



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna, to the 1378th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

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Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, I would like to thank the delegations of Denmark and Switzerland who with support of the Chairmanship and ODIHR organized earlier this week a conference on strengthening accountability for torture, also in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Indeed, tortures, including gender-based violence, have become a part of Russia's policy to break people's will in the occupied territories of Ukraine.

Currently Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, according to human rights defenders, are among the leaders in the number of abductions by the Russian military in Ukraine.

Vitaliy Lapchuk from Kherson is one of the victims of Russia's military.

For more than two months, his wife tried to find a place where the Russians could keep Vitaliy. On the 9th of June, his body with traces of torture had been found in a river in Kherson.

His skull was smashed. And his body was thrown into the river with a weight on his leg. Russian military just decided to inflict more suffering on his family by hiding his body.

The level of brutality and impunity is unbelievable. But this is a grim reality faced by our people in the occupied territories. Especially by those with an active civic stance and those who were put on a wanted list by the Russian leadership just before the war.

And the abductions are ongoing. Two days ago, vice-rector of Kherson State University Maksym Vynnyk was kidnapped. He is a person with disabilities and needs constant medical care.

On the 8th of June, the Russian military kidnapped Serhiy Chernousov, a teacher and a member of Chornobaivka village council. These are just a few examples. But they are quite illustrative to assume what future Russia has prepared for Ukraine.

At the same time new crime sites continue to be discovered in the liberated areas.

This week a new mass grave has been found near Bucha, in the Kyiv region.

At that place Russian militaries executed seven men. All of them were shot in the head with their hands tied behind and some were shot in the knees.

And there are many more places where crimes continue unabated.

At least 20 filtration camps and prisons have been identified throughout the occupied territories.

This brings to our memories the Izolation prison in the occupied Donetsk. We know very well about the horrors taking place there.

And that's why we must stop russia from replicating this prison across Ukraine.

At the same time russia is attempting to turn the Donetsk and Luhansk regions into a territory of lawlessness with russian-created and russian-controlled terrorist organizations, the so-called "DPR" and "LPR".

In this regard last week, a capital sentence declared in Donetsk for three prisoners of war is a clear and worrying trend. Whatever a mock trial was orchestrated, russia bears full responsibility for this.

Ukraine demands the relevant humane treatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war by the russian side. The involvement of specialized international institutions to monitor the conditions of their detention in russian-controlled territories is a must.

At the same time, russia continues to focus its main military efforts in the north of Luhansk region, in particular in Severodonetsk.

Despite russia's fire superiority in that area, Ukraine's forces keep holding the positions. For your understanding, the city is just 4 km wide and 9 km long.

Chernihiv and Sumy regions are also under constant mortar and artillery fire. This night russia's air strike in the Sumy region left four people killed and at least six were wounded.

russia continues firing its missiles. Two days ago Ukraine's air-defense destroyed missiles over the Odesa, Khmelnytskyi and Lviv regions.

However, only a part of them was shot down. Unfortunately, there are victims and destruction.

That's why providing Ukraine with new air-defense and anti-missile systems would help to increase the number of intercepted rockets and therefore save more civilian lives.

In the meantime, the invaders have resumed shelling the residential areas of Kharkiv, but, less intensively after russia's forces were pushed back.

So far, since the 24th of February about 760 civilians have been killed and more than 1,000 injured in Kharkiv and in the region due to russia's attacks. More than 4000 facilities have been destroyed, of which about 2500 are high-rise buildings.

Yesterday Kharkiv was visited by Prosecutor of the ICC Mr Khan. It was his third visit to Ukraine.

He visited the Shevchenkivskyi district of the Kharkiv city, where 9 people were killed, including a 5-month-old boy, and 17 were injured on the 26 of May. The russian troops were shelling this area almost for two hours on that day.

This visit is important to step up the investigation of war crimes on the ground, especially after a respected international human rights organization verified several indiscriminate attacks on the city, including the use of cluster munitions.

Among other things, they found parts of a 220mm Uragan rocket, which carries 30 cluster munitions. The use of such weaponry in densely populated areas pursues the only goal – to kill as many civilians as possible.

And it was done by the russia's military on purpose.

Distinguished colleagues,

As of today, we have a frontline of 2450 km. 1105 km of active hostilities.

But it is more than just a battle line. It is a line between the power of law and the power of force.

Ukraine continues paying unbearable price for keeping this evil at bay.

Two days ago, Roman Ratushniy, one of the active participants of the Revolution of Dignity and civic activist, was killed in the fighting in Donbas. He was to turn 25 on the 5th of July.

This war also claimed the life of Ievheniia Semenenko, a military medic. She was killed in the Kherson region. She was also only 25.

There are many so heroes. The day of victory will come when we will read all their names.

And they were too young to die.

But they were too determined to defend their and our freedom.

And they deserve more than just our condolences and sympathy.

To defend its people and liberate its territories, Ukraine urgently needs sufficient support.

Because there should be no illusions about the endgame russia wants to see.

Especially when the incumbent russian president compares himself to Peter the Great and confesses that his war is about to grasp territories and the former president, who by the way was considered by many as a hope for russia, follows him and questions the future of Ukraine.

They both are talking about redrawing borders in Europe by force.

It proves once again that russia's invasion of Ukraine has nothing to do with NATO, the russian language or any other threats they could invent. It is a pure neocolonial war about occupying territories, stealing resources and subjugating free people.

It is something that we have thought we would never see in Europe again. And it is something the OSCE was established to address and prevent.

To achieve its goals, russia kills civilians, destroys critical infrastructure, robs grain and provokes a food crisis.

While the russian leadership is lost in historical illusions, we have to acknowledge that such aberrations, as the resurgence of territorial ambitions, aggressive nationalism and spheres of influence, are destroying the ground we stand on as well as the heritage created by relevant organizations including by the OSCE.

To defend our common future, first we have to confront effectively appetites of the aggressor state.

It is clear that those who have come to kill you and to destroy the foundations of prospering Europe can be stopped only with our resilience, strength and unity. And we have enough instruments in our hands to do that.

Ukraine has proven it can win important battles even with extremely limited resources: in Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv.

With sufficient tools, Ukraine could achieve much more. We urge partners to speed up deliveries of heavy weapons following yesterday's meeting in Brussels and previous pledges.

Providing Ukraine with comprehensive and timely assistance will stop this devastating death toll.

As long as russia kills people, conducts repressions, and encourages tortures, it has to pay an economic price for that, including in terms of enhanced sanctions and ceased commercial cooperation.

While russia is still trying to convince the world that cooperation with russia can be beneficial, even independent researches prove that companies leaving russia are generously rewarded by markets while those remaining suffer financial and reputation risks.

russia should be reminded of its OSCE commitments which relate the maintenance of peace to the respect for human rights and economic co-operation link with peaceful inter-state relations.

It is russia which has to decide if it wants to be a part of the civilized world with all its related benefits and advantages. And Belarus has to make its choice as well instead of flexing its muscles close to Ukraine's border and supporting russia's war.

We have to send a clear message to russia that it must do its part to remain at the table instead of blackmailing others by having occupied that seat.

To conclude, russia has to withdraw its troops, restore Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including Crimea and other neighbouring countries, and, of course, assume the responsibility for all crimes committed against the people as well as to provide assurance of non-repetition of the aggression and reparation to the victims and return to the tenets of international law.

I thank you, Mr Chairperson.