



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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

1098th FSC Plenary Meeting
(19 February 2025)

Agenda Item 1, General Statements

Mr Chairperson,

I would like to deliver a statement on the subject of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Tomorrow, 20 February, will mark the 11th anniversary of the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. On that day in 2014, the Russian Federation launched its military operation in Ukraine's Crimea – a calculated and illegal move to occupy our sovereign territory and force Ukraine to remain within Russia's sphere of influence.

These tragic events reshaped not only Ukraine's history but also the security landscape of Europe as a whole. Within months after the occupation of Crimea, Russia expended its aggression to Donbas. Then, eight years later, its so-called "special military operation" erupted into the largest war on European soil since 1945.

Let there be no misunderstanding: Russia launched this war out of fear of Ukraine's democratic progress and prospects of integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic communities. Russia's claims of "legitimate security concerns" are baseless pretexts used to justify its continued hostility.

War cannot and should never be a means to address concerns. Furthermore, Russian has shown no interest in genuine dialogue to resolve them.

Three years ago, Ukraine invoked the Vienna Document's risk reduction mechanism to address Russia's military build-up around Ukraine. What was Russia's response?

It cynically ignored our security concerns as baseless and refused to attend the emergency meeting convened to discuss its military build-up. Even on the eve of its full-scale invasion, Russia insisted it had no plans to attack. Many here will remember how Russia's representative stood in this very forum and labelled all warnings as "information terrorism" and "hysterical propaganda."

Mr Chairperson,

Nearly 11 years after the start of this aggression—and three years into Russia's full-scale invasion—there is no indication that Russia has changed its objectives or is willing to cease its illegal activities.

Despite claiming to be open to negotiations, Russia continues to escalate militarily, adding up to 150,000 personnel through the expansion of 12 to 15 new divisions. It claims to seek dialogue, yet intensifies its attacks. Just last week, Ukraine suffered nearly 1,220 aerial bomb strikes, over 850 drone assaults, and more than 40 missile launches.

On 14 February 2025, a Russian drone carrying a high-explosive warhead struck the protective shelter over the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant—an unmistakable message of nuclear intimidation. As President Zelenskyy recently stated at the Munich Security Conference: "This is not just madness. This is Russia's stance." Indeed, Russia's nuclear terrorism threatens not just Ukraine but the entire world.

We must remain united in our determination to respond decisively and counter all forms of nuclear blackmail by this terrorist state.

Russia also continues to violate international law with impunity. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) recently published its second report on Ukraine, confirming Russia's use of riot control agents. These agents—if used as a method of warfare—are classified as chemical weapons under the Chemical Weapons Convention and are strictly prohibited. However, between February 2023 and February 2025, there have been 6,129 documented cases of Russian forces using munitions laced with hazardous chemicals.

Esteemed colleagues,

As we approach the fourth year of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, we must reject any notion of "peace at any price." History has taught us that concessions to aggressors only lead to new conflicts and greater destruction. Temporary ceasefires without accountability or justice merely delay future wars, often making them more devastating when they inevitably resume.

Ukraine has learned this hard lesson firsthand. Between 2014 and 2022, more than 200 rounds of consultations between Ukraine and Russia—along with numerous ceasefires and mediation efforts—failed to stop Russia's aggression.

This is why it is essential to maintain unified and sustained pressure on the aggressor to secure a just, lasting peace rooted in the principle of *peace through strength*.

We are grateful to all states that share this approach. Ukraine welcomes the recent Joint G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement at the Munich Security Conference, which underscored the shared commitment to achieving a durable peace, a strong and prosperous Ukraine, and robust security guarantees to prevent future conflict.

A sovereign Ukraine today is the true guarantee of stability and peace in Europe. The outcome of Russia's war against Ukraine will shape Europe's security framework for decades. It is in the interest of all peace-loving nations to send a clear message: forced territorial gains and reckless imperial ambitions have no place in our world.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.