



Delegation of Canada
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Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR VÉRONIQUE PEPIN-HALLÉ
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE
1486th SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 August 2024

Madame la présidente,

C'est un grand honneur d'être de retour au Hofburg, particulièrement à titre d'ambassadrice. Encore beaucoup de visages familiers, mais aussi de nouveaux collègues, avec qui ils me tardent de travailler.

It is also a distinct pleasure to begin my tenure by extending heartfelt congratulations to Ukraine on the occasion of its 33rd Independence Day.

Canada was proud to be the first Western country to recognize Ukraine as a free and independent nation in 1991. We are happy to have the opportunity to be the first to congratulate Ukraine today, too.

We continue to recognize the same borders as we did 33 years ago, which remain integral to Ukraine's sovereignty in full accordance with international law.

Madam Chair,

We unequivocally condemn Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Our support for Ukraine's right to defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence is unwavering.

We strongly condemn the latest massive attack, launched by Russia over the weekend, against Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, Dnipro and other cities.

We also strongly condemn Russia's persistent attacks on civilian targets, which have resulted in significant casualties and immense suffering.

Approximately 40% of Ukraine's population is projected to need humanitarian assistance in 2024. The impacts of this brutal war extend across economic, environmental, and social spheres, and its consequences will be felt by generations of Ukrainians to come.

Canada is particularly concerned about the well-being of thousands of forcibly transferred and deported Ukrainian children. In response, we launched the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children. This Coalition aims to protect these children's best interests, facilitate their return home, support their reintegration, and prevent such actions from recurring. To date, 40 countries have joined this effort, and we encourage others to lend their support and expertise.

Madam Chair,

Since Russia's illegal full-scale war of aggression, Canada has committed more than \$19.5 billion in comprehensive support to Ukraine. We will continue to stand by the Ukrainian people, condemn the Kremlin's brutal actions, and use every available means to hold Russia accountable.

We look forward to celebrating many more Ukrainian Independence Days.

Slava Ukraini!

Thank you, Madam Chair.