



United States Mission to the OSCE

The Russian Federation's Ongoing Aggression Against Ukraine

As delivered by Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Tracey Newell
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
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Over the last two years, we've documented Russia's attacks and atrocities against the people of Ukraine. Russia has dedicated a shocking number of resources to both. Statistics from an April 22 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute report put this into perspective. Russia increased its military spending by 24 percent in 2023, to an estimated 109 billion U.S. dollars. That's a 57 percent increase since 2014, the year Russia attempted to illegally seize Crimea by force. Russia's 2023 military spending made up 16 percent of its total government spending.

As we have already witnessed, the Kremlin's burgeoning military spending will negatively affect security in the OSCE region for years to come. So will the international network Russia developed to source weapons and material.

Take, for instance, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Since late last year, the DPRK has supplied nearly 11,000 containers of munitions to Russia as well as ballistic missile launchers and several dozen ballistic missiles. Russia has used these weapons repeatedly in strikes on Ukraine's infrastructure. We know Pyongyang is not doing this for free. We know the DPRK is interested in fighter aircraft, surface-to-air missiles, armored vehicles, ballistic missile production equipment or materials, and other advanced technologies. To be clear, Russia and the DPRK are violating UN Security Council resolutions by engaging in these transfers.

Meanwhile, Iran continues to supply Russia with drones, air-to-ground munitions, and artillery shells. This supply of Iranian drones makes it possible for Russia to continue its bombing campaign against Ukraine's cities and civilian infrastructure. The United States has warned that Russia was in negotiations with Iran to acquire close-range ballistic missiles for use against Ukraine and that those negotiations were actively advancing.

Russia and Iran are advancing their ties in other areas as well. Russia's state-owned energy firms are reportedly locking in agreements to develop Iran's oil and natural gas fields. Moscow is storing Russian oil in Iran. Direct connections between the two countries' banking systems have also increased. As two of the most sanctioned countries in the world, this collaboration weakens our collective efforts to end Russia's war on Ukraine.

The DPRK and Iran are providing weapons to Russia, but the People's Republic of China is the largest contributor to Russia's defense industrial base.

The PRC is providing Russia with significant quantities of machine tools, microelectronics, optics, unmanned aerial vehicle and cruise missile technology, and materials Russia uses to make propellant for weapons. These materials are filling critical gaps in Russia's defense production and have helped revitalize Russia's defense industrial base.

In 2023, about 90 percent of Russia's microelectronics came from the PRC. Russia has used them to make missiles, tanks, and aircraft. Nearly 70 percent of Russia's approximately 900 million dollars in machine tool imports in the last quarter of 2023 came from the PRC. Beijing is also working with Russia to improve its satellite and other space-based capabilities for use in Ukraine.

The PRC cannot claim to be a neutral party to Russia's war of aggression while engaged in these activities. If the PRC were to end its support for Russia, Russia would struggle to sustain its war effort.

Madam Chair, this support for Russia's war merits our close attention and response. By standing against Russia's war and holding nations to account for their actions in support of it, we are in fact defending the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, and the rules-based international order. We stand for the right of countries across the globe to choose their futures freely as independent and sovereign states. We stand with Ukraine.

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