



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
in response to the reports by the Personal Representatives of the OSCE
Chairperson-in-Office on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination**

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1390th meeting of the Permanent Council,

22 September 2022

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Rabbi Andrew Baker, Ambassador Ismail Hakki Musa and Associate Professor Dr. Regina Polak back to the Permanent Council.

At the outset, I wish to thank Personal Representatives for their presentations. The Delegation of Ukraine sincerely appreciate the priority attention you dedicated to the events belonging to your respective mandates in the course of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Your vocal and resolute public statements were timely and significantly contributed to shed light on the violations and crimes committed by the aggressor-state.

Dear colleagues,

In today's world, hatred and discrimination can take many different forms and incarnations.

The most heinous and dangerous of them is the physical extermination of a person for the sole reason that she or he belongs to a certain national, ethnic, racial, religious or other group of persons.

Unfortunately, the world overslept this utmost crime against a human being which has become a harsh reality for millions of Ukrainians since 24 February 2022. The crime which until recently we all recalled with horror only during events commemorating the victims of the World War II and the Holocaust.

On 26 February 2022, just two days after Russia launched its full-scale war of aggression, Ukraine initiated the case before the International Court of Justice against the Russian Federation under the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The Court quickly convened a hearing, and on 16 March 2022 ordered that "the Russian Federation shall immediately suspend the military operations that it commenced on 24 February 2022 in the territory of Ukraine."

However, the same day the Court issued its order, Russia barbarically launched an airstrike against the drama theater in Mariupol, murdering hundreds of innocent civilians taking shelter there.

The Genocide Convention is one of the most important international treaties, drafted in response to the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust.

Russia, however, has twisted that treaty in order to justify committing horrors against Ukraine. The Russian Federation has used its false allegations against Ukraine as a pretext for launching a new phase of its aggression: invading more territory, committing atrocities against thousands of innocent Ukrainians, displacing millions more, and inflicting enormous destruction in Ukraine's cities, towns and villages.

Russian armed forces perpetrate deliberate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including residential areas, schools, kindergartens and medical facilities, religious sites and places of worship.

International reports documented forcible deportation of thousands of persons from the civilian population of Ukraine to the territory of the Russian Federation, including forcible displacement of Ukrainian children to the territory of the Russian Federation and their transfer for upbringing to an alien environment in order to destroy their self-identification as Ukrainians.

There is a large number of reported cases of summary execution of men, women and children, sexual and gender-based violence, use of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, arbitrary executions, enforced disappearances, committed by Russian soldiers in Ukraine, which may constitute a crime against humanity or a war crime.

The whole civilized world was profoundly shocked by mass atrocities committed by Russian armed forces in the invaded Ukrainian territories, in particular in Bucha, Borodyanka, Irpin and other places in Ukraine, which manifested in numerous cases of summary execution, murder, torture and rape.

The situation in the territories of the Kharkiv region, liberated by the Armed Forces of Ukraine at the beginning of September, in particular in Izium, also uncovered the places of torture and mass atrocities committed by the Russian invaders during over 6 months of occupation.

How many other similar places are there in the occupied territories of Ukraine? How many Ukrainians will be yet shot down in cold blood with their hands tied behind their backs?

Distinguished Personal Representatives,

Ukrainians know all too well what genocide means. This is not for the first time we have witnessed it. Genocide is part of Ukraine's collective memory. 90 years ago, in 1932-1933, Joseph Stalin and his regime starved millions of Ukrainians to death during the Holodomor genocide, an artificial famine aimed at destroying Ukrainians as a national group. A decade later, Nazis occupied Ukraine and killed millions of Ukrainian Jews during the Holocaust.

Mass atrocity crimes against civilians in the occupied towns in the vicinity of Kyiv, in Izium and other places are not just war crimes but a deliberate and brutal murder of Ukrainians because they are Ukrainians.

All these atrocities are accompanied by the large scale state sponsored campaign of disinformation and propaganda in the Russian Federation aimed at the dehumanization of Ukrainian people, denial of the right of the Ukrainian state

to exist, as well as at justification of the war of aggression and whitewashing of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the russian troops.

For a long time, russian elites have cultivated notions of russian superiority, exceptionalism, chauvinism and aggressive nationalism. This led to a consistent policy of hatred against other nations, religious and vulnerable groups. Domestically, the russian regime persecutes Jehovah's Witnesses, the LGBT community, and national minorities, as well as political dissidents and opposition figures. From the outside, and in relation to Ukrainians as a national group, this general policy of hatred and chauvinism has acquired a genocidal character. This led to a real encouragement to exterminate Ukrainians in the course of armed aggression.

Ukraine views as a joint primary task together with our international partners, lawyers, experts and civil society to collect all the necessary evidence to hold russia, the russian leadership and the russian military accountable for war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression.

We strongly encourage the Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination to contribute to this important joint endeavor by further disclosing and addressing russia's gross violations of human rights, fundamental freedoms and assaults on human dignity amidst its aggression against Ukraine.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.