



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Viktoriia Kuvshynnykova, Chargée D'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1476th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
30 May 2024

Madam Chairperson,

At the outset, I would like to thank you and the Maltese Chairpersonship for the prompt reaction on recent attacks against the Ukrainian cities.

Every week russia hits a new low, resulting in new civilian casualties. Every such an attack must be resolutely condemned.

On May 23, as the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council was still taking place, Kharkiv and its outskirts were hit with 15 missiles.

A printing house, the largest in Ukraine, was destroyed, killing seven and injuring 21 people.

And due to this strike, Ukraine has lost about a third of the annual book production in the country.

Thousands of books for children including school textbooks, were destroyed, reminding us that Ukraine's identity is among russia's key targets.

Two days later, an even more deadly attack was carried out by russia.

A construction hypermarket in Kharkiv was attacked with guided aerial bombs.

This heinous strike was done during the weekend, when the biggest number of customers is expected in the mall, to ensure maximum casualties.

As of today, the death toll reached 19 people, while 44 people were injured.

Among those killed was a father of 8-year-old Mykhailo.

To identify his father's body in the ashes, Mykhailo, as the only direct relative, had to do a DNA test.

This is a grim reality faced by our children.

Colleagues, the fact that the russian army has stuck in the vicinity of the city of Vovchansk already for 20 days, despite original plans to occupy it in two days, explains the best russia's tactics.

Being unable to occupy Kharkiv and the region, they try to destroy it.

Barbaric war crimes against civilians is a stark reminder that vladimir putin wants to subjugate Ukrainians either by occupying the land or by terror.

putin considers no other option, whatever lies he may spread.

The russian regime has accumulated enough means for killing and terror.

And the kremlin believes that it can do it with impunity from its territory.

Ukraine's Armed Forces even register so-called "carousels" of russian planes dropping bombs in the direction of Kharkiv. They have no fear of being shot down.

The russians have about 10,000 of S-300 missiles.

These are air defense missiles that russia employs to terrorize the civilians, especially in Kharkiv and the region.

They also use guided aerial bombs daily. On average, more than 3000 bombs per month. An inaccurate and indiscriminate but powerful weapon.

In the coming months, this number could reach 3,500 items.

They are just dropping these bombs on people. From the russian territory. Often even on its own people.

Furthermore, russia is amassing another group of troops 90 kilometers northwest of Kharkiv.

Does one still have any doubts about what this grouping will do next?

Why there should be safe havens for the army of putin's killers? Why they should feel themselves secure on the other side of the frontline?

Why should Ukraine remain a shooting club for vladimir putin and the army of his killers?

How we can neutralize these deadly threats to civilians?

So, is there any other possibility to protect civilians from S-300 missiles and guided bombs than the destruction of launching pads and means of delivery?

Dear colleagues,

In two days, on the 1st of June, in Ukraine we will mark the Children's Day.

8-year-old Mykhailo will meet this day without his father for the first time.

And most probably, he will never celebrate this day any more.

His right to have a joyful childhood was stolen by russia.

He has been forced by moscow to become an adult in one day.

He will live with the taste of the DNA swab for his entire life.

This taste will be forever associated with the confirmation of his father's death.

Mykhailo's fate is a stark reminder of the brutality of the russian war.

How many children have lost a father or mother? Or even both?

And the fate of Mykhailo and others appeals to us to do our utmost to protect children in Ukraine or in any other participating State, which russia considers as a part of its "historical lands".

The responsibility is on us. On the international community. There is no time for hesitation or delayed decisions.

Because time in Ukraine is measured in numbers of killed civilians and destroyed homes. In thousands of children deported by russia, as moscow is preparing for a new wave of the deportation under the guise of so-called summer camps. In number of civilians tortured or taken hostage by russia. In numbers of burnt books as it happened in Kharkiv a week ago.

That's why, a timely decision is the only game-changer we need. And it is quite clear what should be done.

To provide Ukraine with additional air-defense systems, with artillery shells and ensure that Ukraine exercises its right to self-defense with free hands to destroy legitimate military targets, as guaranteed by international law.

This will prevent the escalation in numbers of civilians killed by russia.

And we should not give time to russia to deceive us anymore, including by preventing russia from misusing international organizations, be it the UN, OSCE or any other institution, for disseminating its false narratives.

International organizations flourished after the Second World War to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”, not to provide an aggressor-state with a platform for propaganda of war, justification of war crimes and crimes against humanity or dehumanizing and promoting hatred toward sovereign nations.

Building consensus, drafting documents, fighting for decision have no sense, if these efforts help the aggressor to create an alternative reality and deflect us from the only legitimate goal – restoring a just peace and ensuring justice.

As President Zelenskyy said recently, quote-unquote, “Ukraine has the world’s largest experience of lies from russia during negotiations... Lies that in particular were russian cover-ups for preparing this war. And that’s exactly why global efforts are needed – the Global Peace Summit of the leaders whom russia won’t be able to deceive. Summit that will show who in the world really wants to end the war and not just claim the ceasefire which will inevitably be broken by russian rockets and artillery just like it was dozens, dozens of times before...”.

As we see, putin and his regime are desperately trying to derail the Peace Summit.

In the run up to the Summit, there would be more phony signals of russia’s alleged readiness for a cease-fire accompanied with more brutal attacks aimed at compelling Ukraine to accept russia’s terms and to capitulate.

Furthermore, the recent intensification of russia's typical hybrid tactics of bullying on EU and NATO borders, proves once again that the most effective way to counter them is our unity, strength, and unwavering mutual support.

This is why the Peace Summit in Switzerland on June 15-16 is so crucial.

Because only the united voice of the global majority can force russia to choose peace over war.

Because this global majority united around the idea of a just peace is the only guarantee that the UN Charter, Helsinki Final Act or any other basic document will not be burnt by russia.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.