



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

# **The Russian Federation's Ongoing Aggression Against Ukraine**

As delivered by Ambassador Michael Carpenter  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
May 11, 2023

Last Friday I traveled to Ukraine. With your indulgence I would like to say a few words about what I saw and heard.

I've been to Kyiv many times before, so the landscape was very familiar: St. Michael's golden-domed monastery, the sprawling Maidan at the bottom of the hill, and the elegant cafes of the Podil district. But never have I seen Ukraine's people so united, so determined to fight for their freedom, and so confident in the righteousness of their cause. Air raid sirens went off as we were on the way to meet with President Zelenskyy, but all I saw on the streets around us was a quiet and steely determination to keep going. To live one's life and defend one's way of life. When I asked civil society activists at a roundtable what sort of support they needed most from us, they immediately brought up categories of military equipment.

Yes, the people of Ukraine understand that this war is about the sanctity of borders and the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. And yes, they understand that it is about ensuring the victory of a democratic society over a ruthless dictatorship. But for most Ukrainians that I spoke with, there is a much simpler truth about this war, namely this: a heavily-armed, murderous regime is trying to kill them, erase their identity and colonize their land. That is what they are living through right now.

In Bucha, the Mayor, Anatolii Fedoruk, greeted us and took us to a memorial where we paid our respects to the victims of the Bucha massacre, which will surely be remembered by future generations as one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's worst and most despicable mass atrocities. Inside the Church of St. Andrew the First Called, two local residents, both women, greeted our delegation and recounted their experiences in late February and March of last year. A grandmother told us how she was in a car with her grandson when he was shot through the eye by Russian troops. She described in painful detail how the most precious light in her life was extinguished in a pool of blood in front of her eyes. Another woman, choking back tears but intent on telling her story, recounted how Russian forces approached her in front of her home and told her they had come to liberate Ukraine. However, after some time, they forced her husband to strip off his clothing and beat him on the front porch while she was taken to the garden and interrogated at gunpoint. She then told us how her husband was killed in cold blood, a civilian, utterly naked and defenseless, in front of his own home and his family. "Liberated from what?" she asked.

One of the things that struck me about Bucha was just how normal it looks today. There are elegant apartment buildings and single-family homes nestled among the pine trees. Blooming lilacs in the sunshine. A McDonald's drive-through and a couple of supermarkets lining the side of the road. It looks similar to many places I know back home, and that probably you do too. And yet the evil that descended upon Bucha in February of 2022 was

not normal. It was extraordinary in the worst possible sense of this term. It should never be forgotten, and the international community should do everything possible so that it never happens again.

Back in Kyiv, we met Mykola Kuleba, who runs the NGO Save Ukraine. Mykola introduced us to a young brother and sister who had been forcibly separated from their parents and taken across the border to Russia. Their mother was there and she recounted the harrowing tale of her children being taken and their eventual return. It was yet more proof, as if any were needed, that Russia is engaging in a horrific social re-engineering effort, implemented through torture, deportation, and murder.

Later in the day, together with a bipartisan delegation from the U.S. Helsinki Commission, we visited Defense Minister Reznikov as well as President Zelenskyy. I won't recount those conversations here, but I will tell you what our delegation members told our hosts, which is that we will stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes. Because it is the right thing to do, and because in helping Ukraine defend itself we are also helping Ukraine defend our shared values and our common humanity against a tyrannical regime that has neither.

Finally, dear colleagues, a few words about what we are doing for Ukraine. Our unprecedented assistance since February 2022 has totaled now over \$58.8 billion dollars. We have provided over \$1.6 billion dollars in humanitarian assistance and approximately \$37 billion dollars in military assistance. This includes armored vehicles, various artillery systems, HIMARS, air defense, and ammunition. We saw the results of some of this assistance over the weekend when Ukraine used an American-made Patriot system to shoot down one of Russia's supposedly invincible Kinzhal hypersonic missiles. We've also provided civilian security assistance for Ukraine's law enforcement and criminal justice agencies to address cybercrime, explosive ordnance removal, and sanctions implementation. And finally, we've provided over \$19.5 billion dollars in development, democracy, and economic assistance. This support has strengthened Ukraine's economic resilience, helped secure its energy grid, advanced accountability efforts, and enabled it to pursue key governance initiatives in democracy, anti-corruption, health care, and agricultural production. But we must all do more.

Colleagues, I know many of the participating States around this table are also providing bilateral assistance to Ukraine. This solidarity makes us stronger and is greatly appreciated. I also believe the OSCE has a role to play in supporting Ukraine, and that every donor country here ought to be looking at how to contribute to the OSCE's Support Program for Ukraine to complement our bilateral assistance. I hope you too will consider doing so.

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