



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
ON RUSSIA'S WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE**

1051st FSC Plenary Meeting
(5 July 2023)

Agenda Item 1, General Statements

Madam Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine allow me to deliver a statement on the subject of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Almost 500 days of the war have passed. The Ukrainian Defence Forces continue to conduct offensive operations on multiple fronts united by a single objective: restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

Being united in their desire to achieve this goal, our troops are moving gradually forward in the east and south, forcing the enemy to retreat. As a result of Ukrainian counteroffensive actions, in the past week, Ukraine's Defence Forces continued successfully liberating territories in the Bakhmut direction and in the Melitopol and Berdiansk directions.

In total, since the beginning of the counteroffensive operation, the Armed Forces of Ukraine liberated more than 150 square kilometres.

Ukraine does not fight in the same way as Russia does. Our strategy is to do everything possible to save lives of our troops and liberate occupied territories with minimal damage, while the Russian strategy is to seize the territory at any price regardless of the casualties among the civilians and even their own troops.

It is clearly evidenced by the losses of the Russian Army which, as the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine reports, are at least eight times higher than on our side. The apparent reliance of the Russian high commander on human wave tactics has already shown its results.

In total, since the beginning of the large-scale invasion, the enemy lost more than 230,000 soldiers, more than 4,000 tanks, up to 5,000 pieces of artillery and MLRS as well as over 600 aircraft and helicopters (as of 05.07.2023).

Esteemed colleagues,

Suffering significant losses on the battlefield, the Russian Federation cowardly continues to kill the civilian population of Ukraine, proving the terrorist nature of its war of aggression against Ukraine.

On 27 June, a Russian missile hit a local restaurant in the city of Kramatorsk in the Donetsk region. 12 civilians, including 3 children, were killed and 61 people were wounded.

The reaction of the Russian side on this tragedy is staggering. Completely ignoring all the evidence from the site of the tragedy, the Russian pro-Kremlin media tried to pass off the restaurant as a military headquarters where Ukrainian and foreign officers allegedly held a staff meeting.

Russian propaganda denied all the footage taken on the site and insisted that the restaurant was a military facility only because people in uniform were engaged in rescue operations and debris removal, and in some videos people spoke English.

On 3 July, a Russian UAV attacked a residential building in the city of Sumy, killing 3 people and injuring 21, including a 5-year-old child. Two apartment buildings that were hit by Russian Shahed-136 drones were seriously damaged.

On 4 July, the Russian military shelled the city of Pervomaisky in the Kharkiv region with an Iskander missile. A residential neighbourhood was hit. At least 43 people were injured, including 12 children. The youngest one is only 3 months old.

These strikes are nothing but a continuation of Russia's terrorist campaign against the civilian population, waged in an attempt to compensate for the lack of success on the battlefield. Russia suffers defeats at the front and takes revenge on the civilian population of Ukraine.

In his recent address to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on the occasion of the Day of the Constitution, the President of Ukraine emphasised: "The political and military leadership of Russia must not avoid justice on the grounds that they allegedly have immunity as leaders of the state. They are not leaders of the state, they are bandits who have seized control of Russia's state institutions, and they have become absolutely arrogant with this impunity and have begun to terrorise the world".

Justice remains a top priority for Ukraine and we will continue to take all necessary steps to ensure that these and other violations of International Humanitarian Law, including deliberate attacks on civilians, killings, torture and mistreatment of prisoners of war, do not go unpunished. All those involved in the terrible war crimes committed in the course of this war of aggression, including top military commanders and government officials of the Russian Federation, will be punished for their actions.

Madam Chairperson,

The situation at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) remains extremely alarming. From the very beginning of the occupation, Russian troops deliberately provoke a potential catastrophe by mining the facility and deploying military equipment there.

The motives of the Russian leadership behind this action are clear - they seek to use the mined ZNPP as a means of blackmailing Ukraine and the international community. By threatening a nuclear disaster on a global scale, the Kremlin is trying to hinder Ukraine's counteroffensive and undermine international support for Ukraine.

After the Russian forces blew up the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant Dam to slow down the preparations of the Ukrainian counteroffensive operation, there is little doubt that they are able to decide to blow up the Nuclear Power Plant.

Such actions are completely unacceptable and must be stopped immediately. Preventing a catastrophic nuclear disaster on a global scale requires decisive measures. It is imperative that the Russian side cease all attacks immediately and unconditionally.

The Kremlin must put an end to all actions that pose a threat to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant or any other nuclear facility, and relinquish control of illegally seized facilities to the legitimate Ukrainian authorities. Only through the complete de-occupation of the ZNPP can we guarantee the safety of the plant and ensure radiation safety in the region.

Nuclear security stands as one of the ten components of President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula. Therefore, we once again call on all nations and international organisations to unite in their efforts to implement this and other components of the Peace Formula.

Esteemed colleagues,

As has been repeatedly noted in this room, the decision of the Kremlin to launch its full-scale invasion of Ukraine has become a strategic mistake for the Russian Federation.

Two weeks ago, the mercenaries from the infamous Wagner Group seized control of two of Russia's cities and rapidly advanced hundreds of kilometres from Rostov-on-Don to Moscow, reportedly shooting down at least six helicopters and one military aircraft. To stop the advancement of the Wagner troops, Russian regular troops were forced to bomb their own highways.

Would it be possible in a country that controls its armed forces and private military companies as the Russian side regularly assures us?

Would it be possible in a country where there is democratic civilian control over the armed formations and the rule of law is respected?

The answer is obvious - no, it would not. However, it is possible in modern Russia under the current criminal regime, which continues to wage a war of aggression against a neighbouring state and ignores all norms and principles of international law.

Recent events in the Russian Federation clearly demonstrate that after years of deliberate attempts by Moscow to undermine international peace and stability, the Russian Federation and its territory themselves become a source of instability.

The Kremlin simply cannot control all the processes within its own state. We strongly believe that the only possible way to stop this irrational madness of the Russian regime is to use force and defeat it.

Let me reiterate our strong commitment to this by quoting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba as he said last week in his statement at the OSCE Chairpersonship Security Review Conference: "Ukraine is strongly determined to keep fighting for its freedom until the last Russian occupier is kicked out of Ukrainian land, including Donbas and Crimea seized by Russia in 2014".

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.