



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International  
Organizations in Vienna

### **Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine**

As for delivery by Viktoriia Kuvshynnykova, Chargée d'affaires a.i.  
Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,  
to the 1486<sup>th</sup> special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

26 August 2024

#### **Madam Chairperson,**

Thank you for convening this special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, Ukrainian people celebrated its 33<sup>rd</sup> Independence Day. The CIO's message delivered on this occasion was very much appreciated in Ukraine. We are grateful for that. But today's meeting is more than the manifestation of solidarity.

It is about our common struggle for the rule of law and justice, the adherence to the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, and the determination to protect the rules-based order in Europe and beyond.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express our gratitude to all our partners, allies and friends for the unity, solidarity and support that the participating States and their people have been providing to our country since the very first days of the russian war of aggression.

This hand of help extended to the Ukrainians in the darkest days enables us to withstand the existential threat and preserve our statehood.

Also, the Independence Day is more than about the restoration of the Ukrainian sovereignty.

As for the third year in a row the Ukrainian people have met this day in the midst of russia's full-scale invasion, it is, first of all, about resolve and courage, about unity and dignity, about hope and the future.

And today we honour those who continue to pay the ultimate price for our right to live in a free, democratic and European state.

Thanks to these brave women and men, a line from Sumy to Kharkiv, and through Kupyansk, Lyman, Siversk, Kramatorsk, Toretsk, Pokrovsk, Kurakhove, Vremivka, and to Orikhiv is literally a line between freedom and subjugation, between rights and repressions, between democracy and tyranny. Between death and life.

Ukraine's Independence Day also serves as a stark reminder that russia's primary goal is – to dismantle Ukraine as a functioning entity. It has not changed for decades.

This is the key driver of the ongoing aggression, starting from the occupation of Crimea in 2014.

It is simply a war of conquest, which Europe haven't seen since the end of the Second World War. As 80 years ago, the future of Europe again depends on the outcomes of the war.

Being driven with the goal to erase Ukraine's identity, the blue and yellow flag, Trident, our language, any symbols displaying loyalty to the Ukrainian state are outlawed by the russian invaders.

For people in the occupation, this means filtration, repressions, deportation, re-education, forced russification and so on. That's why the continuation of the occupation would never mean peace for those people. It is worth remembering for the advocates of peace based on a territorial compromise.

Furthermore, for vladimir putin a democratic and pro-European Ukraine constitutes a threat to his rule and his plans to expand russia by force.

That's why he wants to deprive Ukraine of its right to choose its future freely.

By invading Ukraine and committing heinous crimes, such as blowing up of the Kakhovka dam or bombing the Okhmatdyt hospital, moscow wants to show that there are no limits for its cruelty and impunity.

This is how russia is trying to bully others into obedience.

To that end, vladimir putin is ready to continue to terrorize Ukraine trying to turn it into an unlivable land. As long as he has resources to do that.

Today is no exception. Early in the morning, russia has launched yet another massive missile and drone attack.

This was one of the largest attacks – a combined strike, involving over a hundred missiles of various types and around a hundred of Shaheds.

15 regions of Ukraine were under attack. There were casualties, including civilians were killed in the Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia and Zhytomyr regions.

Ukraine's critical infrastructure was the primary target, as in the past.

These facilities are crucial for the supply of electricity, heat, and basic services to civilians, including in homes, hospitals, schools, and business enterprises, ensuring the safety of individuals and families.

In total, from the start of the full-scale invasion, russia used about 9,600 missiles and rockets as well as 14,000 combat drones against Ukraine.

In addition to missiles, drones and rockets, Ukraine is rained with about 45,000 artillery shells daily.

Every month 3,200-3,500 guided aerial bombs are dropped on the civilian population and infrastructure of Ukraine.

All this speaks volumes - to stop the russian army, to end terror against the civilians and civilian objects and to save human lives a next logical step should be taken - a decision on the use of long-range capabilities.

Against legitimate military targets on the russian territory, in particular on the places of concentration of russia's troops and equipment, military bases, airfields, logistics, and other military facilities.

**Dear colleagues,**

Once again, we find ourselves at a critical juncture in our history.

russia's war is about an attempt to dominate in Europe and beyond by force.

However, in the third year of the war, it is clear that all russia's strategy is based on a mixture of dead promises, fake red lines, distorted history, false accusations, misleading narratives, and empty threats of escalation. Nothing more.

Just as dictators of the past did, Vladimir Putin is trying to bribe the world with promises of possible compromises on our principles, values and commitments. Just to break them again, when he thinks that it is time to take everything.

Such a strategy can only succeed if there is no resistance, no unity and no solidarity.

So, should the world give the Kremlin yet another chance to get away with its crimes? Absolutely, not.

And, the celebration of Ukraine's Independence Day for the third time in the midst of the extermination war is the best proof of our resolve. To defend our land and to fight for our future.

It is the best proof that Russia's plans are doomed to failure. It is the best proof that the Free World has all means at our disposal to secure the victory of justice, human dignity and democracy.

The time for half-steps and empty compromises is over.

As we commemorated the Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Stalinism and Nazism on 23 of August, it is worth remembering that while the crimes of the Third Reich were condemned, Soviet crimes were never properly prosecuted.

The absence of the political will in the Kremlin to disassociate their country from the dark past and the further glorification of Stalinism go hand in hand with Russia's current fascist ideology and aggression against Ukraine.

That's why Ukraine has taken an initiative to create a Special Tribunal.

The Russian leadership must be prosecuted for the crime of aggression.

Moreover, these days Ukraine has ratified the Rome Statute, thus, becoming the 125<sup>th</sup> member of the International Criminal Court.

As Minister Kuleba stated, "by taking this step, Ukraine demonstrates its unwavering commitment to strengthening international justice. This work will now be even more effective".

Colleagues, let me reiterate Ukraine's commitment to a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace.

In view of this, we are grateful for the political leadership demonstrated by the OSCE Chair-in-Office, Minister Borg due to his participation in the Peace Summit in June.

We look forward to working with the Chairpersonship, national delegations and OSCE on the implementation of all ten points.

Our goal is clear: to prepare a real basis for a just end to this war.

The principles of respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states as well as the prohibition on the threat or use of force should serve as the basis for achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Europe.

As provided for in the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.

It is the only guarantee for a lasting and durable peace in Europe.

And let me conclude with the quote from President Zelenskyy's address on Ukraine's Independence Day: "we will not allow to turn into a grey zone our lands, where the blue and yellow flag rightly belongs. A dictator from the Red Square, who constantly threatens everyone with the red button, will not dictate any of his red lines to us. Only Ukraine and Ukrainians will determine how to live, what path to take, and what choice to make. Because this is how independence works. And we know what

independence is. How difficult it is to revive it. How difficult it is to defend it. But we know: everything depends on us.”

**I thank you, Madam Chairperson.**