



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International  
Organizations in Vienna

## **Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine**

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,  
to the 1410<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
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**Mr. Chairperson,**

Despite all its failures on the battlefield, the russian leadership continues to terrorize the Ukrainian population.

How does one day of the russian war look like in Ukraine?

Let me give you only a few numbers from a briefing of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine yesterday morning.

40 settlements were affected by fire on the Kupyansk and Lyman directions.

More than 30 settlements were shelled by russians on the Bakhmut direction.

On Zaporizhzia direction also about 30 settlements were under fire.

17 localities were shelled in the Kherson region.

Two days ago, russia again launched a missile attack on the central part of Kharkiv. With S-300 missiles. The City Central Park was among russia's targets.

Of course, these attacks have no military logic. But they aimed at disrupting people's confidence in the future. Pure terrorist tactics, isn't it?

Before that, on February 5<sup>th</sup>, a russian missile badly damaged the Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv. At least 4 people were injured.

On the same day, premises of the lyceum in the city of Kherson were targeted.

These two examples demonstrate how russia attempts to destroy Ukraine's future by bombing educational facilities.

However, deliberate targeting of children's right to education also brings us to another heinous manifestation of russia's genocidal intentions.

This is the forced deportation of Ukrainian children to russia for the assimilation.

This crime is clearly illustrative of russia's disrespect for requirements of international humanitarian law.

For its part, Ukraine is doing everything possible to return them.

Fortunately, this week the Ukraine's Prosecutor General Office reported that 128 children managed to leave russia.

Still, many and many thousands of illegally deported Ukrainian children remain in the territory of the aggressor state.

It takes months of hard work to return even one child.

Because there are no established mechanisms to deal with this evil.

As we are navigating uncharted waters, we count on support in searching for creative ways how first to trace those kidnapped children and then bring them back.

**Dear colleagues,**

Last weekend at the celebration of anniversary of the National Media Group, one of the largest private media holdings in russia, Alina Kabaieva, chair of the board of directors, said the following:

“Informational work today in the conditions in which we live and fight for our country is like a weapon of war. It is as important as the Kalashnikov assault rifle”.

Surprisingly, she was quite candid. Because, while russia’s tanks are burning on the battlefield, moscow’s only hope is misinformation and propaganda.

russians have proved to be skilful in planting false narratives to split and distract our societies and countries. And they keep on trying.

As yesterday the Joint Investigation Team released a new report about the Buk missile system and those responsible in the chain of command, we have to remember about years of attempts of russian diplomats to whitewash the russian leadership.

As the russian delegation speaks about its commitment to a dialogue, we have to remember how a year ago, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February, the head of the russian mission rejected a proposal to engage in the Renewed OSCE European Security dialogue, which was kindly suggested by the Polish Chairpersonship to find a way for the de-escalation and rebuild trust.

As the russain delegation denies responsibility of the russian military for the crimes and tortures committed in Ukraine, we have to remember testimonies of Konstantin Yefremov, a russian officer who fled from the russian army.

At the beginning of the war, he was in Ukraine - in the Zaporizhzhia region, including the city of Melitopol, and saw by his very eyes atrocities committed by comrades-in-arm.

I want to quote what Yefremov said in his interview: “I don't even have the moral right to ask for forgiveness from the Ukrainians. I can't forgive myself, so I can't expect them to forgive me”.

Let’s remember this.

When one hears next time again how the russian delegation cares about the OSCE and its future, one may ask for the release of Vadym Goida, Maksym Petrov and Dmytro Shabanov, former SMM staff, as well as for the return of stolen OSCE SMM vehicles.

**Dear colleagues,**

As russia continues to focus on taking full control over the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and keeps throwing more and more manpower to capture Bakhmut, russia's intentions are clear.

moscow will continue to mobilize, terrorize and attempt genocide of Ukrainians, while cynically claiming that it is willing to “negotiate”. And it is a matter of time when moscow tries again to take a revenge.

So, there is no other way but to strip russia of its tools for committing the crime of aggression.

Yesterday, during his visit to the United Kingdom, President Zelenskyy presented the Speaker of the House of Commons with a helmet of a Ukrainian pilot.

And on this helmet is written: “We have freedom. Give us wings to protect it”.

To prevent more death and destruction we need a new gamechanger. To push back russian troops, we need a longer hand. To protect the skies, we need modern combat jets.

To build up resilience of our societies we have to deprive moscow of tools for the manipulation.

231 Ukrainian athletes and coaches who have been killed by russia since the beginning of the aggression is a stark reminder why there is no place for the russian athletes at the Olympic games.

White flags must not be misused to conceal russian crimes. russians need white flags only for one thing – to surrender in Ukraine.

To protect our principles and values we cannot allow russia to misuse international assemblies for propaganda.

Because when it comes to the issue of aggression and human lives, then there is no room for neutrality as well as for hiding behind formalities.

To protect peace and stability in Europe we have to cut russia's remaining tentacles.

This week Ukraine has introduced sanctions against russia's nuclear industry.

russia is the only country in the world that allows its military to hit nuclear power plants and use NPPs as a cover for shelling.

It has to pay a price for undermining nuclear safety.

We call upon participating States to follow the case.

Step by step we have to isolate the terrorist regime.

Colleagues, when handing the helmet I mentioned above, President Zelenskyy praised the Ukrainian pilot for his successful missions by calling him "our king".

There are thousands of kings who sacrifice their lives on the battlefield to give us a hope that freedom, democracy and human dignity prevail.

Ukraine is currently paying a heavy price for keeping this hope, for defending its freedom, for protecting principles of the OSCE.

We are not going to compromise on principles we believe in.

**I thank you, Mr Chairperson.**