



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

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Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1484th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
25 July 2024

Madam Chairperson,

As we are in the middle of the year, it is important to check where we started and where we are.

As russia's missile and drone barrage shocked us on the first days of January, the beginning of the Maltese Chairpersonship has been marked with a joint call together with the Secretary General upon russia to end the war against Ukraine.

Sadly, since then the CIO had to repeat this call numerous times.

The intensification of russia's missile terror since March has amplified the dire humanitarian situation for the civilians in Ukraine.

While the coming winter will bring even more challenges.

This is especially true for vulnerable groups, such as newborn babies, children, the disabled and the elderly.

According to the UN Human Rights Monitoring mission, this missile terror combined with the opening of a new axis of the aggression in the Kharkiv region in May has led to a sharp increase in civilian casualties.

Facing difficulties on the frontline, russia is banking on the death, terror and the destruction of essential infrastructure.

Apart from the missile terror, the 5th, recently published, ODIHR report, covering the period from December 2023 to the end of May 2024, provides a grim account of the means used by russia to execute its genocidal strategy. Let me quote.

"Beatings with various tools, electrocutions, stabbing, suffocation, stress positions, mutilation, mock executions with the use of firearms, prolonged use of handcuffs and hooding, threats of death, mutilation or other physical violence and threats of harm to family members", "routine and intense physical beatings using a wide array of methods (fists, kicks, blunt instruments), waterboarding, dog bites, being forced to endure intense physical activities, threats of mutilation and sexual violence", "alleged incidents of rape, threats of rape and sexual violence, including threats to rape the detainee's family members, electrocution of genitals, striking of genitals, forced nudity, sexual harassment" and so on.

This long list of russia's means of terror documented by ODIHR is not exhaustive.

However, it is hard to imagine how long the list of lives broken by russia is – be it the protected population in the occupied territories, prisoners of war or civilian hostages.

And this list will continue to grow, as long as russia remains in Ukraine.

Furthermore, with the start of the harvesting season, the russian army began to deliberately hit the fields with FPV drones to burn the crops.

This serves russia's tactics of undermining the prospects for Ukraine's economy and depriving Ukrainian families of their livelihoods and any confidence in the future.

At the same time, by keeping the situation tense in the Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions for months, the russian leadership is trying to fool the world into thinking that moscow has unlimited resources to wage the war.

At any cost of human lives, the russian regime sends endless and senseless waves of their soldiers to give arguments for their diplomats. Even by sacrificing the future of their own country.

All this brutality of actions culminated in mid-June in the declaration of yet another ultimatum by vladimir putin, demanding free territories from Ukraine and exposing russia's neo-colonial aberrations.

A despicable attack on the Okhmatdyt children's hospital was probably intended to enforce the ultimatum. At the same time, new threats are following with regard to dams on the Dnipro River.

No doubt, the intensity of the fire, the level of cruelty, and the scale of violence should have caused a sense of despair, made people lose the faith in the cause of freedom, and discouraged from further resistance.

Esteemed colleagues,

russia is trying to make us believe that only dark times are ahead of us, with no light at the end, unless moscow's demands are met.

However, is this really the case?

Colleagues, in the last six months, we have accomplished what was considered to be a mission impossible. Just some of them:

- the Hague conference on justice launched the Register of Damage for Ukraine;
- the Recovery Conference in Berlin has shown commitment to building up of resilient Ukraine;
- the EU accession negotiations have been opened with Ukraine;
- there is an agreement that the aggressor's frozen assets will be allocated to help the victim;
- bilateral security agreements have paved the way for the signing of the Ukrainian Compact;
- NATO Summit reconfirmed the irreversibility of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration;
- the First Peace Summit has demonstrated the majority's commitment to Ukraine's territorial integrity;
- the 4th Summit of European Political Community has reconfirmed Europe's unity in standing against the russian threat and resolve to work for the security of our continent.

Of course, russia believed that its threats of escalation, certain prejudices and differences in positions would make none of these achievements possible.

However, russia's calculations failed. Once again.

And with all of these achievements and commitments we are in a much stronger position than before February 24, 2022.

All of this brings us closer to victory and sets the foundations for a just peace.

And what is most important is that we've got to know how to win.

With resolve, decisiveness and integrity.

This must be the compass in our fight ahead.

As President Zelenskyy said, "the only competitive advantage putin still enjoys is Soviet-era weapons, money, and a complete disregard for human life".

That's why, by enforcing Ukraine's defence capabilities, including through providing air-defence systems to protect the skies, the Soviet stocks will be depleted very soon.

By enhancing sanctions, putin will be deprived of money and resources to produce new weapons.

By lifting the restrictions on using long-range weapons against the russian legitimate military targets, we can stop any russian attempt to expand the war.

By helping to protect and restore Ukraine's energy system, we can ensure that moscow's bet on making Ukraine an inhabitable place will be a losing one.

By advancing Ukraine's Peace Formula ahead of the second Peace Summit, we can force russia to engage in real talks on restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity and integrity of the Helsinki Final Act our Organization is founded on.

And by ensuring russia's and its leadership's accountability for all committed crimes and atrocities, we can restore respect for human life and dignity.

Colleagues, with six months still ahead of us, we can ensure that the new year does not start like the current one.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.