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ENGLISH only

## THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Knut-Are Okstad at the Special Permanent  
Council,  
Vienna, 24 August 2023

Thank you, Mr Chair,

Norway has aligned with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I would, however, like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Mr Chair,

Norway joins other participating States in conveying our support to our Ukrainian colleagues – our solidarity with the people of Ukraine – on their Independence Day. As we pass the eighteen-month mark of Russia's war of aggression, the destruction and devastation caused by this war continues to shock and horrify.

International law is our first line of defence. Our security, prosperity, and freedom rest on a rules-based order. Norway condemns Russia's illegal invasion of a neighbouring state in the strongest possible terms. It constitutes a blatant violation of international law and of Russia's commitments as a participating State of this organisation. Norway stands united with the democracies of the world in support of Ukraine, and in defence of our common values.

We remain seriously concerned by the threat Russia's actions pose to nuclear safety and security in Ukraine. Russia's nuclear rhetoric is dangerous and reckless, and we condemn any deployment of tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus.

Mr Chair,

In the eighteen months since Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, more than fifty meetings of the Permanent Council have been convened, in which participating States

have consistently demanded the prompt withdrawal of Russian forces. Once again, we urge Russia to end its hostilities and withdraw its forces swiftly and unconditionally from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We remain resolute in our unwavering support for Ukraine and its citizens, and will stand with them, for as long as it takes.

Thank you.