



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

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Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
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Madam Chairperson,

12-year-old Maksym was a very talented boy.

He loved sports, music, and to ride a bike.

But the biggest dream of Maksym was to hug his older brother Mykyta, a defender of Mariupol and Azovstal, who is still in Russia's captivity. For two long years.

On 21 September Maksym's life was cut short by the Russian missile, when Russia attacked Kryvyi Rih.

The tragic story of this family is telling.

While Russia is raining Ukraine with missiles to kill civilians in peaceful cities, others are facing death in Russia's torture chambers.

Last week the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine presented new evidence showing common patterns of torture by Russia against Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilians in temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories and in Russia.

The new evidence reinforces the Commission's previous finding, as well as those reported by the Moscow Mechanism's experts and ODIHR, that torture committed by Russian authorities has been widespread and systematic.

The Commission has identified additional common elements in the use of torture - "the consistency of violent practices imposed in detention centres where detainees from Ukraine have been held in the Russian Federation, and the replication of these practices in several large penitentiary centres in occupied areas of Ukraine".

In addition to this, Russia continues to impose total russification and cultural assimilation in the occupied territories.

The "state strategy of cultural policy" approved on 11 of September, 2024, is another confirmation of that.

According to this document, the parts of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions of Ukraine have been prioritized for the Russian government.

This is further evidence that people in the territories of Ukraine occupied by Russia face repression, torture, coercion, assimilation and military indoctrination.

Russia is creating conditions, where access to basic needs – food, medicine, health care or education – depends on the belonging to the "Russian world" certified by a Russian passport.

Against this background, it is more than clear that the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity is first and foremost about restoring respect for human life.

This is why the non-recognition of the attempted annexation by Russia of four Ukraine's regions two years ago and of Crimea ten years ago must lead to the full implementation of the Peace Formula and the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Ukraine's territories.

Russia's policy speaks volumes that temporary solutions will not bring a lasting peace but will bring more human sufferings with a bigger war looming ahead of us.

Dear colleagues,

The Russian Federation does not want peace but only uses peace calls to manipulate and divide our countries.

Actions of the Russian regime speak for themselves.

Russia continues to attack densely populated cities daily. With aerial guided bombs, which are powerful and indiscriminate weapons.

Like it happened on 21 of September, when Russia hit yet another residential building in Kharkiv.

21 people were injured, including an 8-year-old child and two 17-year-old teenagers. Sixty residents were evacuated from the building.

Or on 24 of September, Russia repeated the attack on a residential building in Kharkiv, which had already been struck at the beginning of the full-scale invasion.

Moreover, Russia has started to attack the city of Zaporizhzhia with aerial guided bombs for the first time.

At the same time, Russia keeps striking Ukraine's energy infrastructure, which threaten the Ukrainian people's access to critical services during the upcoming winter.

The recent OHCHR report "Attacks on Ukraine's Energy Infrastructure: Harm to the Civilian Population" provides a comprehensive picture of Russia's genocidal intentions.

In addition, our intelligence indicates that Russia is preparing to attack Ukraine's nuclear energy infrastructure.

This includes equipment that is critical to the safe operation of our NPPs.

This was tried by Russia on 26 August 2024, when it deliberately targeted nuclear energy nodes that led to the emergency disconnection of several nuclear units.

Madam Chairperson, I would also like to remind that two weeks ago a Russian representative was boasted, I quote, about "only five facilities that Russia can attack at any given second to cause a total blackout in Ukraine".

Now we have more clarity what he was talking about.

Colleagues, isn't this a confession by a war criminal?

Isn't this high time for the OSCE to keep the Russian representatives accountable for their threats, if there is still any point in tolerating Russia's unjustified presence here?

Isn't this the true value of Russia's commitment to peace and dialogue?

And isn't this a wake-up call for our more decisive actions?

The fate of Moldova, Chechnya, Georgia and Ukraine shows that attempts to please and engage Russia have failed too often to be repeated.

At the same time, the Kremlin's intentions to further focus on reunifying of its so-called "historical and post-Soviet lands" is a sufficient reason to force Russia into peace.

As President Zelenskyy stated, "This war can't simply fade away. This war cannot be calmed by talks".

We know from our past that, when aggression is not stopped it becomes larger in scale. When the aggressor is not punished, he becomes more blood-thirsty.

That's why, the only way to prevent Russia from escalating its killing of civilians is to deprive it of the means to wage a prolonged war. We can do that with sanctions and weapons.

The destruction of the strategic artillery reserves in the Krasnodar Krai and Tver region are the most recent examples of how we can effectively protect human lives.

We need more such decisions that will create right conditions for talks and diplomacy that will lead to a lasting and just peace and more just international order, as foreseen by Ukraine's Peace Formula.

And Russia can take a very simple decision to prove its commitment to peace, the principles of Helsinki Final Act and the UN Charter, as Ukraine continues to work on the organization of the Second Peace Summit.

Distinguished colleagues,

Russia brutally took the life of 12-year-old Maksym.

However, Maksym's dream of seeing his family together again is still alive.

His brother, Mykyta, has the chance to return home and to be a support to their grieving mother.

Like thousands of Ukrainian families are waiting for their loved ones to be back from the frontline, from Russia's captivity and from counties who generously provided shelter for the refugees, and to live in a free Ukraine and a peaceful Europe, where the rule of law prevails not the rule of violence.

We can make this dream come true through common and decisive actions.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.