



Delegation of Canada  
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada  
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR  
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE  
1484<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**25 July 2024**

Mr. Chair,

For nearly two and a half years the Russian Federation, in its prosecution of its war of aggression against Ukraine, has persistently ignored its OSCE commitments, violated international law, and resorted to unthinkable brutalities to achieve its war goals.

ODIHR's Ukraine Monitoring Initiative has - through over 400 in-depth interviews with survivors and witnesses – documented the terrible impact of Russia's war.

ODIHR's Fifth Interim Report on reported violations of International Humanitarian Law and international human rights law in Ukraine presented credible evidence from witnesses and survivors which demonstrated, yet again, a "general disregard for the basic principles...in IHL".

The facts detailed in the report are harrowing.

Since December 1 2023, ODIHR noted an intensification of coordinated large-scale attacks by Russian Federation forces on Ukrainian cities, including those far from the front lines resulting in increased civilian casualties and increased damage to civilian infrastructure, including critical energy infrastructure. According to the Report: "Russia's use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in densely populated areas further showed a continued disregard for the principles of distinction and proportionality."

The report paints a terrible picture of life in the temporarily occupied territories, particularly for civilians arbitrarily detained by Russia. The report states that "ODIHR collected further evidence of widespread and systemic torture, including sexual torture against civilian detainees...", In their interviews with ODIHR, 15 of the 17 victims of Russian arbitrary detention reported torture or maltreatment.

These 15 testimonies reveal only a minute fraction of the cases of arbitrary detention estimated by the Prosecutor General of Ukraine.

ODIHR's report also details the horrendous conditions that Prisoners of War are subject to – all 14 Ukrainian POWs interviewed by ODIHR reported that they had experienced and witnessed various methods of torture and ill-treatment.

We have heard repeatedly of Russia's complete disdain for the welfare of Ukrainian POWs and civilian detainees. The Geneva Conventions are clear. Mistreatment of POWs is clearly prohibited. Torture or inhuman treatment of a POW is a grave breach of the Third Geneva Convention.

ODIHR's report is a crucial part of shedding light on what transpires under Russian occupation, adding yet further information to the file of Russia's transgressions.

The report is also an important reminder that despite gross violations of Russia's international obligations, a rules-based international order and objective international standards still exist, and that those responsible for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law must be held accountable. ODIHR's monitoring mission continues to contribute to our commitment to accountability and ensuring that one day Ukrainians who have suffered wrongfully at the hands of the Russian Federation may have justice.

In light of this report, Mr. Chair, I'd like to point to a round-table discussion hosted by the Russian Delegation earlier this month, with a concept note that reads "Russians and Ukrainians, who are united by a common history and culture, spiritual values, millions of kinship, family ties, and human connection...".

Mr. Chair,

It is nothing short of shocking that Russia can enact a regime of violence against Ukrainians while simultaneously alleging family ties and kinship. If the violation of this so-called human connection is acceptable to Russia for their unjustified invasion, what isn't?

As over a million Ukrainian-Canadians and their descendants call Canada home, we recall that true shared history, and family ties should engender respect and connection, not the twisted travesty that the Russian Federation has inflicted.

Canada will continue to stand by Ukraine, committing resources and investing in Ukrainian sovereignty and freedom, for Ukraine and for the security of the entire OSCE region.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.