

**Buantoscaireacht na hÉireann  
don Eagraíocht um Shlándaíl agus Comhar san Eoraip**  
Permanent Mission of Ireland to the  
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



**Statement by Tánaiste Simon Harris, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and  
Minister for Defence, at the 1509th Reinforced Meeting of the Permanent Council**

**The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine**

**24 February 2025**

Chair,

Tragically, today marks three years since Russia launched its appalling full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Russia's unprovoked aggression is an affront to the fundamental principles upon which the OSCE is founded.

Over the past three years, the people of Ukraine have endured unimaginable violence and suffering - the destruction of their homes, livelihoods and critical infrastructure and the displacement of millions of men, women, and children as a direct result of unprovoked and unjustifiable Russian aggression.

In the face of such brutal adversity, Ukrainians continue to demonstrate outstanding courage, resolve and determination. Today, I would like to honour their heroic efforts to defend their country and their freedom. Freedom which so many of us present here today take for granted.

In pursuing this unprovoked aggression against a peaceful neighbour, Russia has ignored the basic rules of war and of international humanitarian law. This includes the arbitrary detention of civilians in the occupied territories of Ukraine, the forcible removal of Ukrainian children, and reports of widespread torture and mistreatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war.

Ireland condemns Russia's ongoing detention of three OSCE staff members, who have been held without cause for almost three years now. We call for their immediate and unconditional release.

Chair,

Accountability for Russia's violations must remain a priority. Impunity undermines the principles and values for which we stand.

In any discussions on a peace agreement, Ukraine must determine its own future including the terms, the conditions and the timelines. There can be nothing about Ukraine, without Ukraine.

Equally, there must be a European voice as Europe's security is directly impacted by Russia's illegal war. Together with our European Union partners, Ireland will remain steadfast in our solidarity with the people of Ukraine and our determination to ensure that Russia is held to account.

Thank you.