



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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

1048th FSC Plenary Meeting
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Agenda Item 2, 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.

Yesterday, Ukraine was faced with one of the most tragic events in the past 82 years after retreating Soviet troops destroyed the dam of the Dnipro Hydroelectric Power Plant to halt the advance of the Nazi forces in 1941. On 6 June 2023, around 2.30 a.m., the Russian occupiers blew up the Dam of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant in the temporarily occupied Kherson region.

This terrorist act created a mortal danger for Ukrainian citizens in the settlements on both banks of the Dnipro River below the Kakhovka Reservoir. The volume of the Reservoir is gigantic — 18 cubic kilometres. Now, all this water pours out from there. The water is expected to stop leaking in about 4 days.

The destruction of the Kakhovka Dam has already resulted in flooding of the nearby communities (at least eight different settlements in the region are already flooded) and caused substantial economic and environmental damage to the region. Currently, Ukrainian authorities continue to evacuate the local population on the territories under the control of Ukraine's Government and take necessary steps to mitigate damage. According to the available estimates, approximately 16,000 people should be immediately evacuated from the affected areas.

Blowing up of the Dam is an undeniable act of ecocide and an obvious war crime, the impact of which goes far beyond the borders of Ukraine and affects the ecosystem of the entire Black Sea region.

Dams are objects protected by wartime laws and the Geneva Convention. Their destruction is an analogue of deploying an indiscriminate weapon of mass destruction.

Any accusations that it was a missile attack on the Dam are baseless. Even from the type of damage, from the appearance of the Dam itself, it is clear that the explosion occurred from the inside.

There is evidence that Russians planted mines in the Dam back in 2022 to thwart a possible counteroffensive by the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In addition, it is known that before destroying the Kakhovka Dam, the Russian occupiers raised the water level in the Reservoir to a record 17,5 meters, leaving the gates closed. They wanted to make the flooding as large as possible in order to prevent the Ukrainian army from conducting a counteroffensive in this area.

By destroying the Kakhovka Dam, Russia committed a war crime. It is also a clear sign that the Russian Federation lost hope to hold occupied territories and therefore switched to scorched earth tactics.

The only way to stop Russia, the biggest terrorist of the 21st century, is to expel it from Ukraine.

The President of Ukraine clearly pointed out in his address: «The destruction of the dam of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant only confirms for the whole world that they must be expelled from every corner of Ukrainian land. Not a single meter should be left to them, because they use every meter for terror. It's only Ukraine's victory that will return security».

Meanwhile, on social media, the Russians rejoice at the terrorist attack committed by Russian troops, pointing out that Ukraine has other hydropower plants on the Dnipro River, which also need to be destroyed – this is proof of the terrorist nature of not only the current criminal regime in the Kremlin but also Russian society, exalted by propaganda.

Esteemed colleagues,

The destruction of the Kakhovka Dam may have negative consequences for the temporarily occupied Zaporizhzhia NPP. Currently, the water level in the cooling pond is sufficient for the needs of the Plant. The resilience of the NPP to such challenges is ensured due to the fact that during the construction of the NPP, the possibility of lowering the water level in the Kakhovka Reservoir was foreseen.

But nevertheless, the trend is very dangerous. Yesterday Russians blew up the Hydroelectric Power Plant in Nova Kakhovka over their massive fear of the counter-offensive. Tomorrow they can blow up the Nuclear Power Plant in Zaporizhzhia. They stop at nothing. The lives of millions of people are at risk not only in Ukraine but also in Europe.

Blackmailing the world by the threat of a large-scale nuclear accident, the Russian Federation continues to maintain its military presence at the ZNPP and interfere in the management of the Plant through the illegal presence of Rosatom personnel.

The Russian Federation has turned the illegally seized NPP into a military and logistics base. Guided by a simple cold calculation that the Armed Forces of Ukraine will not target the Plant, the Russian military uses the premises of the NPP to store ammunition and military equipment. The actions of the occupiers have already led to a number of emergency situations during which the NPP was disconnected from the power supply.

The ZNPP should be demilitarized, as envisaged by the Ukrainian Peace Formula. The presence of Russian terrorists on the territory of the largest nuclear power plant in Europe poses a direct threat to all mankind. The nuclear safety and security at the ZNPP can only be restored after Russia fully withdraws from the invaded nuclear facility, and the relevant authorities of its legal host, Ukraine, regain full control over the Plant.

Madam Chairperson,

With absolute determination to destroy Ukraine, the Russian Federation persists in launching extensive air and missile strikes against civilians and critical infrastructure. In May, the Russian Federation committed 17 massive air and missile strikes on Ukraine. In Kyiv alone, during the month, our forces intercepted and destroyed seven «Kinzhal» aero-ballistic missiles, 13 «Iskander» ballistic missiles as well as 65 cruise missiles and 169 UAVs of different types.

Although the Armed Forces of Ukraine demonstrate remarkable effectiveness of its air defence capabilities and continue to successfully intercept the majority of incoming air targets (in total, since the beginning of the war, Ukraine have intercepted and destroyed 1,171 cruise missiles, 3,212 operational-tactical level UAVs, 313 aircraft, and 299 helicopters), the level of missile threat is still high, since the Russian Federation remains relentless in its offensive and keeps targeting the peaceful population across the country.

The most recent tragic case of the deliberate targeting of the civilian population by the Russian forces occurred on 3 June 2023, when a Russian «Iskander» missile hit the residential area in the suburbs of the city of Dnipro. A two-year-old girl was killed and 22 people, including five children, were injured.

This cynical crime was committed on the eve of the Day of Remembrance of Children who died as a result of Russia`s aggression, which Ukraine marked on 4 June, and on the very same day as the world marked the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression.

Each death of an innocent child at the hands of the Russian occupiers only strengthens the determination of the Ukrainian people to defend their land. Each death of an innocent child increases the importance of the weapons needed for such defence.

Ukraine extends its deepest gratitude to our international partners who have contributed to enhancing our air defence capabilities by providing modern, highly efficient military hardware and urges the international community to continue providing Ukraine

with essential military aid, including air defence systems, long-range missiles and modern fighter jets. They are crucial for the protection of civilian populations and the liberation of the occupied territories of Ukraine.

Madam Chairperson,

In conclusion, let me reiterate our firm position that the only viable solution for ending the ongoing war is to achieve victory over the aggressor state and defeat it on the battlefield. We have no doubt that this goal will be achieved.

Ukraine remains steadfast in our pursuit of restoring the full sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, including the territories that the Russian side attempted to annex in Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.