



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY FIRST SECRETARY RICK STEENWEG
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE
1397th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

3 November 2022

Thank you Mr. Chair,

Canada is appalled that Russia is attempting to normalize its deplorable attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. Unable to succeed on the frontlines, President Putin is focusing his fury on Ukrainian civilian population centres. While Ukrainians have suffered shelling, mines, missiles, displacement, and economic disruption since the beginning of Russia's aggression, civilians and civilian infrastructure are increasingly the deliberate target of Russia's assaults. The suffering inflicted upon the people of Ukraine is not a by-product of a military campaign but the illegitimate and indefensible target of Russia's troops. Russia must be held accountable for the war crimes it has committed.

According to reports, Russian forces launched 50 missiles into Ukraine on Monday, targeting critical infrastructure, including power and water stations, and leaving 350,000 without power in Kyiv alone. Debris from a downed missile also damaged houses in Moldova, which is greatly affected by the reduction in Ukrainian electricity supply. By striking 18 power-producing facilities in 10 Ukrainian regions, including at least two hydroelectric power plants, putting downstream residents at risk of flooding, the Kremlin continues to make clear its intention to freeze Ukrainians into submission over the winter. The depravity of this strategy, which will fail, is beyond words.

Let me be clear that further atrocities by Russia's forces will only strengthen our resolve to support Ukraine. Russia must meet its obligation to fully respect international humanitarian and human rights law. It must immediately cease its strategy of attacking civilians, and destroying as much civilian infrastructure as possible. It cannot use the threat and conduct of sexual violence against women and girls, nor torture, as a tool of war. And, as per the Fourth Geneva Convention, it cannot take hostages, compel the civilian population in occupied territories to serve, or forcibly transfer or deport such civilians. These are all violations of international law.

Mr. Chair,

President Putin's invasion of Ukraine is causing immense suffering amongst Ukrainians. It is also contributing to the suffering of vulnerable people around the world by exacerbating global hunger and malnutrition. Although we welcome Russia's decision to resume its participation in the implementation of the UN and Türkiye-brokered Black Sea Grain Initiative, the recent suspension of its participation and the lack of commitment to the renewal of the Initiative beyond November 19 has caused uncertainty in global markets and triggered further volatility of food prices. Since September, Russia has deliberately disrupted its inspections to create a queue of 170 vessels in the sea grain corridor. These vessels have more than 2 million tons of food on board, sufficient to feed more than 7 million people. Those in the world's least food-secure countries will most feel the impact of any additional scarcity and inflationary pressures.

Some Russian commentators have gone so far as to call for the sinking of any ship carrying grain through alternative routes through the Black Sea. Canada will not tolerate the deliberate sinking of civilian vessels and thanks Ukraine, the UN, and Türkiye for seeking ways to keep this vital flow of foodstuffs going. We call on Russia to desist from promoting false narratives blaming others for the devastating and wide-ranging impacts of Russia's aggression against Ukraine

Canada condemns the continued and deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian objects during this brutal war of aggression in Ukraine by Russia. We deplore Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, including attempts to claim ownership over Ukrainian territory through sham referenda, which the global community has made clear will never be recognized. We call on Russia to release the three members of the SMM still illegally detained, to abide by its OSCE and other commitments, to end escalatory measures, and to immediately remove all Russian troops from Ukraine. We call on Russia to stop weaponizing hunger.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.