



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

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Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna
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Madam Chairperson,

While Ukraine and the international community are preparing for a Global Peace Summit, russia continues its terror daily.

Every day russia's war leaves a new deep scar in our souls.

Today's morning was no exception. By firing 26 missiles across Ukraine, russia proves that continued destruction of our peaceful cities is among its main goals.

Yesterday russia's attack on a hospital in Selydove claimed the life of a pregnant woman. Also, a nine-year-old child died together with a mother.

Furthermore, a few days ago, on Friday night, an entire family was killed due to russia's drone attack on Kharkiv.

Both parents and their three sons: 7-year-old Oleksii, 4-year-old Mykhailo, and 7-month-old Pavlo were burned alive.

This is what the chief police investigator of the Kharkiv region reported from the spot of the tragedy.

"During the air raid sirens, parents with children usually hid in the basement. But that time, flames burst into the yard. When the family ran to hide, two cars and fuel were already burning near the house. All of them found themselves in a fire trap. As we preliminary established the older and younger boys were near their mother. And the middle son, Mykhailo, always ran after his father. The man probably lost consciousness first, and the boy curled up in the corner, alone in the kitchen. That's where we found him. The mother with two other sons tried to save themselves in the bathroom, holding the children in her arms."

I cannot even imagine what could be the last thoughts of the mother who was trying to save her children from the fire. Now they are together forever. 7-month-old Pavlo was buried in one grave with his mother.

At the same time, a recent report issued by Human Rights Watch has reminded us about entire families buried under rubble during russia's indiscriminate bombardment of Mariupol.

I want to quote Stefaniia who lost relatives during one of such attacks.

"I was a mother and a grandmother, and now I'm nobody," she says. "My family was my wealth, my life was joy and happiness, and now there is nothing. I only ask God to find the bodies of my children to bury, to be next to me."

Her 24-year-old daughter, her 27-year-old son-in-law; and her 3-year-old granddaughter Aryna died in the basement when russian bomb destroyed a building.

As reported by the HRW, it took Stefaniia until October 2023 to find her granddaughter's body, but she was still looking for the bodies of her other relatives.

The only thing she's got is her daughter's phone. There is a text message written on March 6 that had never been sent due to the lack of phone coverage in the city.

The message said, "Mommy, I am alive. Everything is fine with me. Love you."

But now she's gone together with thousands of others from Mariupol.

As assessed by the HRW, 93 percent of the 477 high-rise buildings in the central part of Mariupol sustained damage as of mid-May 2022. All 19 hospitals in the city were damaged, along with 86 of the 89 educational institutions.

It also estimates that, between March 2022 and February 2023, over 10 000 people were buried in Mariupol. At least 8 000 of these deaths were war-related.

This is what russia does to cities and civilians when the sky belongs to them. moscow simply wipes buildings together with people off.

Colleagues, day after day Ukrainians go through the pain of the identification of bodies and burying of entire families.

And there is also the pain of uncertainty. Especially for those who have no communication but still waiting for loved ones from the russian captivity.

Just two days ago we heard such stories from families of Ukrainian defenders of the Chornobyl NPP.

We saw their emotions about how it is to hear daily from their children the same question - why daddies have been working for so long without coming to see them?

The only guilt of the defenders of the Chornobyl NPP was that they were faithfully protecting a nuclear facility according to Ukraine's international obligations.

However, as we see, the world was not ready for state-sponsored nuclear terrorism, as did russia by attacking Chornobyl and Zaporizhzhia NPPs.

Excellencies,

One may ask, where does this russia's utmost disregard for the lives of innocent people stem from?

Latest remarks by vladimir putin provide a clear understanding of its nature.

As usual, it was again a blend of falsified history, disinformation and lies.

However, putin once again repeated that Ukraine never existed and that Ukrainians never were a different people from the russians.

This is what drove putin to start the aggression against Ukraine 10 years ago.

And this explains why russia is focused on the re-education and extermination of the Ukrainian nation today.

Because when one denies someone's right to exist it always ends with mass killing.

Because with such belief one can be fine with the facts that children are burned alive, buried under rubble, separated from their families and are "taught", as confessed once by Maria Lvova-Belova, to "love russia".

Because such denial always provides a false "reason" for genocidal atrocities.

However, this time putin's remarks were as revealing as never before.

Now it is more than clear what a blueprint russia replicates for its policy of ruscism after putin said – and I quote – that "Hitler was pushed to start World War" because neighbors turned out to be uncompromising on his territorial demands.

Of course, we can ironize that russia's so-called fight against neo-Nazism has ended with the justification of Nazism itself.

However, wasn't it a hint that Ukraine has to satisfy russia's territorial claims?

Isn't this the same demand when we hear from the russian diplomats that we have to "recognize reality on the ground" instead of advocating for the implementation of Ukraine's Peace Formula?

And isn't this a stark reminder that we have to do everything possible to ensure that the aggression does not pay off for russia?

This must be done not to hear the same territorial claims for the sake of peace from would-be aggressors in other corners of the world.

And we all know that we are capable of doing that.

While vladimir putin and his envoys continue to brag about russia's military might, just yesterday the russian army lost yet another warship in Ukrainian territorial waters near Alupka.

It belonged to large landing ships which russia concentrated in the occupied Crimea with a hope to seize Odesa on the very first days of the war.

These plans never materialized thanks to the courage of our defenders and further support rendered by international partners to the Ukrainian Defense Forces.

And we have to keep this momentum.

This is how we can effectively protect cities and civilians from occupation.

This is how we can prevent russia's dominance in the air and the repetition of the fate of Mariupol.

This is how we can shape conditions for the restoration of a just peace in Europe.

And this explains why the kremlin has intensified its disinformation campaigns and is ready to give all types of dead promises.

He needs to neutralize international support, get a pause and prepare a new attack from currently occupied territories. As he did it from Crimea in 2022.

However, the two passing years of the war and continued denial of Ukraine's right to exist testify, that the Ukrainians must be given all what it takes to win.

That russia and its political and military leadership must be brought to justice for the crime of aggression and other international crimes.

And that russia must be compelled to compensate for all damages caused by its internationally wrongful acts.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.