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auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR  
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE  
1423<sup>rd</sup> MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**18 May 2023**

Mr. Chair,

With civilian casualties at their highest levels in months, Russian atrocities and war crimes against Ukraine's civilian population continue unabated. Last night, Moscow launched another barrage of missiles against Ukraine's largest city, Kyiv; the ninth such attack this month. Russia's pre-meditated war has a significant humanitarian impact not only on the people of Ukraine, but also on the wider world. This will be my focus today.

Over 8 million Ukrainians remain outside of their country, and over 5 million are internally displaced. Russia's widespread and indiscriminate attacks continue to limit the population's access to food, healthcare, electricity, heat, and water. Each town Ukraine liberates alleviates this burden; each town Russia attacks puts more people in need of shelter and life-saving assistance. Earlier this week, UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Martin Griffiths, reported to the UN Security Council that Ukrainian communities along the Russian border and near the front line are "encircled, cut off from water, food and medical care by heavy ground fighting and blocked roads". Mr. Griffiths also reported on last week's attacks against Kherson, where residential buildings, a school, an outpatient hospital, and an elderly care facility were damaged, leaving scores of civilians dead or needing shelter and healthcare. The same week, Russian missiles struck a humanitarian storage warehouse in Odesa and a Ukrainian Red Cross mobile hospital in Mykolaiv. The attacks destroyed humanitarian supplies, vital medical equipment and put humanitarian workers at grave risk. In this context, Mr. Chair, I will highlight that Ukrainian air defence has neutralized the vast majority of Russian drones and missiles, including reportedly seven hypersonic Kinzhal missiles launched in the past week, thereby defending and preserving countless human lives.

Mr. Chair,

Russia has obligations under international humanitarian law. Homes, schools, hospitals, and other essential infrastructure, as well as humanitarian facilities and assets, cannot be targeted, and yet Russia has attacked all of these. Civilian populations, humanitarian organizations and hospitals must never be targets in war. We condemn in the strongest terms Russia's attacks on civilians and on humanitarian facilities, as well as its clear disregard for International Humanitarian Law.

Mr. Chair,

Amidst this war, humanitarian workers, including locals and UN personnel, local civil society and international NGOs, continue to deliver life-saving assistance to those most in need across Ukraine. Unfortunately, the delivery of crucial humanitarian aid faces grave access limitations, mostly to Russian-occupied areas in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. This continues despite 14 months of humanitarian agencies notifying Russia and its proxy forces through the humanitarian notification system. We call on Russia to allow for the safe and unimpeded passage of humanitarian convoys so that humanitarian workers and organizations can provide assistance to those in need. We also call on all parties to allow humanitarian access to POWs in facilities under their control.

The humanitarian impact of this war is also felt on the 174 000 square kilometres of Ukrainian land estimated to be contaminated by landmines, maiming civilians and rendering fields too dangerous to sow. Antipersonnel mines have been used in multiple areas across Ukraine, including victim-activated booby traps, many of which will remain long after Ukraine liberates its internationally recognised territory. Canada will continue to fund the detection and clearance of landmines, unexploded explosive ordnance and other explosive remnants of war, to help lessen this generational burden.

We welcome the extension of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, albeit only for 60 days. The BSGI has delivered 600,000 metric tons of wheat through the World Food Programme in direct support of humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Yemen. It must be sustained on a long-term and predictable basis.

Finally, Mr. Chair, I would like to join others in marking the 79th anniversary of the mass deportations of the Crimean Tatars under Joseph Stalin in 1944. This action caused massive human suffering and deaths, and displaced the Crimean Tatars from their home of many centuries, forcibly changing the ethnic diversity of the peninsula's population. Today, the remaining Crimean Tatars continue to suffer human rights violations under Russia's illegal occupation of Crimea. This, too, must stop, as must Russia's deportations of Ukrainians out of any parts of Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

Russia can end this war now by unconditionally withdrawing all troops and military equipment from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine. We call on it to do so immediately, to release all SMM staff and assets, to allow food markets and global inflation to stabilise, to support the BSGI through both words and action and to abide by its obligations under international law and by its commitments to OSCE principles.