



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International  
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE  
ON RUSSIA'S WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE**

**1058<sup>th</sup> FSC Plenary Meeting**  
(11 October 2023)

Agenda Item 1, General Statements

Madam Chairperson,

Before I start our statement, I would like to say a couple of words with regard to the recent HAMAS attacks on Israel. Ukraine stands in solidarity with the people of Israel and strongly condemns the terrorism of HAMAS against Israeli civilians. We express our sincerest condolences to all those whose family members and friends lost their lives in this terrorist attack. Israel's right to defence cannot be questioned. We believe that order will be restored and terrorists will be destroyed.

And now, on behalf of the Delegation of Ukraine allow me to deliver a statement on the subject of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

On 5 October, Ukraine was once again shaken by a brutal missile strike that Russian troops carried out on a shop and a cafe in the village of Hroza in the Kharkiv region. This barbaric and heinous act resulted in the tragic loss of at least 53 lives of civilians, including a child, others are injured or missing. In the settlement with a pre-war population of about 350 people, this tragedy had an impact on all families in this small community: one sixth of the Hroza's population was killed.

Regrettably, the tragedy that occurred in the Kharkiv region is not an isolated case. Near-daily air and missile strikes and regular air raids are the everyday reality of life in Ukraine today.

One never knows, what choice Russia will make for the next missile terror. However, one grim certainty reigns: civilians and peaceful cities will become a target for Russian troops.

To illustrate, over the past day, Russia targeted 21 Ukrainian settlements with aviation and shelled more than 130 settlements across the country with artillery.

In the statement released after the Russian strike on the Hroza village, the International Red Cross Committee expressed its concerns over “the increased number of attacks on critical infrastructure, even in places which had been considered relatively safe to date”.

As stated in the recent report of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation in Ukraine “With Russia’s invasion well into its 20th month, Ukraine’s civilians continue to pay a horrendous price with nearly 10,000 dead and tens of thousands injured”.

It’s clear that the Russians are at war with the Ukrainian people. They are intentionally targeting civilians in an attempt to break the will of Ukrainians to resist aggression.

However, despite Russia's relentless use of missile attacks to terrorize civilians and impede Ukrainian offensive operations, our Armed Forces steadily advance. With more than 200 combat engagements taking place on the frontline over the past week alone, the situation in combat areas remains tense and dynamic.

Ukrainian troops continue to carry out successful offensive operations in the direction of Melitopol in the Zaporizhzhia region and Bakhmut in the Donetsk region.

The heaviest battles continue on the Avdiivka section of the front. Yesterday the Russian forces tried to advance in several columns with landing forces, under cover of artillery, missiles and aviation. The Russian offensive failed – at the cost of colossal losses, Russian troops only partially improved their positions.

Every day our forces inflict substantial damage upon the occupiers, disrupt Russian defence lines, and fortify their own positions in previously liberated territories. Just yesterday, the Armed Forces of Ukraine successfully repelled more than 30 Russian attacks.

Our troops, as they do every day, have proven that they can defeat the aggressor. This fight will continue until the full restoration of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

The high cost of war being paid by the Ukrainian Defence Forces is a stark reminder of the sacrifices demanded when an aggressor invades your homeland, seeking to deprive you of your freedom and independence by attempting to conquer your nation.

Madam Chairperson,

Against the backdrop of growing combat losses of the Russian army in Ukraine, which to date amount to more than 283,000 people, the Kremlin continues to recruit new soldiers, including through forcible conscription of residents in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

On 1 October, the autumn conscription campaign began in the Russian Federation with the goal of recruiting 130,000 people to serve in the Russian army. This campaign will also be carried out in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, which is a gross violation of the requirements of International Humanitarian Law. Such actions are unacceptable and must be stopped.

We condemn the Kremlin's attempts to use military service as a tool to consolidate control over the occupied territories and send Ukrainian citizens to fight against their own compatriots.

As a result of forced conscription in Russia, the fighting spirit of the newly mobilised troops remains low. An indicative example characterising the willingness of Russians to go to war against Ukraine became public on 30 September.

On that day, the Main Directorate of Defence Intelligence of Ukraine revealed details of the special operation under the "I Want to Live" project [a special programme launched for the voluntary surrender of Russian soldiers]. As a result of the operation, our military managed to facilitate the defection of one Russian career officer and 11 soldiers who refused to participate in the senseless war and decided to lay down their arms.

Ukraine remains committed to its obligations under International Humanitarian Law. The detention of all Russians who voluntarily surrender occurs in accordance with all requirements under the Third Geneva Convention.

At the same time, we are witnessing Russian forces flouting all the fundamental principles of international law when it comes to humane treatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war.

On 27 September, another "trial" involving 24 prisoners of war from the Azov Regiment began in the Russian city of Rostov-on-Don. The charges brought against the Ukrainian military captured in Mariupol, in particular the charge of "seizure of power" and "terroristic activity" are, to put it bluntly, absurd. In fact, this farce is the cowardly revenge of the Russians on the Ukrainian military for loving their homeland and performing their service duties.

The Third Geneva Convention states clearly that prisoners of war cannot be subjected to trial merely for their participation in hostilities. Thus, those who serve as Russian so-called "judges" and other officials involved in these shameful trials are flagrantly violating the rules of international law.

Russian sham "trials" of Ukrainian prisoners of war are nothing more than a propaganda tool and bear no resemblance to real justice.

Ukraine remains committed to the welfare of its people, including those currently held captive by the Russian Federation. None of the Russian-fabricated "verdicts" will hinder our efforts to secure the release of Ukrainian defenders and their safe return from captivity.

Esteemed colleagues,

A war with such a militarized enemy as the Russian Federation keeps the issue of international military assistance to Ukraine highly relevant.

I would like to reiterate our gratitude to all international partners of Ukraine for the military assistance provided.

Political support, economic aid and military assistance to victims of armed aggression is the only appropriate response of the world to the gross violation of all basic principles of international law and rules-based order.

It is an important sign of solidarity with Ukraine and a clear message to the Kremlin and other aggressors that neither armed aggression against a sovereign state nor attempts to annex the territories of another country will be tolerated by the international community.

It has long been clear that the Russian Federation prefers to ignore these messages, choosing the path of confrontation.

The Russian leadership has stubbornly directed all its resources to the destruction of Ukraine. They do not even deny its imperialistic geopolitical ambitions. As for example, on 5 October in Sochi, Russian president Putin openly declared his desire to destroy the international order and build a new one based on the Russian perception of the world.

Yet we firmly believe that Russia's destructive attempts to distort reality and reshuffle the global order will not succeed.

Without proper punishment, evil will only multiply. There should be no place for violence in the modern world.

Stopping Russian aggression to prevent future wars of conquest is the common interest of all members of the international community.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.