



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by the Delegation of Ukraine
to the 1464th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
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Madam Chairperson,

On March 5, the International Criminal Court issued warrants of arrest for two russian individuals, Mr Sergei Kobylash and Mr Viktor Sokolov.

Mr Kobylash is the Commander of the russian Long-Range Aviation of the Aerospace Force, and Mr Sokolov is the Commander of the Black Sea Fleet, which just lost yet another warship two days ago.

The two suspects are believed to be responsible for the war crime of attacking civilian objects as well as for the crime against humanity.

This goes about russia's bombing campaign against Ukrainian civilians and critical infrastructure in 2022 and 2023.

This warrant further explodes russia's blatant lie and confirms its systematic attacks against civilian objects.

As assessed by Ukrainian law enforcement agencies, more than 150,000 sites were destroyed or damaged so far.

This number includes 121,173 residential buildings, 3,047 educational and 736 medical institutions, 533 cultural and 168 religious buildings, and 5,734 water and electricity networks.

These attacks continue unabated.

Only last week, russian terrorists used nearly 400 guided aerial bombs, more than 50 "Shahed" drones and more than 40 missiles.

Residential areas in Kharkiv, Odesa, and the Sumy and Donetsk regions were again hit.

The attack on Odesa was the deadliest.

On the 2nd of March, it claimed lives of 12 people, including five children.

Let me call the names of these children in the Council.

They are – Tymofii, 4-month-old; Liza, 7-month-old; Mark, 3-year-old; Zlata, 8-year-old, and Serhii, 9-year-old.

The children were buried yesterday in Odesa. Their dreams and plans for this life were cut short by the Iranian drone launched by russians.

Furthermore, Odesa was again attacked yesterday, when the city was visited by an international delegation at the highest level. As reported, five civilians were killed.

By committing this attack, russia demonstrated once again its criminal nature and total disrespect for basic rules.

However, every perpetrator of such crimes must know that they will be held accountable.

As President Zelenskyy stated, "International justice requires time, but it is unavoidable. We continue to make every effort to ensure that no russian beast responsible for the murder of Ukrainian children, women, and men goes unpunished. And no number of stars on shoulder straps or cabinet doors will keep them from being held accountable".

And I want just to add that no immunities will protect them from accountability.

It is very symbolic that the new ICC warrant was issued just one year following the issuance of the warrants against vladimir putin and Maria Lvova-Belova for kidnapping Ukrainian children.

Likewise, we believe that one day the incitement to genocide and lies propagated at the highest level in russia will also get a proper assessment, probably, by a special tribunal.

As Refat Chubarov, head of Crimean Tatar Mejlis, mentioned during the briefing we had on Tuesday, this hatred is as dangerous as weapons since it has been translated into repressions and crimes on the ground.

Occupied Crimea and parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions have lived in this reality for ten years.

Even two days ago, another wave of mass searches of Crimean Tatar homes took place in occupied Crimea.

Ten Crimean Tatars – Remzi Kurtnezirov, Nariman Ametov, Enver Khalilaiev, Arsen Kashka, Ali Mamutov, Vakhid Mustafaiev, Memet Lumanov, Aziz Azizov, Rustem Osmanov, and Mustafa Abduramanov – were illegally detained.

This repression takes place, as Crimea continues to resist the occupation.

Thousands of lives have been broken and many more will suffer if the occupation lasts.

Crimea has also become a testing ground for russia's efforts to discredit democracy through conducting illegitimate referenda and elections in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine by force of arms.

And we have to be clear, that the so-called presidential election russia is preparing in the occupied territories will not only be null and void, but will de-legitimize the mandate of the illegitimately appointed russian president.

In addition to human tragedies, the recent destruction of russia's patrol warship Sergey Kotov is also a stark reminder of Crimea's militarization.

Sergey Kotov was built in Kerch in occupied Crimea at the height of russia's full scale invasion, as it joined the Black Sea Fleet in 2022.

Against this backdrop, we have to give honest answers to following questions.

Can we abandon all those people in the occupation?

Can we allow russia to use assets in the occupied territories for the production of means for killing our people on the free lands?

Can russia continue to use Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant for the goals of nuclear terrorism and blackmailing?

Or should Ukraine be given everything it needs to restore its territorial integrity, liberate people from russia's lawlessness and secure itself from russia's future attacks?

Dear colleagues,

russia likes to repeat that it was provoked to attack Ukraine because of NATO. And even new accusations have been invented by russia.

But facts speak for themselves.

As Minister Kuleba reminded recently, russia first invaded Ukraine in 2014 when our country was neutral by law.

russia attacked Ukraine not because NATO “expanded to the east” or because Ukraine “wanted to join NATO”.

The truth is that russia attacked because it denies Ukraine’s right to exist and wants to conquer our land and kill our people.

Recent appearance of dmitrii medvediev with a map of divided Ukraine behind him, as well as messages repeated by vladimir putin during his recent national address speak volumes that russia is not interested in peace, ceasefire, armistice or whatever else diplomatic construction.

This understanding must be a bottom line for our actions.

And as russia is trying to promote new false narratives to challenge our unity and solidarity, we have to remember what we have accomplished since February 2022 and how many stereotypes and beliefs about russia appeared to be just soap bubbles.

And what is most important is that we've learned how to win.

Thanks to that more than half of newly occupied territories are liberated. Our energy dependence on russia is practically over and we passed through two winters. Many taboos on military deliveries have been lifted. russian fleet lost its dominance in the Black Sea.

To accomplish our rightful cause, we need more capabilities to protect our skies, to undermine russian logistics in our occupied territory and to keep russia’s troops at bay.

All this will shape proper conditions for just and sustainable peace in Europe and beyond.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.