



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1420th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
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Mr Chairperson,

I would like to start by thanking the Chairpersonship of North Macedonia for organizing the Second Supplementary Meeting on the Human Dimension.

The SHDM proved to be an important platform to learn from numerous testimonies about the systematic nature of torture and the use of war crimes by russia as means of war to break Ukraine's resistance.

I am also grateful to all partners for co-organizing important side events on the margins of the Conference.

We especially appreciate the resoluteness to act together in addressing children's forcible deportation, one of the cruelest genocidal practices by russia.

The SHDM also proved to be a stark reminder of what the OSCE should stand for – for human rights, the rule of law, and accountability of perpetrators.

As one of the speakers, Volodymyr Yermolenko, rightly noted, “the aggressor is testing the rule of law and the limits of its impunity”.

The russian aggressor does this with daily attacks on peaceful Ukrainian cities.

In the night, russia attacked the city of Mykolaiv with four missiles. So far, one person was killed and 23 wounded.

On Tuesday, they shelled the Kherson region 75 times. Kherson itself was under fire 11 times.

In the village of Kizomys, the Kherson region, they destroyed an Orthodox church with a guided air bomb.

This is the real face of russian Orthodox defenders.

Two days ago, also in the night time, 67 attacks on 19 peaceful communities of the Zaporizhzhia region were recorded, including 53 artillery barrages, 6 attacks with MLRS, 7 with the use of UAVs, and 1 airstrike.

The cities of Marganets and Nikopol, Dnipropetrovsk region, are constantly under fire from heavy artillery.

On Tuesday, four communities in the Sumy region were shelled from russian territory.

These acts of terrorism are conducted every day. Yesterday Sumy and Chernihiv regions were attacked again. This time by helicopters.

After just a week ago we discussed the issue of cultural heritage protection and russia's intentions to erase Ukraine's national identity, on April 25 russian terrorists

destroyed with an S-300 missile a local history museum in Kupyansk, the Kharkiv region. As a result, two women were killed and ten persons wounded.

There is no more living space left in Mariinka, Avdiivka and Bakhmut, the Donetsk region.

Nevertheless, they continue to stand strong and unbreakable.

Even these few attacks of the last week that I mentioned reveal the scale of russia's barbarity.

So, I would like to recall the words of Oleksandra Matviichuk, the Head of Centre for Civil Liberties and Nobel Peace Prize winner, delivered at the SHDM.

"This is not just a war between two states. This is a war between two systems: between a system of authoritarian rule and democracy. putin wants to convince the whole world that democracy and human rights are fake and that they cannot protect against the war. We have to respond to that. We must set an example of justice".

Therefore, we do not need to look for a common denominator with the aggressor, as russia is trying to promote this idea in the OSCE.

This will not make the OSCE area more secure and safer.

This would only provoke the aggressor to commit new crimes. More brutal. More cynical. Against new participating States.

To prevent that, we must ensure that justice prevails. Words are not enough for this.

Our response to crimes must include the establishment of a Special tribunal to be followed with clear-cut verdicts against those who planned, supported, and implemented the war of aggression against Ukraine and the entire OSCE family.

Otherwise, the cycle of violence will repeat itself.

Recently issued the report "Crimean Tatars' struggle for human rights" by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights provides a sad example of how deeply russia's impunity is rooted – through centuries. Let me quote.

"The history of Crimean Tatars on the peninsula has been marked by waves of persecution and displacement from their homeland. In the 18th century, and after the conquest of the peninsula by the Russian Empire, Russian settlers [...] imposed systems similar to serfdom [...] Some of the most egregious abuses, however, were inflicted during the time of the Soviet Union. [...] between 1917 and 1933, approximately 150 000 Crimean Tatars had either been killed or forced to leave Crimea [...] The Russian Federation's illegal annexation of Crimea in March 2014 [...] resulted in a massive deterioration of the human rights situation of Crimean Tatars".

However, three completely different historical periods have the same pattern of persecution, discrimination, stigmatization and crimes committed by the russian state.

This pattern gives a clear understanding of what russia is about. And russia's impunity continues unabated in the occupied Crimea these days.

Just a few the most recent examples.

Last week, the house of Crimean Tatar human rights defender Abdureshit Dzhepparov was searched.

At the same time his son Islam and nephew Dzhevdet were abducted back in 2014. Their fate is still unknown.

Today it has become known that russians conducted searches in Sudak in the homes of Crimean Tatar activists Edem Ismailov and Bari Bariev. They both have underage children.

Also, mock trials still take place.

Appaz Kurtamet, a 20-year-old Crimean Tatar, was sentenced to seven years in prison merely because for sending 500 hryvnias to his friend in July 2022.

These crimes are committed in a systematic and planned manner.

Yesterday, on April 26, it has been seven years since the russian occupation administration in Crimea unlawfully banned the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people.

This ban clearly shows how russia is using its anti- extremist and antiterrorist laws to stigmatize the indigenous people of Crimea.

Therefore, we believe that the OSCE and its Institutions will amplify the call for an immediate end to all repressions in Crimea.

I am grateful to the RFOM for her attention to the fate of citizen journalist Amet Suleymanov who was forced into pre-trial detention in Simferopol despite his failing health.

All political prisoners and illegal detainees must be released immediately, as well as Crimea must be liberated that is the only way to bring freedom back to the peninsula.

Dear colleagues,

37 years ago, the negligence of the Soviet authorities left a huge radioactive scar on Ukrainian soil for hundreds of years.

The seizure of the Chornobyl and Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plants a year ago by the russian troops has reminded us again about the increasing criminal irresponsibility of the moscow regime.

The kremlin's geopolitical aberrations have created enormous risks of a new human-made catastrophe in Europe.

This risk grows every day as russia still controls the ZNPP.

But this nuclear blackmailing must be stopped, including with sanctions against the rosatom, an attempted illegal operator of the ZNPP, and the entire russian nuclear industry.

At the same time, the Chornobyl catastrophe is also a showcase of how lies kill.

The Soviet authorities tried to build walls of lies both to mislead the international community and misinform own people about the true scope of the incident.

37 years after, we are again confronted with the same insane lies, disinformation and propaganda.

This time to justify the russian war of aggression, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Including in this room every Thursday.

A self-evident example of this was demonstrated in the UN Security Council during the high-level open debate on maintaining international peace and security through multilateralism, which was chaired by minister lavrov a few days ago.

But let's make no mistake.

russia continues to exploit its participation both in the UN and OSCE as a tool not to maintain but to undermine the rules-based international order (for those who "does not understand" what it means I repeat – the order based on rules of international law) and global security architecture.

And let's be frank.

The multilateralism remains effective not because the russian delegation is sitting together with us at the same table, but because of the daily sacrifice of Ukrainian

defenders, because of sanction regimes, because of generous unity of the international community in providing Ukraine with arms, humanitarian aid, and financial support.

And let's face the hard truth.

There is the only one way to restore peace and stability in Europe and globally. This is to approximate Ukraine's victory by speeding up weaponry supplies, by lifting all possible red lines for giving Ukraine all needed platforms, including F-16 and ATACAMs, by integrating Ukraine's air-defence with the Western system, by hardening the sanction regime, by exposing russian crimes and ensuring justice.

As Minister Kuleba wrote earlier this week, "Ukraine did not choose this battle. Nor did the United States and its NATO allies. russia started this war. But it falls to Ukraine and its partners to bring the conflict to an end, winning a just victory that guarantees peace and stability in Europe for generations to come. Doing so requires accepting the inevitable: that Ukraine will become a NATO member, and sooner rather than later".

This would be the manifestation of the country's right to freely choose its future so clearly protected by the Helsinki Final Act.

I thank you, Mr Chairperson.