



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE
1417th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

30 March 2023

Mr. Chair,

As we approach the OSCE recess, knowing that those defending Ukraine will receive no such break, we find it important to reflect on events in Ukraine since the beginning of 2023. Since the start of this year, Russia has continued to launch wave after wave of missile and drone attacks on civilian settlements, with hundreds of innocent civilians killed each month. According to the OHCHR, Putin's war caused over 737 civilian casualties in January, 599 civilian casualties in February, and already 644 civilian casualties this month. As per the second Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment completed by the World Bank, Government of Ukraine, European Commission, and the UN, Ukraine's reconstruction and recovery needs now exceed US\$411 billion. And yet, Russia shows no signs of relenting its attacks and is even reportedly buying more weaponry from Iran and North Korea.

Over these past three months, Russia's Armed Forces, alongside irregular Wagner units and personnel, have continued their assault on Bakhmut, throwing thousands of lives in front of those defending Ukrainian territory. Russia has had little to show for its efforts except body bags, the destruction of a Ukrainian city, and further internal disagreements amongst the actors attempting to carry out Putin's wishes. Russia's Armed Forces have also continued to put the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant at risk and have announced the transfer of nuclear weapons to Belarusian territory.

We have also seen continued attempts by Russia to confuse the public discourse around its war, including in this Council. This has included efforts to draw false comparisons with the actions of others in past wars in a bid to justify Russia's own war crimes and its deliberate attempts to destroy Ukraine as an independent entity, culture, and language. To prevent the truth from being shared domestically, the Kremlin has continued the destruction of independent Russian thought and journalism these past three months by kicking out international journalists, censoring its population, promulgating unjust laws, and repressing freedom of speech.

Mr. Chair,

In the face of Russian atrocities, Ukraine and the international community have responded. Sanctions continue to tighten around Putin and his cronies. Furthermore, Canada has been at the forefront of taking action to seize the assets of sanctioned persons, and to use the proceeds for the reconstruction of Ukraine and compensation to victims of the Putin regime's illegal and unjustifiable invasion.

The latest UN General Assembly resolution, supported by an overwhelming majority – 141 Member States – condemns Russia’s aggression and demands that Russia withdraw its forces from Ukraine and respect international law. On March 17th, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Putin and Russia’s “Child Commissioner” Maria Lvova-Belova for war crimes, specifically the deportation of Ukrainian children.

The world has stood up to support Ukraine. Since the beginning of this year alone, Ukraine has received over USD\$8 billion in bilateral aid. Battle tanks promised to Ukraine over the past three months are starting to arrive on the front, crewed by well-trained Ukrainian soldiers. Along with donations of fighter jets, ammunition, armoured personnel carriers, air defence units, artillery, and other weaponry, Ukraine has been dutifully preparing to continue to exercise its right to self-defence and to take back more of its territory currently under Russian occupation.

And it is the efforts and resolve of Ukrainians these past three months that have been most impressive. Despite the cold of winter, the hardships caused by Russia’s destruction of its economy, the separation of families, and the ongoing pain, suffering, and loss of family, friends, and fellow citizens, Ukrainians continue to fight back. They continue to fight for their freedom and the memory of loved ones. Recently published results of the [All-Ukrainian Sociological Survey](#) show that the majority of respondents, in all regions of Ukraine, are confident in Ukraine’s victory and believe that Russia is running out of resources. We feel the same. Canada stands with Ukraine, and we will continue to do so for as long as it takes.