Russian Empire and the advantages of his authoritarian system, yet Russia's economy and reputation are in ruins, many citizens have fled, and the human rights of those in the Russian Federation have been dramatically eroded over the past year.

Mr. Chair,

The principal tool in our diplomatic toolbox is dialogue, but when Russia was invited by all OSCE participating States to engage in dialogue, the Kremlin refused, and chose war instead. This does not mean that the path for dialogue is closed forever, but it cannot occur without reestablishing some basic rules. Any dialogue between Russia and Ukraine ending Russia's war of aggression needs to be based on the basic tenets of international law, including respect of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the inviolability of its borders. Ukraine can only engage in dialogue with a partner that is not intent on its very destruction, and one that is willing to demonstrate its commitment to international law, to the Helsinki Final Act, to the Geneva Conventions, and to the other elements of the rules-based international order – to which Russia has committed. It is these international agreements and commitments that govern our relations and protect us all from a world where might makes right. Otherwise there remains no basis to believe anything Russia might agree to.

Mr. Chair,

We reiterate our call upon Russia to end this war of aggression and to withdraw all troops and military equipment from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine. We call on Russia to release all SMM staff, to promptly return SMM assets to the OSCE, and to abide by the principles and commitments it has signed on to. We call on Russia to recognise it is the biggest threat to our indivisible security. Canada will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes.

Thank you.