



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
AT THE 1001st FSC PLENARY MEETING
(16 February 2022)**

Agenda item 3, General Statements, on the subject of “Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea”

Mr Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine let me deliver a statement on the subject of Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea.

The situation around Ukraine remains tense and tends to worsen. The Russian Federation continues armed aggression against our country and takes measures to prevent the integration of our state into Euro-Atlantic structures. The ultimate goal of the policy of the Russian Federation is the destruction of Ukrainian statehood and the establishment of control over our territory.

The current week is particularly intense and challenging for Ukraine and the OSCE due to continued unusual military activity of the Russian Armed Forces and concentration of a ground troop of about 127,000 people strong along the border with Ukraine and in the occupied Crimean Peninsula.

According to our general assessment, there are 87 battalion tactical groups, 43 tactical groups of missile troops and artillery, including those armed with operational-tactical missile systems, multiple launch rocket systems and artillery systems of large calibres (more than 200 mm).

The grouping includes 54 Iskander missile systems, more than 1,800 tanks, more than 4,800 armoured combat vehicles, more than 1,700 artillery systems, and more than 600 MLRS

In addition, there was an increase in the operational-tactical and army aviation of the Russian Aerospace Forces at operational airfields and individual sites near the state border of Ukraine. In general, about 430 combat aircraft and 360 helicopters are ready for use in the Ukrainian direction.

Under the pretext of participating in the joint Russia-Belarus military exercise “Union Resolve-2022”, 15 battalion tactical groups of the Russian Armed Forces were redeployed to the territory of Belarus. The main part of the troops is stationed along the northern border of Ukraine.

Russian military deployments in Belarus and western Russia near the Ukrainian border in conjunction with the Russian occupation forces in Donbas and Crimea are dangerous striking force, which threatens the security of Ukraine and has a destabilizing effect on regional security.

Additional military threats to Ukraine are created by Russia along the coast of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. As of 14 February 2022, Russia is strengthening the grouping of its Navy in the Black Sea by redeploying missile, rocket-artillery, and landing ships and boats from the Baltic and Northern Fleets, and the Caspian Flotilla. The naval grouping in the region is about 70 ships and boats, including 11 landing ships and about 30 landing boats.

The amphibious capabilities of the Russian Black Sea Fleet have been increased by redeploying to the Black Sea landing ships of the Baltic and Northern fleets and the Caspian flotilla to the Black Sea (amphibious assault ships “Georgy Pobedonosets”, “Olenegorsky Gornyak”, “Pyotr Morgunov”, “Korolev”, “Minsk”, “Kaliningrad”).

Available landing ships and boats can carry out transportation and provide amphibious landing of up to 4,000 military personnel and up to 350 units of military equipment, both in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

Also, up to 19 battalion tactical groups of all-military units and 7 tactical groups of artillery units with a total number of up to 44,000 servicemen are fully ready for immediate use in the temporarily occupied Crimea.

It should be emphasized that Russia's military maritime activity is accompanied by the closure of vast sea areas in the northern part of the Black Sea in areas adjacent to the coast of Ukraine.

Mr. Chairperson,

Dear colleagues,

As you are aware of, this large-scale military build-up gave rise to security concern of Ukraine and many other participating States and necessitated the activation of the Chapter III of the Vienna Document 2011 by Ukraine.

It did not cause much surprise that similar to its stance in April 2021 and on numerous other occasions, the Russian side again opted to ignore our legitimate concerns and did not engage in a meaningful dialogue, having provided no response to our request for the explanations on its unusual military activities. The Russian Federation also rejected Ukraine's request to hold a meeting under para 16.2 of the Vienna Document, which still was convened on 15 February with the participation of other interested OSCE participating States. The Russian Federation also refused to attend a possible future joint PC-FSC meeting.

We are extremely concerned over the current security trends and consider actions of the Russian Federation as a substantial threat to national and regional security.

Mr Chairperson,

This is not the first time we have seen the accumulation of Russian troops in close proximity to the territory of Ukraine, but never before have plans for a possible military invasion been so actively discussed.

Ukraine is resolved not to fall into the trap of Russian provocations on the border. We do our best to avoid situations that the Russian Federation can use as a pretext for further aggressive actions.

Ukraine is interested in finding new opportunities to ensure effective negotiations with Russia to end the conflict.

The security component is the basis for resolving the conflict, and it is reflected both in the Minsk agreements and in Normandy format decisions. At the same time, pushing for a direct dialogue with representatives of the Russian occupation administrations is not acceptable for us.

It is clear to us that the Russian Federation is trying to undermine the Normandy format as the main platform for resolving the conflict. Despite this, it is very important to

continue our work in this format. The N4 decisions adopted in Paris two years ago on measures to stabilize the situation in Donbas remain relevant.

Today, many statements are being made, and Moscow is even voicing such statements that Ukraine is planning to attack Russia. This is absurd. We do not plan to go to war with the Russian Federation, but we are doing everything to strengthen the defence and exclude the possibility of escalation. I want to reiterate Ukraine's commitment to follow the political and diplomatic path. It is thanks to this path that we have incredible political and military-technical assistance from our partners; it is thanks to this path that the Kremlin lifted the blockade of Azov. It is by relying on this path that we will seek to unblock the waters of the Black Sea. A powerful army that we are building around the clock, the Territorial Defence Forces are our important diplomatic arguments.

Today, Ukraine has unprecedented support from international partners - the largest in the history of its independence period. In particular, this support has materialized in the supply of defensive weapons, which increase the ability of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to repulse the aggressor. Within a month, we received about 2,000 tons of modern weapons, ammunition and armour protection equipment from different countries. Our military has been trained and is ready to use the entire arsenal to defend Ukraine.

We also appreciate the support and practical assistance, provided by our partners in cyber domain. Unfortunately, Ukraine continues to be a target of malign influence campaigns and cyber-attacks. We regard it as a direct interference in internal affairs of Ukraine and a threat to our national security. Recent massive cyber-attack against Ukrainian governmental websites and a number of key banks, which occurred on 15 February 2022, clearly proves intentions of external forces to undermine Ukraine's resilience and national security.

In conclusion, we reiterate our call on the Russian Federation to de-escalate current security situation, end its aggression against Ukraine, de-occupy the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the city of Sevastopol and parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, stop the ongoing militarisation of the Azov-Black Sea region and restore freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Russia must fully implement its commitments under the Minsk agreements, including the withdrawal of its armed forces, mercenaries, armed formations and weapons from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.