



**1391<sup>st</sup> (reinforced) Meeting of the PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**29 September 2022**

**POLISH OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP 2022**

**ADDRESS BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**H.E. MARCIN PRZYDACZ**

*Mr. Chair, Dear Ministers, Excellencies,*

Once again, we are gathered here to express our outrage at Russia's blatant violation of fundamental norms of international law. The Russian Federation's attempts to change internationally recognized borders through sham referenda and the announced process of annexation are disgraceful.

We condemn in the strongest possible terms these actions as blatant disregard for international law, including the UN Charter and ten principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Moscow's unjustified territorial claims and attempts to change the Ukrainian borders as a result of the current war of aggression are to be considered null and void. Annexation of any part of Ukrainian territory has no legal foundations, no legal meaning and consequence, and will not be recognized by international community just like in the case of Crimea land grab by Russia back in 2014.

Under international law, which we all are bound to respect, Ukraine – as a sovereign and independent state – has the right to defend itself and reclaim its territory in the situation of foreign occupation. It has also every right to receive all necessary assistance from third countries in its defensive war against the aggressor.

Time and time again, Russia has shown and proven the following:

- That it is notoriously unwilling to respect the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of state borders.

- That, in fact, it places itself above the law.
- That it is not interested in peaceful settlements of disputes.
- That it has no respect for human rights as proven by findings of the mission conducted recently under the Moscow Mechanism.
- That it does not respect the views and reaction of international community, horrified – just like us – by Russia’s actions and shameful conduct in Ukraine.

Russia’s unjustified and unprovoked war is being waged not only against Ukrainian Armed Forces but first and foremost against the civilian population.

We strongly condemn indiscriminate shelling of residential areas and infrastructure, mass torture, force deportations - all these horrifying actions that we have only a limited time to enumerate briefly today but which raise our indignation and disgust, and make Russia’s policy-makers forever guilty of the crimes committed against innocent people in Ukraine.

Recently, we have been gravely concerned about Russia’s repetitive threats of using nuclear weapons. These statements are provocative, dangerous, escalatory and utterly unacceptable. This is yet another manifestation of a reckless behaviour that runs counter to Russia’s key international commitments. We call on Russia to abandon this dangerous path.

Sham referenda illegally conducted at gunpoint in occupied Ukrainian territories are Moscow’s cynical and deceitful misinterpretation of one of the key rules of the OSCE Decalogue - the right of self-determination of peoples.

Moscow illegally carries out conscription in occupied territories of the Donbas and Crimea and forces local population to fight against their fellow brothers and sisters. There is a serious risk that it will also try to implement this heinous practice in Kherson and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts.

We will not accept the erasure of internationally recognized borders. We must use every tool available to pressure Russia into refraining from actions which aims to destabilize and undermine Ukraine’s statehood and independence.

The stakes are high – the future of Ukraine is tightly connected with ours. By defending our values and principles we are protecting the rules-based order, the foundations of international security and stability.

Russia should immediately cease its aggression against Ukraine and withdraw its military forces from the territory of an independent state.

*Thank you, Mr. Chair.*