



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1444th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
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Mr. Chairperson, dear colleagues,

russia continues missile and drone attacks on Ukraine.

Strikes took place on September 21, 23, 25 and 26, and also this night.

Shahed drones, Kalibrs cruise missiles, Onyx anti-ship missiles, S-300 anti-aircraft guided missiles, Kh-101/Kh-555/Kh-55 air-borne cruise missiles – this is the arsenal used by russia to terrorize Ukrainians over the week.

Unfortunately, there are killed and wounded.

Among the targets again were civilian objects, port infrastructure, UNESCO heritage.

Moreover, all the attacks were conducted at night.

Five nights of stress and lack of sleep for the civilians, including children.

The artillery fire is another deadly force.

According to the report of the Ukrainian Defense forces dated September 27, about 100 settlements came under artillery fire – in Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions.

This is just one day of russia's war.

Apart from deliberate and systematic attacks harming civilians, there is continuous evidence of torture, sexual and gender-based violence, as the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine said in its latest updated report.

Gross violations of human rights have become another weapon of russia against the civilians.

As stated by the UN Commission, the brutality of torture leads to death of the victim.

And its death toll is growing. Often, in the shadow of the occupation.

So, it might be comparable to the casualties caused by military attacks.

But we will learn this after the liberation of the territories and disclosure of all mass graves and places of detention, which we have already seen in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Kherson and other regions.

While the russian diplomats cynically call for a professional dialogue without emotions within the OSCE, russian soldiers without emotions torturing civilians to death in the occupied territories.

The same goes about rape and sexual violence committed by russians.

Frequently, as confirmed by the Commission, family members were kept in an adjacent room, thereby forced to hear the violations taking place. Isn't this torture?

And, contrary to the russian diplomats, victims of sexual violence do not have such a privilege to make a procedural reservation.

There is another concern of the Commission: the rhetoric transmitted in russian state and other media may be incitement to genocide.

This is what, namely, russia's dehumanization campaigns, was repeatedly raised in the Council by Ukraine and other participating States, including last Thursday.

We believe that the RFoM within her mandate could make a valuable contribution to the investigation conducted by the UN Commission.

This incitement to genocide testifies that russia amies to commit further crimes, unless it is stopped.

Colleagues, two days ago, we sat in this room to support the CIO's plan on how to ensure the OSCE functionality.

On the same days, the russian federation announced plans to conduct the war against Ukraine until 2025.

This is quite illustrative of russia's true attitude.

The implementation of these plans does not mean dialogue, but new killings, tortured civilians, deportation of children, burned houses, mined fields, polluted soils.

And we know how the russian delegation will be whitewashing war criminals, including today.

By lying. By blaming others. By wrapping their own crimes with the flag of the fight against neo-Nazim.

It seems, they believe that endless historical manipulation is an indulgence for them to commit crimes today according to a playbook of the past.

But let's make no mistake. The facts on the ground speak for themselves.

Incitement to genocide and dehumanization campaign, reference to "historical lands" and "one people", elimination of dissidents and suppression of protest, kidnapping and deportation of children, re-education and filtration, mass graves and torture of civilians, the separation of people into "ours and not ours" – this are clear evidences of a plague that we all thought was in the past. And this plague is in the russian house.

Dear colleagues,

Next Sunday, October 1, Ukraine will mark the Day of Defenders.

Day of the strongest women and men.

Of those who defend the rules-based order, rule of law, human rights, freedom and democracy on the frontline.

As we rely on their courage and bravery, so they do rely on our decisiveness and leadership.

For Ukrainians it would also be a day to pay tribute to the fallen heroes.

Let me just name a few of them.

20-year-old Dmytro Alekhno was killed on September 3, in the Donetsk region.

20-year-old Vasyl Riabtsev was killed on September 3, in the Zaporizhzhia region.

23-year-old Vasyl Chorniy was killed on September 5, in the Donetsk region.

In 2014 when russia occupied Crimea and attacked Donetsk and Luhansk regions, they were 11- and 14-year-old, respectively, with completely different plans for life, with an idealistic view on the world, with the confidence that adults will protect them.

But, the years passed, and since 2014, russia has crossed the line from controlled escalation to full-scale, unprovoked war in the heart of Europe.

Those young boys gave their lives a few days ago to protect us.

And what do we hear from the russian delegation again?

Unwilling to withdraw its troops from Ukraine and return to the principles of international law, but calls for professional dialogue to prevent the escalation.

How they did it in 2014 to win time and prepare for war.

But we have to learn the lesson of 2014.

That's why we, Ukrainians, want most of all today that our children in a few years do not have to go again to defend our freedom and independence with arms in their hands.

This is what we are fighting for.

This is why we should not allow russia to abuse the rule of consensus in the OSCE in order to empower their impunity.

As russia's hot war ranges on at the heart of Europe, the time of balancing as it was during the Cold War passed long ago.

The OSCE can and should contribute to bringing russia to account, legal and political.

And this is a way of how we can empower the Helsinki Final Act to protect lives of people.

We have already seen that our political will to set a precedent is the only limit for the OSCE to remain in line with the times.

And the OSCE has made a significant advance in this regard. We have to keep the momentum.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.