



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
AT THE 1034th FSC PLENARY MEETING
(1 February 2023)
Agenda item 1, General Statements**

Mr Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine let me deliver a statement on the subject of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

The seizure of the entire territory of Ukraine and the destruction of its statehood remains the main goal of the Russian Federation. Since the enemy failed to achieve its strategic goals in 2022, it has moved to waging a war of attrition. Its readiness for a war of attrition is indicated by the Kremlin's mobilization and plans to expand conventional forces.

The state of play along the entire frontline clearly proves that even using the superiority in the number of manpower, artillery and aviation, the Russian troops cannot reach their goals and continue to bear significant losses of people and weapons. The figures speak for themselves: the overall Russian losses have long ago exceeded the number of armed forces of some independent states. In particular, it is reported of more than 128,420 soldiers killed; 3,209 tanks, 6,382 armoured vehicles, 293 aircraft and 284 helicopters destroyed. During the battle for Soledar (the Donetsk region) alone, the Russian Federation lost more troops than during two wars in Chechnya.

Being unable to defeat the Ukrainian Defence Forces on the battlefield, the Russian side does not give up its missile terror and continues to target the civilian population of Ukraine. Battered down in the area of Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Novopavlivka and Lyman, the Russian forces are trying to break the Ukrainian spirit to fight, indiscriminately attacking peaceful settlements using all available weaponry - rockets, missiles and unguided munitions.

On 28 January, the Russian forces attacked a residential area in Kostiantynivka (the Donetsk region) using an S-300 anti-aircraft missile system. As a result of this strike, senseless from the military point of view, 3 civilians were killed and 14 were wounded. Dozens of people were left without homes.

On 29 January, the central part of Kharkiv was again attacked by a Russian missile (preliminary it was an S-300 anti-aircraft missile system), that hit a four-story residential

building. The explosion killed an elderly woman and caused injuries to three other residents.

These attacks against urban areas are just few examples of Russian purely terrorist tactics to sow fear and undermine the will of people to resist. Regrettably, regular strikes have become an everyday reality for millions of people regardless of how close to or far away from the frontline they are.

Brutality, cruelty and non-selectivity continue to be a hallmark of Russian military tactics. Numerous settlements in Ukraine were simply razed to the ground, while hundreds of towns and villages were changed beyond recognition due to the ongoing shelling by the Russian forces.

With every day that passes, the toll of civilian victims of Russian war against Ukraine continues to climb. According to the recent estimates of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 7,110 civilians were killed and 11,547 were wounded. As stated in the OHCHR report: «most of the civilian casualties recorded were caused by the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects, including shelling from heavy artillery, multiple launch rocket systems, missiles and air strikes». The real number of casualties is much higher since access to information during the active phase of hostilities continues to be limited and more accurate calculations will be possible only after the liberation of our territories.

The level of war-related damage increases too. To date, more than 38,000 residential buildings, 3,126 educational and 1,250 healthcare institutions were severely damaged or totally destroyed. Fully ignoring the provisions of the Hague Convention of 1954, the Russian troops damaged or ruined 1,200 sites of Ukraine`s cultural heritage.

The Kremlin`s war of attrition is an illegal and inhuman war, which contradicts the very basics of International Humanitarian Law. It must be stopped immediately with the decisive actions of the entire international community. President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy spoke clearly on the issue: «Russia hopes to drag out the war, to exhaust our forces. So, we have to make time our weapon. We must speed up the events, speed up the supply and opening of new necessary weaponry options for Ukraine».

The so-called «Russian world» only brings pain and devastation to Ukrainians. But Russians will never kill our love for Ukraine and faith in our victory. We believe that we can defeat the aggressor in this war already in 2023. Spring and early summer will be decisive for achieving this goal. Therefore, timely military and technical assistance from our partners has a direct impact on the speedy end of the war.

We are grateful to all participating States who have provided their military assistance to Ukraine, in particular air-defence systems and heavy-armoured vehicles, during these extremely difficult times and would like to call on all to continue that. Ukraine needs it to protect the civilian population, liberate temporarily occupied territories and stop this senseless war.

Esteemed colleagues,

Numerous atrocities committed by the Russian Federation and its troops in Ukraine, including its deliberate attacks against civilians will not be forgotten or forgiven by Ukraine or the international community - under international law, war crimes have no statute of limitations.

In this context, we want to once again emphasize the importance of creating a Special Tribunal for the Punishment of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine in order to bring the Russian leadership and all criminals to justice. One cannot consider victory complete unless justice is done. That is, the perpetrators must be punished, and the damage caused must be compensated. We must make every effort to prevent a repetition of the crime.

The recent meeting of the Core Group on the establishment of the Special Tribunal, that gathered representatives of 20 nations in Prague on 26 January 2023, became an important step in this regard.

Against the backdrop of Russia's increasingly brutal methods of warfare, it is key to strengthen international pressure on the aggressor state to undermine its very ability to wage the war.

Every Russian missile fired at targets in Ukraine causes colossal destruction and irreparable human losses. At the same time, every Russian missile launch reduces the stockpile of this deadly weapon. It is critically important not to allow Russia to rebuild these stocks.

Tougher sanctions are key to make it impossible for Russia to produce new weapons that bring death. Tougher sanctions are one of the most effective ways to stop the Kremlin-run death machine.

Mr Chairperson,

The situation along the state border with the Republic of Belarus remains tense. Today we would recall that a year ago, we all tried to use the available OSCE toolbox, in particular the Vienna Document 2011, to prevent current tragic events. However, Belarus decided to take the side of the aggressor by providing its territory and respective military infrastructure for the needs of the Russian forces.

All actions aimed at practical support of armed aggression constitute a gross violation of international law and will not remain without consequences. Hiding behind fictional security concerns related to the «situation around the Belarusian state border» the territory of Belarus has been turned by the Russian side into a big military camp where it can continue its preparations for further aggressive actions. The recent announcement by the Belarusian defence ministry of yet another joint Russian-Belarusian military exercise clearly proves that.

In conclusion let me reiterate that despite the dire situation caused by the substantial intensification of Russian air and missile attacks, the Armed Forces of Ukraine continue to resist. We are determined to continue fighting against the aggressor till the full restoration of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally

recognised borders, including the territories that the Russian Federation attempted to annex in Crimea, Donbas, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.