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auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE
1447th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 October 2023

Mr. Chair,

It has now been over 600 days of full-scale war and brutality inflicted by Russia on Ukrainians.

In its unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine, the Russian Federation has shown continuing disdain for international law, including international humanitarian law, employing tactics that seek to instill terror the civilian population of Ukraine.

Russian forces deliberately target civilians in Ukraine. We have seen this clearly since the earliest days of the full-scale invasion in Mariupol, when Russian forces deliberately attacked a maternity ward and aimed tanks at residential buildings.

Russian forces aim to deliberately destroy Ukraine's ability to heat its homes, light up its cities, and deliver food to the poorest people in the world. Such attacks continued since our last meeting. On October 15, thirteen Russian guided bombs hit key infrastructure in Kherson, sparking a partial blackout, disrupting the area's water supply, and killing two people. The day prior, Ukrainian authorities report disrupting an attempt by eight Russian saboteurs to attack critical civilian infrastructure in the Sumy region.

We have previously cited credible reports of illegal transfer and imprisonment, torture, other inhuman or degrading treatment, and sexual and gender-based violence against innocent civilians in temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine. Governing by such terror is a deliberate choice to punish opponents or those considered hostile to the occupation, to coerce people into subjugation, and to break resistance to the occupation.

In April 2022, the world was shocked to discover the brutal massacre of civilians and prisoners of war as Russian forces retreated from Bucha. Murdered civilians lined the streets, their hands tied behind their backs, shot at blank range. The abandoned torture chambers served as a warning sign for the rest of Ukraine as to what awaits them under Russia's so-called "liberation".

We cannot forget the fear Ukrainian children forcibly taken from their families and caretakers must be feeling. Being forcibly transferred to unfamiliar surroundings with unfamiliar people is deeply distressing for them. We emphasize that *all* Ukrainian children must be returned home, where they belong.

If this record was not infamous enough, Russia's leadership regularly threatens the use of nuclear weapons and his forces occupy Europe's largest nuclear power plant, dramatically raising the risk of potentially catastrophic consequences. But this is not the only example of Russia's willingness to resort to weapons of mass destruction.

Russian media reported that Russian forces used riot control agents on the battlefield in Ukraine. Canada and other members of the G7 invoked a formal procedure under the Chemical Weapons Convention to ask Russia to explain these reports. Any use of riot control agents in warfare is explicitly prohibited by the Chemical Weapons Convention, but, sadly, it wouldn't be Russia's first violation.

Finally, Mr. Chair, we want to underscore that warfare has rules, and all parties to a conflict are bound by them. Russia's record in Ukraine includes tactics that are deliberately designed to impact and terrorize civilians and they must stop.

Our dedication to Ukraine's free, democratic and prosperous future is unshakeable.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.