



United States Mission to the OSCE

The Russian Federation's Ongoing Aggression Against Ukraine

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Courtney Austrian
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
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Over the last week, we've seen the Russian Federation continue its large-scale missile and drone attacks across Ukraine. During the night of June 1st, Russia launched 15 missiles and 21 Shahed drones against Ukraine. Russia continues to barrage Ukraine's frontline cities. Russian Federation forces bombarded the suburbs of Dnipro last weekend, wounding at least 20 civilians, including five minors, and killing a two-year old girl who was found in the rubble of her home. And we were deeply alarmed earlier this week at the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam, another tragic outcome of Russia's unprovoked, full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which has caused devastating floods and seriously impacted the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian civilians along the river.

We will not avert our eyes from the Kremlin's unconscionable carnage. Instead, we will call it out and work to document responsibility. The Kremlin and its enablers must and will be held accountable. Make no mistake, the needless death and destruction that Russia is causing day after day are signs of the Kremlin's desperation, not its success, as Secretary Blinken pointed out June 2nd in Helsinki. When you look at President Putin's previously articulated strategic aims and objectives, he said there is no question Russia is significantly worse off today than it was before the full-scale invasion – militarily, economically, geopolitically.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has been not only a strategic failure, but a military failure as well. As Secretary Blinken observed, the Kremlin worked over the last several decades to try to build the Russian Federation's military into a modern force. Russia often claimed it had the second-strongest military in the world, and many believed it. Today, many see Russia's military as the second strongest in Ukraine. Its equipment, technology, leadership, troops, strategy, tactics, and morale are a case study in failure, even as Moscow inflicts devastating, wanton, and gratuitous damage on Ukraine. Russia's troops are estimated to have suffered more than 100,000 casualties in the last six months alone. Russia's defense partners and customers can no longer count on the fulfillment of promised orders, let alone spare parts. And as they witness Russia's poor performance on the battlefield, they are increasingly taking their business elsewhere.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has been an economic failure. Russia's oil revenues have fallen by 43 percent, thanks to coordinated action by the United States and its partners. The Russian Federation's tax revenues from oil and gas have fallen by nearly two-thirds. Russia's foreign reserves are down by more than half, as are profits from its state-owned enterprises. Russia's government-driven investments are artificially inflating its GDP and are largely focused in sectors, like buying more military hardware to use against Ukraine,

that will not productively contribute to Russia's future economic growth. More than 1,700 foreign companies have reduced, suspended, or ended operations in Russia since the onset of the invasion. That's tens of thousands of jobs gone, a massive flight of foreign expertise and capital, and billions of dollars in lost revenue. An estimated one million people have fled Russia, including many of the country's top IT specialists, entrepreneurs, engineers, doctors, professors, journalists, and scientists. Those in creative industries have also left, seeing no future for themselves in a country where they cannot express themselves freely.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has been a geopolitical failure. Putin and his cronies hoped to remake the world order, but their actions have often brought about the opposite diplomatic result they intended. Ukraine's unity, solidarity, and national identity are stronger than ever. Ukrainians are more determined than ever to write their own independent future on their own terms. International support for Ukraine remains united and unwavering. Finland has joined NATO, and Sweden is not far behind. Others also look to join NATO for the defensive protection it provides. Let me say that again, defensive protection. And at the UN General Assembly, at least 140 nations have repeatedly voted to affirm Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, to reject Putin's attempts to illegally annex Ukrainian territory, to condemn Russia's aggression and atrocities, and to call for a peace consistent with the principles of the UN Charter.

Last week, we also heard strong words about how a supposed new Russian elite would hate people in other countries because of their support for Ukraine. I would like to respond. Our message to the people of Russia is this: the United States is not your enemy. For more than 30 years, we have sought stable and cooperative relations with Moscow, because we believed that a peaceful, secure, and prosperous Russia was in the interests of the United States and the world. We cannot choose your future for you. We will not try to do so. But we also will not let President Putin impose his will on other countries to dictate their futures.

Mr. Chair, I would like to close with another quote from Secretary Blinken, who said, "where Putin aimed to project strength, he's revealed weakness. Where he sought to divide, he's united. What he tried to prevent, he's precipitated. That outcome is no accident. It's the direct result of the courage and solidarity of the Ukrainian people and the deliberate, decisive, swift action that we and our partners have taken to support Ukraine." The United States will continue to work with Ukraine, and with our allies and partners, to meet Ukraine's needs on the battlefield and to invest in Ukraine's future strength.

Precisely because we have no illusions about Putin's aspirations, we believe the prerequisite for meaningful diplomacy and real peace is a stronger Ukraine, capable of deterring and defending against any future aggression. The United States welcomes any initiative that helps bring President Putin to the table to engage in meaningful diplomacy if it helps find a way to a just and lasting peace, consistent with the principles of the United Nations Charter – principles which every UN member and every Helsinki Final Act signatory have pledged to uphold.

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