



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Viktoriia Kuvshynnykova, Chargée D'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1467th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
11 April 2024

Madam Chairperson,

Over the last two weeks russia has intensified aerial attacks against Ukraine.

Last night was not an exception. Ukraine was attacked with 82 missiles and drones.

Hundreds of missiles and drones were fired at Ukraine in the last 14 days.

The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine verified that at least 57 children were killed or injured in March, doubling the number from February. Even yesterday russia killed a 10-year-old girl in the Odesa region, a 14-year-old girl in the Kharkiv region and a 12-year-old boy in the Donetsk region – three angels in one day. And in total 604 civilians were killed or injured last month, a 20 per cent increase compared with February 2024.

These casualties resulted particularly from the increased use of missiles across Ukraine and increased aerial bombardments near the frontline.

Also, critical infrastructure remains its main target. Thermal and hydroelectric power plants were damaged. Emergency outages were caused in several regions of Ukraine.

Furthermore, over the last two weeks, russia attacked three Ukrainian HPP and dams – Dnipro, Kaniv, and Dniester.

This is how russia wants to replicate the destruction of the Kakhovka HPP with enormous environmental and economic consequences for the entire region. Hundreds of thousands of people are at risk. And these terrorist attacks do not stop.

In the case of the Dniester HPP, besides Ukraine, Moldova is under a threat.

During these two weeks, russia also hit Ukrainian underground gas storage infrastructure in the west of Ukraine. This is a direct threat to Europe's energy security.

Furthermore, russia is the only terrorist state in the world that has not only seized, militarized and is trying to hijack a nuclear power plant, but also uses it as a platform for propaganda.

On daily basis, russia reminds that its aggression poses unprecedented threats to nuclear safety throughout Europe and the world. The occupation of the ZNPP must be ended.

At the same time, the cities of Odesa and Kharkiv remain under constant attacks for almost two weeks. Through constant strikes on Odesa, russia still is trying to disrupt Ukraine's maritime corridor. And this is a vivid example of possible implications for the freedom of navigation in the Black Sea region and beyond.

In view of this, we believe that the OSCE will be duly represented at the upcoming Second Black Sea Security Conference. As the most important regional security organization in Europe, the OSCE could provide a valuable contribution to the discussion.

Amidst daily attacks on Kharkiv, let me also mention that it is among the 20 largest cities in Europe and second largest in Ukraine.

Currently, Kharkiv is a home for one million of people. Many fled to the city from destroyed communities in other regions. Now Russia wants to deprive them of their second home.

Meanwhile on the Russian TV, Kremlin's propagandists call to take or destroy Kharkiv "in order to break the will of the Ukrainian people".

This very rhetoric transmitted in Russian state media may constitute incitement to genocide, as concluded by the UN Inquiry Commission recently.

In addition to that, on March 27, so-called "extraordinary congress of "world's Russian people's council" was held in Moscow under the chairmanship of Kirill, head of the Russian Orthodox Church.

In its document it supports the Kremlin's intention to destroy the Ukrainian state and declares the Russian invasion as a "holy war". Such instrumentalization of the church and a call for violence or territorial ambitions is unacceptable.

Moreover, Russia actively uses a barbaric tactic of double-tap strikes to target first-responders.

On the 4th of April, as a result of such a strike, Russia killed 3 rescuers in Kharkiv.

It was heartbreaking to see a young firefighter crying at the place where his father, a 52-year-old rescuer, was killed. Volodymyr and Vladyslav, father and son, were working in a fire department. A day later, as a result of the double-tap strike, journalists were wounded in Zaporizhzhia.

That is how terrorists perceive the lack of response to their previous crimes, as an invitation to new attacks.

Time and again, we see that Russia respects neither its political commitments before the OSCE nor the principles and norms of international law. The Russian regime has once again demonstrated that it cannot be considered as a credible partner, including within the OSCE.

Moreover, these daily attacks testify again and again to the fact there can be no meaningful engagement with Moscow in the OSCE until the Kremlin ends this war.

It is impossible to have any quote-unquote "unifying agenda" with a state focused on killing, destruction and aggression.

Esteemed colleagues,

As Russia wants to reduce the discussion about the war to the fact that it is about a piece of territory, OHCHR recent report entitled "Human Rights Situation during the Russian occupation of territory of Ukraine and its Aftermath" provides a new grim account of what is at stake – human life and freedom.

The report finds "a systematic dismantling of fundamental rights and freedoms; the subversion of Ukrainian systems of governance, administration, justice and education; the imposition of Russian systems and legal frameworks; and the suppression of expressions of Ukrainian culture and identity, affecting every aspect of daily life for residents".

Force is used in the TOT "to quash peaceful protests, restrict free expression, impose strict controls over residents' movements, and pillage homes and businesses".

Those “without a passport of the Russian Federation were singled out by the occupying authorities, experienced harsher restrictions on their freedom of movement, and were progressively denied employment in the public sector, as well as access to healthcare and social security benefits”.

However, obtaining Russian citizenship leads to “serious implications for young men” [...] as they “were obliged to present at a military enlistment office for assessment of eligibility for service in the Russian Armed Forces”.

The report goes further by stating that “these grievous acts appear [...] as part of a policy by the Russian Federation to intimidate, instil fear, punish, or extract information and confessions”.

Let me quote one case from the report. “In Kharkiv region, Russian Armed Forces visited a police officer at home and instructed her to report for work under the Russian authorities. She refused and was detained for one week, during which time she was badly beaten and threatened with execution. She continued to refuse until Russian Armed Forces threatened to take away her young son and showed her a document indicating that a Russian family was ready to adopt him”. How insane this is!

By taking children hostage, the Russian regime continues to act as a terrorist one.

The continued terror against the civilian population of Ukraine underlines the urgency of further joint actions aimed at deterring the Russian aggression and ensuring effective international isolation of the aggressor State.

It is time to realize that the era of peace in Europe is over.

Attempts to appease, engage or involve Russia do not work anymore.

Daily rhetoric of the Russian regime is the best evidence of that.

To make sure that Ukraine protects its borders and that the war is not spread in Europe, Ukraine needs a stable and timely supply of all types of weapons and ammunition.

Ukraine needs more systems against ballistic attacks. A few additional patriots can effectively protect our common skies. When Ukraine has everything it needs, the Russian terror tactics fails.

And last but not least. The OHCHR report underlines that the Russian Armed Forces and occupying authorities carried out crimes in an atmosphere of pervasive impunity.

In view of this the second anniversary of Bucha massacre is a stark reminder that peace is not possible without justice.

Therefore, we are grateful to all participants of the Ministerial Conference on Restoring Justice for Ukraine hosted by the Netherlands on the 2nd of April.

This conference, including the establishment of the International Register of Damage, is an important step towards the implementation of President Zelenskyy's 10-point Peace Formula in view of an upcoming Global Peace Summit.

And a reiterated commitment, expressed during the conference, to work towards the establishment of a special tribunal for the crime of aggression is an important reminder for the Russian political and military leadership about the inevitability of justice.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.