



STATEMENT ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 18 July 2024

Thank you, Madam Chair,

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has created the most challenging security situation in Europe since the Second World War. Yesterday marked the 10 year anniversary of the downing of MH-17, an event that made it clear to us all that Russia was, and is, a threat to European security.

Therefore, it is also in Norway's interest to assist Ukraine in its self-defence against Russia's aggression. Ukraine has both a right and a duty to defend its freedom and sovereignty. Its most urgent need is military support. Norway's support through the «Nansen Programme for Ukraine» demonstrates Norway's long-term commitment and support. The programme also provides civilian support, including financial and humanitarian support.

Russia's attacks on energy infrastructure and other critical civilian infrastructure are causing unnecessary suffering for the civilian population. In the months leading up to winter, reconstruction of critical infrastructure will be crucial, to improve energy security and prevent a humanitarian disaster. Norway has there recently announced that it will provide additional 1 billion Norwegian kroner (approximately 90 million euros) to improve energy security in Ukraine. And, once again, we call on Russia to adhere to international law, including the UN Charter and international humanitarian law, and fulfil its obligation to protect civilians.

Norway also actively supports the 'Ukraine Peace Formula'. The Peace Summit in Lucerne was a success and contributed to assure continued cross-regional engagement and counter Russian disinformation. The basis for any initiative must be the fact that

Russia is the aggressor who now occupies a large part of Ukrainian territory in clear breach of international law, including the UN Charter.

Russia's war of aggression denies Ukraine's right to exist as a free and sovereign state. This is incongruent with peace in line with international law. Not challenging Russia's actions would potentially mean witnessing a roll-back of global achievements and international rules that we have all agreed to, including in this organisation. We must uphold the commitments as stated in the Helsinki Final Act.

Ukraine's struggle to defend itself is legitimate and in line with international law. Norway's military aid to Ukraine is in support of the sovereignty, self-determination and independence of Ukraine. Russia could at any moment choose to cease hostilities and withdraw its forces from Ukraine, thus bringing an end to the war. We once again urge Russia to do exactly that.