



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
AT THE 1023rd FSC PLENARY MEETING
(28 September 2022)**

Agenda item 2, General Statements

Mr Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine let me deliver a statement on the subject of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

The events of the recent week clearly demonstrated that the Russian Federation doesn't even try to pretend that it is interested in peace. The Kremlin may deny its military losses in Ukraine, it may persuade the world, that the so-called «special military operation» is going on in accordance with the original plan and it may even lie to itself believing in its own victory.

However, nobody is a fool here. After more than 7 months of the war, the Russian Federation de facto recognised its strategic failure and the weakness of its armed forces that rely only on numerical superiority. Facing substantial losses in manpower and the inability to find enough so-called «volunteers» to fight in Ukraine the Kremlin was forced to declare mobilisation.

«Ukraine destroyed Russian professional army, we will succeed in destroying its amateur army», - is the stand expressed by General Valerii Zaluzhnyi, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with regard to the Kremlin's decision to declare mobilisation in Russia. These words clearly confirm the determination of Ukrainians to fight against the Russian occupiers defending their families, their homes, their land and their country.

While the Russian Federation continues to ignore the voice of its own people and mobilise new soldiers for its senseless crusade against the entire rules-based order, Ukraine continues to take all possible steps to protect and liberate its citizens. Within the framework of these

measures, last week, on 21 September 2022, we managed to release 215 Ukrainian defenders from Russian captivity.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Turkish side for its mediating efforts and to ensure that the respective work on the liberation of all Ukrainians will be continued. President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy clearly stated in his address to the nation: «No matter how difficult it may be, we must free all our people, all Ukrainians. We do not forget about anyone».

Esteemed colleagues,

Talking about the current events, I also would like to raise the issue of the so-called «referendums» organised by the Russian occupation administration in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia and Kherson regions. It is hardly possible to use the word «referendum» when talking about this farce in a rush prepared by the Russian Federation as an answer to the Ukrainian counteroffensive operation in the Kharkiv and Kherson regions.

All Russian attempts to legitimize its occupation of the sovereign territory of Ukraine cannot change the fact that the Russian Federation has been and remains to be an aggressor state, that in violation of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act committed armed aggression against Ukraine. No matter how many illegitimate polls the Kremlin holds in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, all of them are null and void.

Mr Chairperson,

The situation along the entire 2,000-km-long frontline, in the Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, Kherson and Mykolaiv regions, remains tense. The armed forces of the Russian Federation do not give up their efforts to recapture previously liberated areas and seize new territories, in particular in Donbas.

Millions of Ukrainians in numerous settlements across Ukraine continue to suffer from regular Russian attacks. Only during one week since the recent FSC meeting on 21 September 2022, the Russian troops launch more than 36 missiles, conducted more than 104 air attacks and in more than 490 cases used multiple launch rocket systems.

Allow me to remind you of the recent strikes committed by the Russian forces against the civilian population and critical infrastructure:

- on 23 September the Russian troops launched 4 «Kalibr» cruise missiles and Iranian-made «Shahed-136» UAVs, against the port infrastructure in Odesa. As result, 2 people were killed;
- two days later, on 25 September, the Russian forces again used Iranian UAVs this time against the administrative building damaging it and causing a fire in the city centre;
- on 26 September as a result of the deliberate missile strike against a residential building in Pervomaiske (Kharkiv region) 7 people, including a 15-year-old girl, were killed. A part of the settlement was left without a water supply;

The ongoing strikes against the civilian population and critical infrastructure constitute a gross violation of the International Humanitarian Law provisions aimed at the protection of civilians during armed conflicts, including the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the IV Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Additional Protocol of 1977 as well as of the number of UN General Assembly resolutions.

The actions of the Russian Federation demonstrate its total disregard for all norms and principles of international law, in particular, the UN Charter and other numerous bilateral and multilateral treaties.

Mr Chairperson,

Ukraine continues to take all possible steps to ensure that all persons responsible for the numerous crimes will be held accountable. To this end, respective law-enforcement agencies continue to document and investigate numerous atrocities conducted by the Russian troops in Ukraine. According to the information of the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, more than 36,483 crimes of aggression and war crimes have been already registered since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion.

This number includes also terrible war crimes committed by the Russian troops during the occupation of the Izyum settlement in the Kharkiv region. The ongoing exhumation on the site of mass burial has already revealed 436 bodies including 5 bodies of killed children. The majority of them have signs of violent death. Respective procedural actions are going on.

Punishment for aggression is a key element of justice we need so much after all these terrible atrocities. Punishment for aggression is also one of the elements of the peace formula announced by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on 21 September 2022 in his statement during the 77th session of the UN General Assembly. The entire list of elements includes:

«punishment for aggression; protection of life; restoration of security and territorial integrity; security guarantees; determination to defend oneself».

This is a simple formula based on our common values and mutual principles such as respect for human life, irreversibility of liability for committed crimes, self-defence and freedom of choice. We hope that the international community will accept this formula and continue to support Ukraine till its victory over the aggressor state.

For its part, Ukraine will continue its tireless efforts to counter the Russian aggression till the full restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, including the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

This is our final goal and it will be reached no matter how much time it takes since it is a question of the very existence of Ukraine, its statehood and its nation.

Mr Chairperson, I thank you and ask that this statement be attached to the Journal of the Day.