



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1402nd meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
15 December 2022

Mr. Chairperson,

As we are approaching formally the end of this year, let me express appreciation to the Polish CIO for maintaining focused attention to the russian aggression throughout the year.

And I am grateful to all distinguished delegations for their support of Ukraine and the OSCE principles.

Colleagues, we entered this year with a strong feeling of uncertainty, as the russian troops were mounting on Ukraine's border and occupied territories.

However, we are accomplishing this year with a growing confidence that the russian aggression can be effectively repelled and the respect for the OSCE principles can be restored in full strength.

Our unshakable solidarity, unity and fidelity to principles are the key to our common victory and a lasting peace in Europe.

Dear colleagues,

Despite the fact, that a supposed three-day military campaign against the Ukrainian state has already turned into a strategic defeat and bankruptcy of the russian regime, moscow is not giving up its hopes of turning the tide of the war.

The shelling of recently liberated territories of the Kherson region continues.

Border areas of the Sumy and Chernihiv regions are under constant fire.

And Belarus continues to act according to the russian orders by conducting provocations along the border with Ukraine.

While Donbas remains a key hotspot.

Today Bakhmut has become another symbol of Ukraine's invincibility, as russia tries to raze the city to the ground.

But the question is – what for?

The Kremlin sacrificed thousands of its soldiers just to capture a few kilometres around Bakhmut from August.

Just a few kilometres, which have no tactical neither strategic meaning for the whole military campaign.

And I would like to draw attention of the kremlin envoys to a recent statement by Olga Batalina, russia's first deputy minister for social affairs.

She beats the alarm that russia is now in a difficult demographic period, the number of young women has decreased by 40% over the past 10 years.

So, what is the Russian president doing to cope with this challenge and bolster confidence about tomorrow among young families?

Putin simply continues to draft young men for his bloody war of aggression and burns resources for his geopolitical failed gambles.

Well, not the best solution. So, I will repeat my previous question – quo vadis, Russia?

Neither Russia is stopping attacks against Ukraine's critical infrastructure.

Moscow just adds new evil deeds to the list of war crimes.

Yesterday, Moscow launched yet another wave of the Iranian drones to hit Kyiv. Luckily, all 13 drones were shot down.

However, a few days before, on 10th of December, a drone strike plunged Odesa and region in the darkness.

More than 1.5 million people were affected.

Also, the Odesa sea port faced the outage and managed to resume its work only two days ago.

While we are looking for opportunities to expand the capabilities of the Black Sea grain corridor and support people in need by launching "Grain from Ukraine" humanitarian initiative, Russia tries to impair the operation of the corridor.

At the same time, the situation with electricity supply remains very difficult in Kyiv and the region, Lviv region, Vinnytsia region, Ternopil and the region, Chernivtsi and the region, Zakarpattia, Sumy region, Dnipropetrovsk region.

As stated by President Zelenskyy during the Paris conference „Standing with the Ukrainian People“, as of today, at least one and a half billion euros are needed only for a quick restoration of Ukrainian energy infrastructure destroyed or damaged by Russian terrorist attacks.

In this regard we are grateful to our partners for pledges done during the Paris Conference this week.

Especially, we are grateful to the French delegation for hosting this very important meeting.

Solidarity and determination of partners to support Ukraine through this winter and beyond are both – heartbreaking and reassuring.

At the same time, this number of 1.5 bln euro is yet another argument why we have to focus on the prevention.

As the risk of new attacks remains high, Ukraine needs more systems capable to intercept missiles, especially ballistic targets.

New sanctions will further drain Russia's capabilities to continue the war.

As well Ukraine's potential strengthen with supplies of all needed military equipment will make any Russia's plans to attack with no chance to succeed and will accelerate the liberation of occupied territories.

And we are also grateful to the Netherlands for their encouraging statement about willingness to host a tribunal to try Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

We call upon participating states to support this endeavour.

This is how we have to address Russia's impunity accompanied with tortures, degrading filtration procedures, forced deportation and abduction of children, execution of civilians.

Last week report issued by the OHCHR is yet another chilling reminder why justice must prevail.

However, I believe that the russian diplomats will complain again, as they did last time, that it is too premature to talk about the tribunal.

Let me remind them that the Allies committed to bring to justice major war criminals already in 1943, years before the Nazi forces were finally defeated.

The Moscow Declaration is worth reading in this regard.

Dear colleagues,

The russian delegation upon the kremlin's instructions is trying its best to "victimise" russia and to blame everyone around for the war started by moscow.

russia believes that by repeating mantra about a dialogue it could deceive us and buy some time for its military to regroup.

But we have to remember the recent history of the last 30 years.

As on the eve of the collapse of the USSR, namely on 7 December of 1991, when the Belovezh meeting was taking place, after which the USSR ceased to exist, Mykhail Gorbachov threatened the Ukrainian journalist Zynoviy Kulyk with a violent conflict, should Ukraine decide to live independently.

When he was confronted with a comment that there were no preconditions for conflict in Ukraine, Gorbachov simply replied - "No? Well, then they will ... Definitely, I think they will".

Indeed, afterwards, controlled escalation and conflicts became a signature line for russia for the next 30 years.

russia faithfully implements soviet worst practices and policies.

Obvious Lavrov's ultimatums at the Stockholm Ministerial are still fresh in our memories, however, he was not the only russian official who came to the OSCE meeting with territorial claims.

Back in 1999, on the sidelines of the Istanbul OSCE Summit, during one of the bilaterals, the former russian president begged to leave Europe for russia.

As he said, "russia has the power and intellect to know what to do with Europe".

Now we understand what he meant.

And this proves that president putin is trying to implement what politicians in moscow – of all political stripes – have dreamed about for decades.

When one may hear once again demands from moscow for security guarantees, well, let's recall that Ukraine was neutral by its national law when russia attacked my country in 2014 and occupied Crimea.

So, who really needs guarantees?

And it was Ukraine who voluntarily disarmed itself and gave russia its cruise missiles and strategic bombers.

At least, we believed in russia's responsible behaviour in line with all its international obligations and status.

Apparently, russia is now using these missiles and bombers to dismantle Ukraine's statehood.

And this is not to mention the infamous Budapest Memo, a document closely linked to the OSCE heritage.

Obviously, russia failed to be a responsible international actor.

Let's remember all these facts.

Russia has travelled a 30-year long way to today's aggression.

So, who really is the threat to European security?

Statements are not enough to change this. Russia must act. Withdrawal of troops from Ukraine must be a start.

In conclusion, I would like to quote a speech delivered by Oleksandra Matviichuk at the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize last weekend.

"People's lives cannot be a "political compromise". Fighting for peace does not mean yielding to pressure of the aggressor [...] Dictators are afraid that the idea of freedom will prevail. This is why Russia is trying to convince the whole world that the rule of law, human rights and democracy are fake values [...] A lasting peace that gives freedom from fear and hope for a better future is impossible without justice [...] We still see the world through the lens of the Nuremberg Tribunal, where war criminals were convicted only after the fall of the Nazi regime. But justice should not depend on resilience of authoritarian regimes. Justice cannot wait". End of quote.

This is the voice of ordinary Ukrainians.

They want to bring their children up in a free, democratic and European Ukraine, in a country of opportunities, where everyone's rights are protected and authorities are accountable.

I also want to draw attention to President Zelenskyy's call to convene a special summit – the Global Peace Summit - to determine how and when we can implement the points of the Ukrainian Peace Formula.

We believe that the OSCE will also demonstrate its leadership and make its own contribution to this process.

This is the only way to restore lasting peace in Europe.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.