



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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

1076th FSC Plenary Meeting
(08 May 2024)

Agenda Item 2, General Statements

Mr Chairperson,

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

Today, Ukraine, like many other countries in the world, commemorates victory over Nazism and pays tribute to the victims of World War II, the most brutal and devastating conflict humanity has ever endured. That war was one of the greatest tragedies ever to have afflicted the peoples of the world, causing enormous human suffering.

Regrettably, not all countries in the world have drawn the right conclusions from the bitter lessons of the past.

Russian society, infected with xenophobia and chauvinism, has turned the slogan "never again" into "we can repeat it", thereby insulting the memory of all who sacrificed their lives for a better future.

Fanatically supported by his obedient and blindly loyal citizens, Russia's self-proclaimed leader, Vladimir Putin, whose another so-called "inauguration" took place yesterday, declared the entire democratic world hostile and launched a war of aggression against Ukraine.

Russian officials and state media obsessively promote the false narrative that Russia is fighting "Nazis" in Ukraine, thereby drawing historical parallels with World War II and playing on Russians' sense of phantom greatness to make them more willing to die for their "leader."

For more than two years, the Russian side has been regularly reporting about its so-called “military successes”, claiming that “all the goals of the special military operation will be achieved”. However, we clearly see now that the goals of this war have long been different from those announced by Putin in 2022.

This is no longer about a desire to push NATO aside – after all, NATO, on the contrary, has become closer. It is not the "demilitarization" and "denazification" of Ukraine – after all, it is for defence from the Russian invaders that Ukraine is increasing its arsenal of weapons, and "Nazism" never was and is not Ukraine’s state policy.

This war has long since become genocidal and existential. This war is for the existence of the state of Ukraine and the Ukrainian nation itself.

Every day, millions of Ukrainians live under the constant threat of missile, air, and artillery attacks simply because Russian criminal regime in the Kremlin denies the existence of Ukraine as a free and independent state.

On 29 April, 6 civilians were killed and 32 more were wounded as a result of a Russian attack on the residential area in the city of Odesa using a ballistic missile equipped with cluster warhead.

Another missile strike on Odesa, carried out just two days later, on 1 May, targeted the local mail sorting depot and led to another 14 wounded.

Even Easter, which most Ukrainian Christian denominations celebrate on 5 May, did not stop Russians who claim to be “defenders of Orthodox values”.

In the night from 4 to 5 May, a Russian missile strike against the settlement of Snihurivka (Mykolaiv region) killed 2 people aged 18 and 17, who were going to church for Easter service.

On 5 May, Russian air raids on populated downtown area of the city of Kharkiv led to 14 civilian casualties. As a result of explosions of air bombs, several residential buildings and a medical facility were seriously damaged.

Esteemed colleagues,

The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine remains no less alarming. Those Ukrainians, forced to live under Russian occupation, are subjected to widespread arbitrary deprivation of liberty, tortures, executions, abduction, and forcible deportation of civilians, in particular children.

These people are forcibly drafted to the Russian occupation forces and used by the Kremlin to create an impression of its own legitimacy, as demonstrated by the illegal elections organised by the Russian Federation the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in March, when people were forced to vote at gunpoint.

As the recent Moscow Mechanism report presented last week at the Permanent Council proves, the arbitrary deprivation of liberty of Ukrainian civilians “has occurred on a massive scale and has revealed signs of a systematic, consistent, deliberate pattern of conduct targeting specifically Ukrainian civilians.”

Currently, the Ukrainian prosecution authorities are investigating 2101 cases of torture of civilians by the Russian military. As part of these investigations, law enforcement agencies have already identified 120 places of detention where more than 5,600 people were subjected to torture, threatened with force, interrogated with the use of violence, beaten, and sexually assaulted.

The same level of disregard for IHL norms and provisions aimed at the protection of the civilian population is also demonstrated on the battlefield, where Russian troops use prohibited weapons and violate laws and customs of war towards those who have laid down their weapons.

To date, the relevant Ukrainian agencies have established and are investigating more than 2000 cases of the use of prohibited anti-personnel mines, chemical weapons, phosphorus and thermobaric bombs, as well as incendiary weapons. According to estimates of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the Russian forces used 1891 chemical munitions.

Regarding prisoners of war, the Russian troops de facto adopted the “no quarter be given” approach to hostilities. In total, Ukrainian authorities are investigating 27 criminal proceedings related to the execution of 54 Ukrainian POWs.

This cruel practice has been widely documented by international human rights organisations. The latest Human Rights Watch report, published on 02 May 2024, states that since early December 2023, Russian forces “appear to have executed at least 15 Ukrainian soldiers as they attempted to surrender, and possibly six more who were surrendering or who had surrendered”.

Those Ukrainian soldiers who were captured are detained in extremely difficult conditions. In gross violation of the Third Geneva Convention, the Russian side subjects Ukrainian

prisoners of war to torture and inhumane treatment. They are regularly denied basic necessities, including basic medical care, water and food.

Mr Chairperson,

We can never repeat often enough that international solidarity in the face of brutal violations of international law remains a key element for restoring lasting peace in line with the provisions of the UN Charter. In close cooperation with our partners engaged in the realisation of the Ukrainian President's Peace Formula, Ukraine continues to take all necessary steps for the success of the Peace Summit, which will take place in Switzerland in June.

As President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy recently said: "This will be the first phase – essentially the first real opportunity to begin the restoration of just peace. We should all understand that only global efforts can force Russia to peace".

The summit will serve as a platform to discuss ways to achieve comprehensive, just and lasting peace for Ukraine in accordance with the UN Charter and international law.

We strongly believe that its implementation is in the interests of all states of the world that value the rules-based world order and share the values of security and equality of states.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.