



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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

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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.

As we approach one year since the unjustified and unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine was launched by the Kremlin on 24 February 2022, the Russian Forces continue attempts to advance in the Eastern regions of Ukraine and to seize the entire territory of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The Russian Federation has been ramping up its efforts on the battlefield, trying to turn the tide of the war in its favour.

Currently, the most severe hostilities are ongoing on the Kupiansk, Lyman, Avdiivka, Bakhmut and Novopavlivka axis, where every day new waves of inexperienced recruits and former convicts are hurled into battle as cannon fodder by the Russian commanders. As a result of Russia's WWI-style tactics, its forces continue to suffer significant losses, which in some units reach up to 80% of personnel.

Last week's offensive on Vuhledar in the Donetsk region was disastrous for the Russian army. Russians almost completely lost a 5,000-strong marine brigade while attempting to assault the positions of the Ukrainian Defence Forces.

Approximately 130 pieces of military equipment including 36 tanks were destroyed during one week in this area. The battle for Vuhledar has already become one of the heaviest military losses in a single battle for the Russian armed forces since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The failed attempt to capture Vuhledar testifies to the poor systemic training of the mobilised Russians.

Nevertheless, the Russian occupying forces do not give up their intentions to destroy the critical infrastructure of Ukraine through regular shelling of areas adjacent to the frontline, in particular, in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. The Kremlin has

shown again and again that it does not take into account the norms and its own obligations under International Humanitarian Law.

The result of such a total disregard is obvious - every day we are horrified by reports about significant human losses and destruction caused by the regular attacks by the Russian troops.

Fighting the Russian occupying forces, the Ukrainian army never sets as its goal the destruction of critical and civil infrastructure in the occupied territories and thus protects from suffering the peaceful civilians of these territories, who became hostages of Russia`s criminal expansionist policy. Just compare downtown Donetsk after eight years of alleged bombing by Ukraine and downtown Mariupol after three months of the so-called "liberation" of this city by the Russian army. The scale of devastation is evident.

In 2021, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights recorded 25 civilian deaths related to the conflict in Donbas. Whereas during the year that has passed since Russia`s full-scale invasion of Ukraine last February, Putin has ruthlessly killed tens of thousands of people across Ukraine and continues to do so with maniacal persistence.

On 10 February 2023, Ukraine witnessed yet another large-scale wave of Russian missile attacks when the enemy launched 106 missile strikes across the entire territory of Ukraine, in particular 32 S-300 anti-aircraft missiles and 74 sea- and air-launched cruise missiles. On the same day, the Russian forces also carried out 59 airstrikes, including with the use of the Iranian-made «Shahed-136» UAVs.

The majority of air targets were successfully intercepted by the Ukrainian air defence. However, some Russian missiles and drones that reached their targets caused substantial damage to the civilian infrastructure in the Khmelnytskyi, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv and Kharkiv regions leaving thousands of people without electricity and heating again.

Regular waves of brutal missile terror by the Russian forces clearly demonstrate how urgently Ukraine needs air defence and anti-missile systems to protect citizens and civil infrastructure from reckless Russian attacks. We are grateful to all those participating States who have provided their military assistance, in particular air defence systems, to Ukraine and would like to call on all to continue since it is so needed to protect the civilian population of Ukraine. The sooner and the more security assistance Ukraine gets now, the sooner the war will end with a lasting and just peace.

Esteemed colleagues,

As the Russian troops unsuccessfully try to advance and seize new territories in Donbas, the situation in the temporarily occupied territories remains especially dire. The kidnapping and killing of people by the Russian troops amounted to a widespread and systematic practice there.

In an attempt to absorb temporarily occupied territories, the Russian Federation continues to impose its national legislation, establish occupation administrations, and integrate the local economy with the economy of the Russian Federation. The occupiers

introduced education in Russian and in line with the Russian educational standards, as well as enacted measures aimed at erasing Ukrainian cultural identity.

However, while Russian propaganda continues to use the image of the so-called «liberator» to whitewash the aggression and justify the war, the local population in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine continue to resist. The «Yellow Ribbon», «Crimean Fighting Seagulls» and «Atesh» movements demonstrate that Ukrainians are steadfast in their determination to continue fighting against the Russian aggressors, although they live under occupation.

Trying to suppress any kind of local resistance, the Russian occupying forces continue to persecute people for their pro-Ukrainian views. At the end of January, Ukrainian law-enforcement agencies revealed that the occupation administration in the Berdiansk district (the Zaporizhzhia region) equipped special sites for the detention and torture of the local people.

In Crimea, repressive measures continue to be taken. People are detained for single-person pickets, comments on social media on the situation in Ukraine and even anti-war stickers on their cars. According to the available information, the occupation administration is currently prosecuting approximately 240 criminal cases against the representatives of anti-Russian movements.

Under the pretext of the so-called fight against religious extremists, the Russian occupation authorities continue to persecute representatives of the local Crimean Tatars community which is considered «disloyal» by the Russian special services.

Speaking of the terrible consequences of the Russian occupation of Ukraine's sovereign territories and all the atrocities the Russian troops committed in Ukraine since the beginning of its aggression, we would like to reiterate the importance of accountability. All perpetrators, including the involved military commanders, must be held accountable for what they did. Those committing war crimes should know they cannot act with impunity. None of the 69,345 crimes so far registered by the Ukrainian law-enforcement agencies since the beginning of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine will go unpunished.

Dear colleagues,

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has far-reaching consequences for international security that go far beyond the European continent. Being completely isolated in the international arena and understanding that the international community will not accept its aggressive revisionism, the Kremlin regime continues to invest substantial efforts into gathering other authoritarian regimes around itself. Sharing a common set of revisionist objectives, this axis of global pariah regimes seeks to deepen their cooperation, in particular in the sphere of arms transfers.

This trend is a clear sign of the Russian regime's weakness. However, the threat should not be underestimated. Cooperation between Moscow and Tehran has already brought its results – Iran modernised its UAVs using experience received in Ukraine.

Further development by Iran of its military technologies constitutes a serious threat to the entire international community.

We should not also forget about one of the most loyal Kremlin allies – the Republic of Belarus. Minsk continues to provide its territory and respective military infrastructure for the needs of the Russian forces involved in the war against Ukraine. We would like to emphasise once again that actions aimed at practical support of armed aggression constitute a gross violation of international law and will not remain without consequences.

Against this backdrop, it is critically important for all of us to have a common understanding of this threat and develop a joint long-term strategy to address threats from the Russian Federation and its allies in order to provide security for the entire world.

So far, the Kremlin has not showed even a sign of readiness to stop its war of choice. On the contrary, significant intensification of military efforts, the continued Russian nuclear sabre-rattling and the spread of false allegations and misinformation indicates that the Russian Federation is determined to wage the war regardless of the possible consequences for the world and even for its own people.

For its part, Ukraine has a clear vision of how to stop the war. We are convinced that the implementation of the 10-point Peace Formula presented by President Zelenskyy at the G20 Summit on 15 November 2022 is designed to bring an end to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and to restore security for the whole world. The main goal of the Formula is to deprive Russia of its tools to commit the crime of aggression and to ensure security and justice for the entire international community. We call on all countries to join the process of its implementation.

Mr Chairperson,

I would like to conclude my statement with the words of President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, which he said in his address to the European Council during his recent visit to the EU institutions in Brussels: «the sooner and stronger freedom and the real power of European values return to the entire territory of Ukraine, which remains occupied by Russia, the more reliable and lasting peace will be in post-war Europe ».

These words clearly underscore that the only possibility of ensuring lasting peace and stability in Ukraine, Europe, and the world is to restore the rule of international law and recreate the efficiency of international institutions. Undeniably, the road in that direction lies through the liberation of Ukraine from the Russian occupiers and the restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty within its internationally recognised borders. And this goal will certainly be achieved.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.