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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 8 June 2023

Thank you, Mr Chair,

Norway condemns Russia's illegal war of aggression and irresponsible attacks on civilian infrastructure. The destruction of the Kakhovka dam would not have occurred, were it not for Russia's war of aggression. It causes severe harm to thousands of Ukrainian civilians, infrastructure, and the environment, and may pose further risks to safety and security at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. I already expressed shock and concern regarding this situation during our special meeting on Tuesday. Our thoughts are with the many affected Ukrainian citizens. Everything must be done to limit the consequences and repair the damage.

At the same time, Russian aerial attacks on Ukrainian cities continue, thus terrorising the civilian population. It is heartbreaking to hear news from Ukraine about civilian casualties and material losses every day. Vulnerable groups are particularly affected. It has been well documented that Ukrainian children have been deported to the Russian Federation. They have been separated from their families, forcibly adopted, or put through filtration camps. The recent Moscow Mechanism report clearly explained how this is in violation of international human rights law and the Geneva conventions.

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The suffering of the children at times of war is the hardest to witness and the most difficult to prevent. Children cannot impact the situation, but they will have to live with war injuries to their bodies, souls and futures. The effect of war on children was thoroughly documented at the conference Protecting Children in Armed Conflict, which took place in Oslo this week.

Let me also seize the opportunity to thank the Republic of Moldova for hosting the 2nd Summit of the European Political Community in Chisinau last week. The Summit served as a timely occasion to demonstrate solidarity with Ukraine and other countries of the region. Norway's Prime Minister was happy to participate, and he expressed appreciation of Moldova's role in assisting Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees. Norway will continue to support Moldova in the time to come.

Our support, however, would not have been needed, if there was no Russian aggression against Ukraine, and if Russia had respected our common conventions and commitments.

Let me therefore again repeat that the Russian Federation must withdraw its troops from Ukrainian territory and end this war.

Norway will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes.

Thank you.