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Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**JOINT STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE
1464th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 March 2024

Madam Chair,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of Norway and Canada.

On March 2nd, a Russian drone attack on a residential building in Odesa took the lives of twelve people, including five children. One young baby, Timofiy, and his mother Anna were found dead under the rubble, curled up against each other as they did every night going to bed. This, however, would be their last time they would do so. Timofiy was one of two babies under the age of 1 to die on March 2nd. Ukrainian authorities said there were no military targets nearby.

When President Zelenskyy and Greek Prime Minister Mitsotakis visited the site of the attack a few days later, more explosions hit dangerously close to their motorcades.

How many more people, how many more Ukrainian children will the Kremlin's war kill?

Your actions in Ukraine are indefensible.

Madam Chair,

The March 2nd attack adds to a long list of Russian attacks, whose effects on civilians and civilian objects have been truly devastating.

We are determined to leave no stone unturned in our pursuit for justice and accountability for the victims of Russia's war, and for upholding international law and norms that govern the peaceful relationships and orderly conduct between States.

Earlier this week, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for two members of the Russian armed forces and navy for suspected missile strikes carried out against Ukrainian electric infrastructure. This is the second warrant issued by the ICC for Russian officials who may have committed war crimes – the first, as we all recall, was for the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Putin, and his Children's Rights Commissioner Ms. Maria Lvova-Belova.

Madam Chair,

Last week Norway and Canada launched together with Ukraine the Peace Formula Working Group #4 focused on detained persons, deported children and Prisoners of War. We were pleased by the participation of many OSCE participating States and also by many from the Global South.

The Working Group will focus on results-oriented outcomes, including identification, tracking, and returns of all three categories of people. We are looking forward to advancing this piece of President Zelenskyy's Peace Plan, including at the OSCE.

We have heard here at the OSCE the need for urgent action on this topic.

Last week, we shared with the Council the story of a Ukrainian Prisoner of War, Ostap, who was ill-treated, tortured, and raped in Russian custody in Olenivka and Taganrog.

This week, we heard from Refat Chubarov, chair of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People. His deputy Nariman Dzhelyal is imprisoned on politically motivated charges.

Mr. Chubarev described the immense pressure the occupying Russian Federation is exerting on some 300,000 Crimean Tatars, with repression, forced conscription of young men, and passportization, to name but a few examples. He made clear that support from the international community is vital for his community.

We demand an immediate end to politically motivated prosecutions and arbitrary arrests in Crimea and other temporarily occupied or controlled territories of Ukraine. We call on Russia to immediately release all Ukrainian citizens, illegally imprisoned by the Russian occupation authorities, including three OSCE staff – Vadym Golda, Maxim Petrov, and Dmytro Shabanov.

Russia may try to hide their abuse behind closed doors, but detainees, Prisoners of War and deported and forcibly transferred children are not forgotten, and never will be.

Finally, Madam Chair, on the occasion of International Women's Day, Norway and Canada would like to pay tribute to the Ukrainian women diplomats we work with every day: Viktoriia Kuvshynnykova, Nataliia Kostenko, Yana Boiko, Tetiana Maznychenko, Olesia Tsymbaliuk, and Karina Lanchuk. Your tireless determination and professionalism in the service of the defence of your country against this illegal invasion is a constant inspiration to us.

Thank you, Madam Chair.