



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY ANDRIJANA BESLIC, FIRST SECRETARY
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE**

1446th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

6 October 2023

Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to join others in expressing our profound sadness at the loss of so many innocent lives at a wake in Hroza yesterday, and in Kharkiv today. Fifty-two civilians died in Hroza, including an eight-year-old boy, because of an attack on a café with a precision Iskander missile.

This morning, we woke up to more sad news out of Kharkiv, where two Iskander ballistic missiles hit a residential building in the early morning, killing a ten-year old boy and his grandmother, and injuring almost 30 others, including a baby not even a year old.

Rescuers pulled the young boy, Tymofiy, from the rubble wearing his Spider-Man pyjamas.

And yesterday, missiles targeted a hospital in Beryslav, injuring two medical workers. We wish them a speedy recovery.

We express our deepest condolences to the victims and survivors of these callous attacks, and to their loved ones.

We condemn, in the strongest possible terms, attacks intentionally targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure. Such attacks may amount to war crimes. Any war crimes must be subject to accountability as such.

We have said this just yesterday: Anything, and anyone seems to be a military target for Russia, including civilians, whether they are dead, alive, or even unborn.

These recent attacks are sadly not isolated incidents. We have heard in this Council, on many occasions and from many credible sources, the systematic nature of attacks on civilians and civilian targets by Russian forces in Ukraine.

We are reminded of the attack on a restaurant in Kramatorsk in June 2023 that killed 13 people, including teenage twin sisters.

And we are reminded of the attack on a high-rise apartment in Uman in April this year, that killed 23 civilians, including children. And in Sloviansk, on orthodox Easter this year, when Russian forces struck apartment buildings killing 15 individuals.

In Dnipro, we are reminded of the death of 46 people, including children, killed by Russian missiles in January 2023 because of attacks – again – on an apartment building.

We remember Zaporizhzhia in September of last year, when over 30 civilians were killed, including children, and over 100 wounded following attacks on a civilian humanitarian convoy.

We remember Vinnitsya in July 2022, when 27 civilians, including children, were killed with missiles fired by the Russian Navy.

We remember Chasiv Yar in July of last year, when a Russian missile struck an apartment block killing over 40 people, including children.

We remember Kremenchuk, in June last year, when a Russian missile hit a shopping mall killing 20 civilians and injuring three times as many.

In Odesa, the same month, we remember how Russia bombed an apartment building killing 20 people.

And who could forget the attack on fleeing women, children and elderly at a train station in Kramatorsk in April last year, that killed 61 people, including children.

Most of us here have seen, here in this building, the movie “20 days in Mariupol” that documented the siege of the city, and the relentless bombing of residential areas, including a maternity ward by Russian forces. The images shocked the world and illustrated Russia’s utter disregard for human life, and its real intentions behind its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The use of precision missiles on residential areas, and the sheer scale and number of attacks give credence to allegations that Russian forces are deliberately and systematically making civilians and civilian objects in Ukraine military targets. This is illegal under international law.

Mr. Chair,

Russia’s attacks on civilians only further drive home for all of us why we need to continue supporting Ukraine militarily, politically and via humanitarian means. Canada will continue to do so, now and into the future.

We stand by Ukraine, and support Ukraine in all multilateral fora, including at the OSCE, to shed light on all crimes committed by Russia, and to impose consequences on Russia for violations of international law.

Thank you, Mr. Chair