



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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

1044th FSC Plenary Meeting
(10 May 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.

441 days have passed since the Kremlin took the fatal decision to launch its unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. Despite permanent calls from the international community and strict obligations imposed by International Humanitarian Law, the Kremlin continues massive strikes against the civilian population of Ukraine and its critical infrastructure facilities using all available weapons, including ballistic and cruise missiles, UAVs, tube artillery and multiple launch rocket systems.

And there is no longer any doubt about Russian intentions in this war. It was for the sake of occupying the territory of Ukraine and annexing its regions to the Russian Federation that President Putin launched a war against the Ukrainian people on 24 February 2022. 441 days later, Moscow does not give up its intentions.

The Russian side keeps reiterating that the so-called «special military operation» is going on in line with the initial plan. We hear such statements from the Kremlin, Russian defence and foreign ministries as well as from the Russian delegation here, in the FSC. Apparently, regular strikes against the civilian population of Ukraine were a part of this plan since the very beginning of the invasion.

During the past week alone, the Russian forces launched 64 missiles, committed 357 air strikes and carried out 431 attacks with the use of multiple-launch rocket systems. These strikes led to the numerous deaths of civilians and caused severe destruction of critical infrastructure.

According to the most recent estimates of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), there have been already recorded 23,606 civilian casualties (8,791 killed and 14,815 injured) as a result of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (as of 8 May 2023). As it is stated by the OHCHR, most of the civilian casualties were caused by the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects as well as mines and explosive remnants of war.

Ukrainian law enforcement agencies also continue to record the economic consequences of the ongoing hostilities. So far, there has been registered destruction or damage of 99,455 civilian infrastructure facilities, including 77,978 residential buildings, 2,476 educational and 541 medical institutions, 538 cultural and religious buildings, as well as 4,577 water and electricity network facilities.

These deliberate actions of the Russian Federation constitute war crimes that strike us with their scale and brutality. The Government of Ukraine continues to take all possible steps to ensure that all responsible persons will be taken to account for their crimes, including within the framework of the Special Tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

Esteemed colleagues,

The Ukrainian army has already liberated almost half of the territory occupied by Russian troops since the start of a full-scale military invasion. We will continue to fight the Russian invaders until the complete de-occupation of our sovereign territory within internationally recognized borders. To this end, preparations continue for new Ukrainian offensives, the direction and time of which will be determined by the military command in due time.

Meanwhile, in an attempt to advance in the Donetsk region, the Russian army continues to concentrate its efforts on seizing Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Mariinka. Every day, in the area of Bakhmut, Ukrainian defenders are forced to repel dozens of attacks of the Russian troops attempting to assault Ukrainian positions under the cover of the artillery barrage.

The decision to launch the invasion of Ukraine has become a strategic disaster for the Russian Federation. However, even facing huge losses of manpower and military equipment, the Kremlin does not want to stop this madness and keeps mobilising more troops for the senseless war.

Russia wastes thousands of its troops as cannon fodder, but the only place in which it is still trying to advance is Bakhmut, in which Russian troops resorted to scorched earth tactics. As of 10 May, 196,310 Russian soldiers were killed in action.

In order to replenish its increasing losses, the Russian Federation continues to draft new people, engage private military companies and conduct forcible conscription of residents in the

temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. As a result of forced conscription, the morale of the newly mobilised troops remains extremely low.

The number of Russian soldiers who applied to the «I Want to Live» project [a platform for Russian soldiers who don't want to take part in this war and prefer to surrender] demonstrates it quite clearly. In April, the project surpassed the mark of 100 applications per day from those who expressed a desire to surrender. In general, since the project was launched in September 2022, we have received more than 16,000 applications from Russian soldiers.

Ukraine remains committed to its obligations under International Humanitarian Law and let me assure you, that the detention of those who voluntarily surrendered under the «I Want to Live» project takes place in accordance with all requirements under the Geneva Conventions.

As the Russian forces unsuccessfully try to advance in the eastern regions of Ukraine, the situation in the temporarily occupied territories in the southern regions of Ukraine is very worrying. The Russian Federation continues to deport the civilian population of the temporarily occupied areas under the pretext of the so-called «evacuation». Such facts are widely reported now in the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions.

In the city of Enerhodar alone, where the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is located, more than 1,600 people, including 660 children, have been relocated.

In this regard, we recall that the forced relocation of the civilian population as well as all actions aimed at the change of demographic structure of the occupied territories are totally unacceptable. They contradict the provisions of International Humanitarian Law and fall under the definition of genocide under the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant itself is still being held hostage by the Russian Federation in violation of all principles of nuclear safety and security. Deployment of Russian military and Rosatom personnel, military equipment and weapons at the Zaporizhzhia NPP is unacceptable. Russian presence at the site of the largest nuclear power plant in Europe increases the risks of a severe nuclear accident. The Russian Federation must immediately withdraw its military and other personnel from the Zaporizhzhia NPP and hand back its full control to Ukrainian legitimate authorities.

Madam Chairperson,

On 8 May, Ukraine paid tribute to all those who fought against Nazism. The people of Ukraine will always remember and honour bravery of those who resisted and defeated Nazism.

Consistent with this position, we strongly condemn the continuous efforts of the Russian Federation to weaponize the WWII memory in order to justify and legitimise its full-fledged war of aggression against Ukraine.

We all missed the moment when the aggressor-state transformed the “never again” slogan into the “we can repeat it”, indulging in terror and violence. Evil has, unfortunately, returned. Rejoicing over the mass destruction of civilian homes and the killing of thousands of civilians in Ukraine by the Russian army, the Russian people betray and disgrace the memory of the victors over Nazism in World War II and its victims.

It is hard not to shudder, having realized that the only lesson the Russians learnt from all the suffering of this horrendous war is: they need to kill, rob and rape on an industrial scale.

Even on the eve of its Victory Day holiday, the Kremlin couldn't help making another attempt to demonstrate that it is able to repeat the horrors of war and Nazi war crimes. This attempt failed, thanks to the professionalism, high level of combat training and advanced weapons of the Ukrainian Armed Forces: 23 out of 25 Caliber and Kh-101/Kh-555 cruise missiles, fired at Ukrainian cities by Russian invaders on the night of 9 May, were destroyed by the Ukrainian air defences.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Ukraine remains committed to the struggle for the liberation of Ukraine from the Russian invaders. We will continue to counter Russian aggression till the full restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, including the territories that the Russian side attempted to annex in Crimea, Donbas, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.