



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S
ONGOING AGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE
1373 MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 May 2022

Thank you Mr. Chair,

Russia is the aggressor state in Europe, waging an illegal war of choice against a European neighbor. Again. Russia's war of aggression has provoked the largest humanitarian crisis in the heart of Europe since World War II, undermining security on the continent and beyond. Russia's war of aggression continues to shock the world with reports of committed atrocities and alleged war crimes against the people of Ukraine. Russia's war of aggression has led to Russia's political and economic isolation. And Russia's war of aggression continues to face staunch resistance from the brave and courageous Ukrainian people fighting to defend their country and the values of peace, sovereignty, democracy, and the rule of law.

Mr. Chair,

By invading Ukraine, Russia has made the terrible choice to flagrantly violate international law, the UN Charter, and the OSCE founding principles that Russia had committed to uphold. Mariupol, Bucha, Irpin, Kharkiv, Kramatorsk, Odesa, Izum, Mykolaiv, Bilokhorivka: we are appalled by the assault on human life in disregard of international humanitarian law, and by the senseless destruction that Russia's actions continue to inflict on Ukraine.

Under no circumstances can civilians not taking part in hostilities be legitimate targets. Under no circumstances can atrocities such as summary executions, torture, rape and gender based violence be justified. Anyone who orders or deliberately commits such acts, or aids and abets them, can be held responsible for war crimes. Commanders of forces who knew or had reason to know about such crimes, but did not attempt to stop them or punish those responsible, can be criminally liable for war crimes as a matter of command responsibility.

Mr. Chair,

This past weekend, Prime Minister Trudeau visited Ukraine. He had an opportunity to visit Irpin, where he witnessed firsthand the reckless brutality of Putin's illegal war. At the same time, he bore witness to the strength and resilience of the Ukrainian people. Despite efforts by Russia, cities such as Kyiv, Irpin, Kharkiv, Odessa, and other proud Ukrainian cities, continue to stand strong and free today. When Putin invaded Ukraine, he gravely underestimated the determination of the people of Ukraine, who continue to fight with courage and resilience for peace, for democracy, and for their freedom, as he also underestimated the unity of support that the world would have for Ukraine.

Prime Minister Trudeau met with President Zelenskyy and reiterated Canada's unwavering commitment to help in any way possible. Canada has reopened our Embassy in Kyiv and will continue to implement additional measures, sanctions, and investments to help ensure Ukraine has what it needs to repel the aggressor state and defend its territory and people, and to rebuild from the devastating destruction we are witnessing.

We know, as do virtually all others in this room, that in standing up for themselves, the people of Ukraine are standing up for sovereign equality, for democracy, for the rules based international order, and for international law—and we stand with them.

Mr. Chair,

We will not allow Russia to manipulate their way into impunity through the spread of disinformation and their false narrative that they had no choice but to inflict a pre-emptive strike in self-defence or in defence of Russian speakers in Ukraine. That these arguments are simply not true is eminently clear from the resistance Ukrainians are demonstrating to avert Russian domination – Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking Ukrainians alike. No one is buying Kremlin's fabrications about this premeditated and unjustified war. Let us recall that 141 states voted in favour of the General Assembly resolution demanding that Russia stop its aggression and its illegal invasion of Ukraine. The responsibility for this war rests squarely and solely with Russia.

Canada strongly condemns this war of aggression by Russia against Ukraine. We condemn Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We condemn Russia's attempts to replace democratically elected Ukrainian local authorities with illegitimate ones. We reject Russia's plans to force currency conversion in Kherson and we will not recognize sham referendums or acts of illegal annexations of Ukraine's territory.

Mr. Chair,

In the 1990 Paris Charter for a New Europe, OSCE participating States pledged their full commitment to the Ten Principles of the Helsinki Final Act, including “to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State”, recalling that “non-compliance with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations constitutes a violation of international law.”

For Canada – these Principles continue to matter as much today as they did in 1990.

We call on Russia to abide by the Helsinki Final Act and all other OSCE commitments. We call on Russia to change course and to immediately cease their aggression. We call on Russia to withdraw their troops in full compliance with humanitarian and human rights law. We call on Russia to respect Ukraine’s territorial integrity.

Russia can stop this war now.

Canada continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine.

Thank you Mr. Chair.