



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1437th special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
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Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you for convening this special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council.

Today is a special day for Ukraine. 32 years ago, the Ukrainian people regained their state, freedom and human dignity and the right to freely decide their future.

All these set the foundation of the Helsinki Final Act. And all participating States committed themselves to respect these principles. All but one.

However, we have gathered today not for the celebration and greeting speeches.

But to decide on further actions that would be the OSCE's contribution to common efforts aimed to bring justice, rule of law and peace back to Europe.

We have to act resolutely to end the all-out war waged by russia already for a year and a half.

Every day of this war claims the lives of the bravest and brightest women and men who decided to stand with arms in their hands to defend the country.

As President Zelenskyy stated today, "Many Ukrainians lost loved ones because of the war. And they are those fallen heroes thanks to whom we haven't lost our Ukraine."

Today we pay tribute to those to whom we owe our freedom and independence.

And every **547** days of this war shocks us with a new cruelty, violence and atrocities.

Not a single day russia has stopped to commit crimes. August was no exception.

russia's well pre-planned and systematic attacks continue to kill the youngest.

On August 19, 6-year-old Sofia was killed in the center of the city of Chernihiv. russia hit the city center with an Iskander missile.

This attack, launched by russia on the Orthodox holiday of the Transfiguration of the Lord, killed 7 people and injured 156, including 15 children.

Another attack on August 13 killed 23-day-old girl and her 12-year-old brother Artem. That day, russia took the lives of at least 7 innocent people in the Kherson region.

On August 12, 8-year-old Volodymyr was killed by a russian missile, as he was playing in the backyard in the Ivano-Frankivsk region, hundreds of kilometers from the frontline.

And after every air alert Ukrainians check their phones, call their relatives, read news feeds.

One never knows, what is russia's choice for yet another terrorist act. However, one knows for sure that civilians and peaceful cities are among the targets.

Like it happened with my family on the 15th of August, when, at night, Lutsk, Lviv, Dnipro, Kramatorsk and Smila were under attack.

On that night russia launched 28 missiles. Three people were killed in Lutsk, Volyn region.

And as it appeared, the street of Kakhovska in Lviv was heavily damaged. The street is very dear to me personally.

My wife grew up there. And her 84-year-old father and 81-year-old mother still live there.

Explosions were heard by them just a few hundred meters away. Thanks God, they are safe, but extremely shocked.

This is how russia brings pain and sorrow to every Ukrainian family. Day and night.

These russia's crimes fully match with the definition of terrorism.

Let me quote the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism:

“Any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act”.

Doesn't russia pursue the same goal to terrorize the OSCE by keeping its staff hostage for more than a year?

So, how long should we tolerate the terrorist state in the OSCE?

Dear colleagues,

Today is also the **3467th** day of resistance to the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol.

This occupation became the starting point for the brutal war we are witnessing today.

This was the first step in moscow's efforts to dismember the Ukrainian statehood.

As warned back in 2014, this gross and blatant violation of the Helsinki Final Act has entailed many more crimes.

As it is clear from today's point of view, the russian war can be ended only with the liberation of Crimea.

And we know why the freedom of Crimea matters. For Ukraine. For the OSCE. For the world.

Just one example. Even on yesterday's night, the Odesa region was attacked from the Black Sea. In the result, 13 000 tons of grain were burnt.

It was the third attack on the Odesa region since our last meeting in July. Or in other words – attack on global food security and freedom of navigation.

Therefore, I am grateful to the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Minister Osmani for his political leadership and participation in the Third International Crimea Platform Summit, which concluded its work just yesterday.

The International Crimea Platform aims to improve the effectiveness of the international response to russia's temporary occupation of Crimea, address the growing security threats, prevent further human rights violations and protect the victims of the occupation regime, and achieve the primary goal of de-occupying Crimea and returning it to Ukraine.

Therefore, Minister Osmani's participation in the Crimea Platform Summit provides a strong political guidance for the OSCE, in particular for its Institutions and Secretariat, to act proactively in this field.

That's why we look forward to working with the Chairpersonship, national delegations and OSCE Secretary General to translate the adopted declaration into common actions.

In this regard, I want to inform that this morning the russian invaders have conducted yet another wave of searches in Crimea. Homes of Uslan Asanov, Seydamet Mustafaiev, Remzi Nemetulaiev, Abdulmejit Seitumerov, Ametkhan Umerov and Eldar Yakubov were raided.

We call upon the OSCE to react in this regard. It is time to act.

If today Crimea has been turned by russia into a key support area for its aggression, so tomorrow Crimea must become an outpost of democracy and the rule of law.

And it is time to plan one of the next summits in one of the Crimean cities with a focus on rebuilding, rehabilitation and reintegration of the liberated peninsula.

Dear colleagues,

Yesterday's Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Stalinism and Nazism is a stark reminder that unpunished evil returns with more suffering and new deaths.

That's why Ukraine will continue to work with partners on the establishment of a Special Tribunal to prosecute the russian aggression.

All responsible for planning and executing the biggest international crime must be brought to account. No more impunity for war criminals.

The wheels of justice grind slowly but steadily.

The only thing we need is a political will to allow these wheels to complete their work.

That's why we are grateful to all who participated in the conference "Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine. Justice to be Served" held in Kyiv on August 21.

As it was also announced two days ago, in September the International Court of Justice will hold public hearings in the case concerning allegations of genocide under the convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide.

However, apart from ensuring justice for victims, we are also obliged to prevent new crimes and defend those at risk.

Therefore, Ukraine appreciates military aid provided by our partners across the world, which saved thousands of lives.

Heavy weapons and ammunition of all types, reconnaissance UAVs and other types of weapons helped to prevent russia from seizing additional territories.

At the same time, expanding military aid, including through provision of long-range missiles, would help to liberate already occupied territories, save many lives and would simply pave the way to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.

Despite russia's terror and its attempts to blackmail the world, Ukraine will continue its efforts also on the diplomatic track to implement the Peace Formula as proposed by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The recent meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, has become an important effort in this regard.

Colleagues, this war is an existential one for Ukraine. The Russian leadership is quite clear about its genocidal plans and their crimes speak volumes.

However, despite Russian ongoing attempts, Ukraine will never give up its independence and sovereignty. Likewise, our collective strength should not be shaken.

Not only can we defeat the terrorist state, but we can also ensure that justice prevails.

I want to conclude my statement with the quote from President Zelenskyy's address on Ukraine's Independence Day: "In a big war, there are no small deeds. No unnecessary ones. No unimportant ones. This is true of people, deeds, and words".

Colleagues, I want to thank you for all your support, your humanity, your sincerity.

This will be always remembered by the Ukrainian people and kept in our hearts.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.