
Chairmanship: Poland**1364th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 24 March 2022 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10.05 a.m.
Suspended: 1.05 p.m.
Resumed: 3 p.m.
Suspended: 6 p.m.
Resumed: 10 a.m. (Friday, 25 March 2022)
Closed: 11 a.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador A. Hałaciński
Ambassador M. Czapliński

Chairperson, Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Russian Federation (Annex 1)

Point of order: Ukraine, Chairperson

3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 1: THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

Ukraine (Annex 2), France-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Monaco, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (Annex 3), Canada (Annex 4), United States of America (Annex 5) (PC.DEL/416/22), Switzerland (PC.DEL/429/22 OSCE+), United Kingdom (Annex 6), Georgia (Annex 7), Turkey (Annex 8), Norway (Annex 9), Portugal (Annex 10), Belarus (PC.DEL/435/22 OSCE+), France-European Union, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA.GAL/15/22 OSCE+), Chairperson

Agenda item 2: REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE FOR
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
(ODIHR)

Chairperson, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, France-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, Monaco, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/431/22), United Kingdom, Russian Federation (Annex 11), Armenia (PC.DEL/443/22), United States of America (PC.DEL/417/22), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/448/22 OSCE+), Georgia (PC.DEL/440/22), Turkey (Annex 12), Kyrgyzstan, Holy See (Annex 13), Kazakhstan (Annex 14), Turkmenistan, Canada (PC.DEL/420/22 OSCE+), Switzerland (PC.DEL/421/22 OSCE+), North Macedonia (Annex 15), Norway (Annex 16), Uzbekistan, Italy, Ukraine (PC.DEL/436/22), Bosnia and Herzegovina, France-European Union, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA.GAL/16/22 OSCE+)

Agenda item 3: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

- (a) *Ongoing crimes by Ukraine with the support of a number of OSCE participating States*: Russian Federation (Annex 17), Chairperson, France-European Union, Ukraine, France, Canada (Annex 18), Norway, Lithuania (Annex 19)
- (b) *23rd anniversary of NATO's aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*: Serbia (Annex 20), Russian Federation (Annex 21)
- (c) *NATO's response to the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo*: United States of America (PC.DEL/428/22), France, Albania (Annex 22), United Kingdom, Italy, Germany (Annex 23), Canada (Annex 24), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Annex 25)
- (d) *Aggression of Azerbaijan against Artsakh and Armenia with the direct involvement of Turkey and foreign terrorist fighters – recent developments*: Armenia (Annex 26), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/449/22 OSCE+)

Agenda item 4: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Meeting of the Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Z. Rau, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation of Spain, H.E. Mr. J.M. Albares Bueno, on 17 March 2022*: Chairperson
- (b) *Meeting of the Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Z. Rau, with the European Union's Special Representative for Human Rights, H.E. Mr. E. Gilmore, on 17 March 2022*: Chairperson

- (c) *Joint statement by the Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Z. Rau, and the OSCE Secretary General, Ms. H. M. Schmid, on the situation in Ukraine, issued on 18 March 2022: Chairperson*
- (d) *Meeting of the Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Z. Rau, with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence of Ireland, H.E. Mr. S. Coveney, on 18 March 2022: Chairperson*
- (e) *Meeting of the Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Z. Rau, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, H.E. Mr. B. Aurescu, on 21 March 2022: Chairperson*
- (f) *Meeting of the Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Z. Rau, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia, H.E. Mr. B. Osmani, on 21 March 2022: Chairperson*
- (g) *Meeting of the Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Z. Rau, with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, H.E. Ms. A. Linde, on 22 March 2022: Chairperson*
- (h) *Telephone conversation between the Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Z. Rau, and the Secretary of State of the United States of America, H.E. Mr. A. J. Blinken, on 22 March 2022: Chairperson*

Agenda item 5: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a) *Announcement of the distribution of a written report of the Secretary General: Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre*
- (b) *Implications of the late approval or non-approval of the extension of the mandate and budget of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine: Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre (SEC.GAL/42/22 OSCE+)*

Agenda item 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Annual State of the Nation Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 16 March 2022, entitled “New Kazakhstan: Path of Renewal and Modernization”:
Kazakhstan (Annex 27)

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 31 March 2022, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 1

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Point 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like once again to make procedural objections to the proposed first item on the agenda of today's meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council.

Mr. Chairperson, you persist in refusing to act in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure regarding the preparation of the agendas of the Permanent Council (paragraphs IV.1(C)1 and IV.1(C)3), which should take into account the views of all participating States.

We continue to regard this item, which has already become a standing item, as politically biased, reflecting the approaches of some participating States and openly discriminating against the Russian representatives. Such wilful actions are contrary to the mandate of the Chairmanship-in-Office, which was endorsed by the Porto Ministerial Council in 2002 and which is binding.

Once again, we urge the Polish Chairmanship to ensure equitable opportunities for all to engage in discussions at the Permanent Council.

We request that this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council.

Thank you for your attention.



1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine has been defending its freedom, sovereignty and democracy against Russia's war of aggression already for a month now.

And this is after eight years of repelling Russian armed aggression and hybrid warfare, when Russia was lying to the whole world and denying its direct involvement.

We are grateful to all our partners, allies and friends for their support and solidarity with the Ukrainian people at these tragic times for the whole OSCE.

What Russia had intended to be a campaign lasting a few days has turned out to be the gravest catastrophe in Europe since the Second World War.

The death toll caused by Russia's war of aggression is devastating.

Russia is burning entire cities to ashes.

Civilians are deliberately killed through indiscriminate shelling.

A total of 121 children have perished in Ukraine since the start of the Russian attacks; more than 167 have been wounded.

Russia has damaged 548 educational facilities, including 220 schools, 155 kindergartens and 40 other facilities, such as rehabilitation centres, sports facilities, art schools and libraries.

The Russian forces have already destroyed 3,500 infrastructure facilities in Ukraine.

The targeting of critical infrastructure is exposing Russia's plan, which is to bring about a humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

According to the United Nations, about 10 million Ukrainians have already left their homes fleeing the Russian invasion.

This is after only one month.

In violation of international humanitarian law, the Russian forces are using cluster munitions in populated areas, as has already been confirmed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Furthermore, two days ago, it was reported that phosphorous bombs had been used in the suburbs of Kyiv.

As evidenced by the shelling of the Sumykhimprom chemical plant earlier this week, the actions of the Russian troops are becoming more and more dangerous.

While forest fires have broken out around the Russian-occupied Chernobyl nuclear site and the risk of a nuclear incident is increasing, Russia is threatening Europe with a chemical incident as well.

This is how Russia's State terrorists act.

At the same time, Russia has for years been exploiting the notion that it is somehow involved in a fight against neo-Nazism.

However, while Russia is defending monuments, it continues to claim human lives.

Ninety-six-year-old Boris Romanchenko, a survivor of the Buchenwald, Peenemünde, Dora and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps, was killed in his home in Kharkiv last Friday during a Russian bomb attack.

He had served as Vice President of the Buchenwald-Dora International Committee for many years.

He survived Nazism but not "Russism".

These Russian atrocities bring to mind our worst memories from the past.

The Ukrainian cities of Mariupol, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Iziium and others are under siege.

The situation in Mariupol is especially heartbreaking.

As of today, there are about 100,000 people left in the city.

They are under a complete blockade – no food, no water, no essential medicines – and under constant shelling.

All our attempts to organize secure humanitarian corridors for the residents of Mariupol are disrupted by the Russian invaders.

Two days ago, one of the humanitarian convoys was simply captured by Russian troops.

We believe that “green corridors” and humanitarian convoys could work if supported by relevant international actors, including those working on behalf of the United Nations and the OSCE.

The presence of international actors on the ground is indispensable for needs assessment, which is crucial for a targeted, timely and co-ordinated international humanitarian response – something that is long overdue.

As the Greek consul general, the last European Union diplomat evacuated from Mariupol, pointed out, “Mariupol will become part of a list of cities that were completely destroyed by war”, joining “Guernica, Coventry, Aleppo, Grozny [and] Leningrad”.

This will be remembered by generations to come.

Russian diplomats must be feeling “proud” of such achievements by their country’s leadership and army.

In other cities under Russia’s control the humanitarian situation is rapidly deteriorating as well.

The Russian invaders are carrying out reprisals against the residents of Kherson and attempting to create illegal quasi-autonomous authorities there.

On 21 March, the Russians opened fire on peaceful demonstrators in Kherson’s Freedom Square, wounding an elderly man.

The invaders believe that they can break the resistance of Ukrainians through brutality, as is normally done in Russia. But they have simply got it wrong about Ukraine and its people.

Furthermore, Russia is using its warships for blockade of Ukraine from the sea, including the city of Odesa.

Russia intends to cut off Ukraine’s trade routes and starve Ukrainian coastal cities and towns. This cannot go unnoticed and without response by the international community – it is high time to close international ports to Russian ships.

Esteemed colleagues,

Hungry and demoralized Russian soldiers are looting and killing.

They call it switching to self-sufficiency. In reality, it is robbery sanctioned by the Kremlin.

Russia’s unprovoked and unjustified war is also yet another grim reminder that women are among the most vulnerable in situations of armed conflict.

According to the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, the identity of one of the Russian soldiers responsible for raping a woman after killing her husband and terrorizing their little child has been established. Reports of numerous sexual crimes by Russian soldiers in Ukraine have been coming in from various occupied areas.

Let me also remind you of the fate of people living in the occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea.

These Ukrainian citizens have been held hostage by Russia for eight years now.

As in the days of Stalin, Ukrainians are forcibly deported to Russia in violation of international humanitarian law.

On 19 March alone, Russia forcibly relocated 2,389 children from Donbas.

Furthermore, Russia continues to conscript thousands of male residents of the temporarily occupied areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and the temporarily occupied Crimea.

They are sent to the forward positions of the Russian troops as cannon fodder.

So much for Russia's "protection" and "liberation"!

In reality, these people have no rights or choice, and ultimately they are doomed to a certain death. That is all what the much-trumpeted concept of "Russkiy Mir" ("Russian World") is about.

No matter what Russian diplomats say in their statements.

And now it seems that Russia has opened a second front – against the truth.

I am referring not only to the spreading of fake news about biolabs and "infected combat birds" and other nonsense about Ukraine.

I also have in mind the persecution of people in Russia who give the slightest hint of seeking to find out the truth about Putin's war in Ukraine.

Esteemed colleagues,

Over the past few days, we have heard the Kremlin complaining about the West with increasing frequency.

Why? Because the free world has stood up in defence of the rules-based order grounded on the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

In contrast to Russia and President Putin, who decided to smash all OSCE fundamental principles to smithereens and to unleash an all-out war in Europe.

However, Vladimir Putin should at least find in himself the courage to admit that it was his decision to sacrifice the future of a country of 140 million people to his neo-imperialistic dreams.

Instead of blaming the rest of the world, the Kremlin must change its policy and course.

Russia has to stop the war, withdraw its troops, restore Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including Crimea and, of course, assume responsibility for all the crimes committed against the Ukrainian people. Additionally, Russia must provide assurances that such aggression will never be repeated and return to observance of the tenets of international law.

Last but not least, I also have a question for the Belarusian diplomats: do you really want to share full responsibility for all these atrocities with Russia and ruin the reputation of your country altogether?

I kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

The delegation of France, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

One month has now passed since President Putin launched his devastating war against Ukraine with the participation of the Lukashenka regime in Belarus as co-aggressor. We are witnessing an unprecedented act of Russian military aggression against a sovereign and independent neighbouring country, Ukraine, in flagrant violation of international law and the core principles that underpin the rules-based international order. Since the start of this war, at least 925 civilians have been killed and 1,496 injured, according to UN Human Rights Office, which estimates that the actual toll will be much higher. In addition, over ten million people have been forced to flee their homes in less than a month and, while the majority are internally displaced, over 3.5 million people have fled to other countries, out of which 1.5 million are children. Many of them are severely traumatized.

The European Union condemns President Putin's premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. Deliberate attacks directed against civilians are prohibited by international humanitarian law. There is prima facie evidence that the Russian indiscriminate attacks in densely populated areas and on those fleeing the war zones, as well as on civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and schools, could be constitutive of war crimes. We demand that Russia immediately and unconditionally cease its military actions and withdraw all its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine. Equally, Russia must stop its State-run disinformation campaign and cyberattacks. We also reiterate our call on Belarus to stop enabling the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations. The European Union resolutely supports Ukraine's inherent right to self-defence, and the Ukrainian armed forces' efforts to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity and population in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Russia has no right under international law to use unilateral force on the territory of a third country and bears full responsibility for these acts of military aggression and all the destruction and loss of life. The International Court of Justice has ordered Russia to immediately suspend its military operations on the territory of Ukraine, stating that it has found no evidence to substantiate Russia's "justifications" of the war. We demand that Russia complies with the provisional measures order of the Court, which is binding under

international law. We also support all efforts to gather evidence and document the atrocities of this war, including by the International Criminal Court's prosecutor, the UN Human Rights Council and the OSCE, through the Moscow Mechanism and other tools. The perpetrators of these serious human rights violations and possible war crimes, including the responsible government officials and military leaders, will be held accountable.

The European Union condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's siege and heavy bombardment of Mariupol and the intensification of Russian offensive formations around big cities including Kyiv, Chernihiv, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv, Berdiansk and Kryvyi Rih. The situation in Mariupol is catastrophic. Russian troops have pummelled the city with artillery, rockets and missiles – damaging or destroying over 90 per cent of the city. They bombed an art school in which 400 residents had taken shelter. This follows the bombing last week of a theatre where civilians were sheltering and hundreds of people were trapped beneath rubble in a basement. They have also cut off access to electricity, heating, fresh water, food and medical supplies, consciously creating a humanitarian catastrophe, which Moscow reprehensibly blamed on Ukraine for refusing to surrender. According to local authorities at least 2,300 people have been killed in the city and in some cases, there has been no other option but to bury the dead in mass graves. We are appalled by the reports, including from Human Rights Watch, indicating that Russian forces are using cluster munition against civilians, including in three separate attacks in Mykolaiv.

These pitiless and deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure are shameful and totally unacceptable. Like the UN, we are calling on the Russian Federation to urgently agree to a sustained ceasefire in order to allow for safe passage for civilians who wish to leave and comply with its obligation to ensure the free and safe movement and access for those delivering humanitarian assistance. As in all conflict situations or situations of displacement, women and children are particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses and their rights must be safeguarded and upheld.

We strongly condemn the kidnappings of democratically elected mayors and local representatives by the Russian armed forces and call for their immediate release. Any attempt by Russia to conduct unlawful referenda to create illegitimate alternative administrative structures in Ukraine will be considered null and void. In this context, we are impressed by the determination and courage of the residents of Kherson, peacefully opposing any attempts of the Russian armed forces to declare their control over the city.

Putin's war in Ukraine is mirrored by a wide-ranging and systematic crackdown on human rights and fundamental freedoms in Russia. We strongly condemn Russia's propaganda and disinformation campaign at all levels and fora. Through its propaganda proxies, the Kremlin actively incites militarism and chauvinism, while brutally denying freedom of speech and other fundamental rights and freedoms to the Russian people. As the Representative on Freedom of the Media pointed out last week, media are subject to harsh censorship, including the ban on describing the Russia-inflicted war as a war or even saying "no to war". Freedom of peaceful assembly is grossly disrespected, as peaceful protesters are routinely detained. Moreover, independent judiciary has long been lost, as politically motivated court rulings testify, not least in the case of opposition leader Alexei Navalny. As a result of Russia's ruthless actions in Ukraine gravely violating the Council of Europe statute, the country's membership of the organization was ceased last week. It is regrettable that President Putin has deprived its citizens of the possibility of filing their complaints to the

European Court of Human Rights, thus further limiting Russian citizens' access to legal remedies. There are, nevertheless, brave individuals in Russia, such as the journalist Marina Ovsyannikova, who stand up against the official propaganda. We applaud the courage of all those in Russia who defend the values of democracy, freedom and peace at high personal risk and underline the importance of fighting the propaganda campaign by enlightening the Russian people about the war in Ukraine.

Mr. Chairperson, let us be clear: the use of chemical and biological weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone and under any circumstances is unacceptable and contravenes international law prohibiting the use of such weapons. Russia's continued disinformation attempts about biological labs and chemical weapons in Ukraine don't have any substance or credibility. Ukraine has been faithfully implementing its obligations under United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 and a number of other organizations, including the OSCE, and the European Union has been providing assistance in this regard. In the event of a biological or chemical incident, Russia would bear full responsibility.

The European Union and its transatlantic and likeminded partners have reacted strongly and in an unprecedented way to the Russian aggression by targeting those who bear the responsibility of this unlawful attack with the most far-reaching and hard-hitting sanctions packages in our Union's history. We have also sanctioned key individuals in Belarus for their involvement in facilitating the Russian military aggression from Belarusian territory. We are prepared to adopt further restrictive measures if President Putin does not stop and reverse the military aggression.

The European Union reiterates its unwavering support and commitment to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters. Ukraine, as any sovereign State, has the inherent right to choose its own future and destiny. We stand by the people of Ukraine and its democratically elected institutions and representatives in this difficult time. The European Union and its Member States will continue to provide co-ordinated political, financial, material and humanitarian support as well as shelter for those who flee the war. We are also committed to provide support for the reconstruction of a democratic Ukraine once the Russian onslaught has been overcome. Ukraine belongs to our European family.

I kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, and Albania¹, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, Georgia, Andorra, Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

1 The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 4

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Thank you.

I would like to request at the outset that my statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to express Canada's deep gratitude to Chief Monitor Çevik and his entire team for their dedicated commitment to the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and to their longstanding work to increase transparency and decrease tensions in Ukraine. Our thanks as well, dear Halit, for the efforts undertaken to evacuate mission members able to leave the zone of conflict, and for your continued support to national mission members still on the ground.

Mr. Chairperson,

It has now been a month since President Putin launched this war. One month of shelling hospitals, killing innocent civilians, targeting critical and civilian infrastructure, and perpetrating possible war crimes. The situation in Mariupol is a humanitarian catastrophe, caused solely by the actions of the Russian military that continues to destroy the city and prevents humanitarian relief. The toll on the people and the cities of Ukraine is horrific and undeniable, as our Ukrainian and European Union colleagues have just described very compellingly. I fully support their statements.

What has also been indisputable has been the determination and resilience of the Ukrainian people in the face of the horrors brought against them. Putin's anticipation of a short victorious war and a quick Ukrainian capitulation has proven illusory. Day by day, week by week, Ukrainians prove their commitment to defending their freedom and their home. The courage and sacrifice exemplified by Ukraine during their darkest hour humbles us all.

In the face of this resistance, it has become increasingly evident that Putin's war can only lead to further devastation not only for Ukraine but for the Russian people as well. With heavy casualties and losses in the field, not only has Putin failed to achieve his strategic

objectives in the war that he insists that all Russians call a “special military operation”, but the costs he has incurred at home, to the Russian economy and citizens, have been extensive. Within one short month, in response to Putin’s brutal war against Ukraine, Russia has become the most-sanctioned country on Earth. In response to Putin’s war against Ukraine, Russia has faced severe capital flight, the virtual elimination of foreign investment, and the closing of its stock market for almost an entire month. As a result of Putin’s war against Ukraine, the Russian people are facing extreme inflation and commodity shortages with the high-profile exit of hundreds of companies. As a result of Putin’s war against Ukraine, airspace has been closed for Russian airlines, the availability of spare parts is dwindling, and, consequently, Russians are limited in their avenues of escape. We are seeing hundreds of thousands of Russians flee; flee from Putin’s repression and from the disappearance of a perceived future for them in Russia. This did not have to happen. Putin alone brought this upon the Russian people. The responsibility for the consequences of his actions rest with him.

Mr. Chairperson,

In the wake of Putin’s invasion, and as the Ukrainian people continue to bravely resist this brutal war, the Kremlin has clamped down ever harder on dissent and the free flow of information. They are arresting thousands of anti-war protesters and banning social media sites. The Kremlin has instituted severe prison sentences for what it deems false reporting on the war, in a further attempt to gain total control over the domestic narrative. The truth itself has been labelled “extremist”, and political opponents are arbitrarily handed down unjust sentences. Despite this, Russians are accessing independent media outside the country. They are learning the facts of Russian military’s bombardment of Ukrainian cities and killing of civilians. They are having to reconcile the destruction of majority Russian-speaking cities like Kharkiv and Mariupol with Kremlin claims of “preventing genocide” against the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine. The Kremlin’s narrative cannot ultimately succeed against the truth.

Mr. Chairperson,

President Putin will only cause more loss for the Russian people the longer his war against Ukraine goes on. The massive losses and calamitous costs he is imposing on the Ukrainian people are horrific. The Ukrainian people should not lose their future for one man’s attempts at reviving a neo-imperialist dream, and neither should the Russian people.

Thank you.



1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Today is the 29th day of President Putin’s vicious and unprovoked war on Ukraine. We have witnessed one month of suffering. One month of children being orphaned. One month of savage cruelty inflicted on peaceful citizens.

More than 3.5 million refugees have fled Ukraine. More than ten million are internally displaced. As we speak, countless families huddle in bomb shelters without heat, water, or food. Mothers comfort hungry toddlers as explosions thunder above ground.

Across the border, the leader addresses a crowd bussed into a stadium. He wears an expensive jacket from the finest of European stores. The symbol “Z” is emblazoned everywhere – the new and infamous symbol of this cruel war. A large banner reads “For a world without Nazism.”

Meanwhile, as my Ukrainian colleague noted, Boris Romantschenko, a 96-year-old Holocaust survivor, who was imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps in Peenemuende, Dora, Buchenwald, and Bergen Belsen, died from Russian shelling at his home in Kharkiv on 18 March.

What sort of cynicism, what sort of moral vacuousness, what sort of callous human emotion allow Russia’s representatives to do this while calling for a “world without Nazism”?

Mr. Chairperson, allow me to recall the words of Russia’s great poet and Nobel Laureate Joseph Brodsky, written decades ago but eerily foreboding. Referring to historical justifications for war, Brodsky wrote:

“Evocations of history here are bare nonsense. Whenever one pulls the trigger in order to rectify history’s mistake, one lies ... One always pulls the trigger out of self-interest and quotes history to avoid responsibility or pangs of conscience. No man possesses sufficient retrospective ability to justify his deeds – murder especially.”

Let us all heed this warning.

Mr. Chairperson, Russia has turned many of Ukraine's once bustling cities to ruin with devastating shelling and bombing. Russian soldiers have brazenly looted businesses and private residences. And Russia continues to lie to the world while it continues its war of aggression, the likes of which Europe has not seen since 1945.

In Kyiv, at the centre of Peremohy Avenue (Victory Avenue) stands an obelisk with the inscription: To the Hero City of Kyiv. After the end of the Second World War, the Soviet Union declared Kyiv, Sevastopol, and Odesa as "hero cities" because of the fierce resistance they showed the Nazi invaders at great cost to themselves. Joining that list of hero cities today are Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Mariupol, Kherson, Hostomel and Volnovakha. Places like Sumy and Irpin are now familiar to the world. Ukrainian resistance in these and other cities, towns, and villages has been uncompromising. It has been inspiring. It has also been tragic. And it was unnecessary.

In ultimate contrast to the many examples of heroism by Ukraine's forces and ordinary citizens are the manifestations of Russia's barbaric and botched invasion, rife with violence, abductions, and intimidation against civilians, community leaders, journalists, and clergy. There are reports of forced relocation of civilians, including children, from Ukraine to Russia, as well as reports of abductions of democratically elected officials, journalists, and others who dare speak out against Russia's aggression. The editor of the media outlet "Novy Den" was kidnapped in Kakhovna on 12 March. He reported his captors wanted to "break" him to send a message to all journalists that "you will be crushed." It is clear that the Kremlin desperately fears the truth. But the truth will come out. And those who try to legitimize this evil war will forever bear this burden, no matter how cynical, how cruel, how brainwashed.

Mr. Chairperson, as Secretary Blinken announced yesterday, the United States assesses that members of Russia's forces have committed war crimes in Ukraine. This sobering assessment is based on a careful review of information from public and intelligence sources. We are committed to pursuing accountability, using every tool available. That's why we joined 44 other OSCE participating States in establishing an Expert Mission, with Ukraine's support. The Mission's work will inform international accountability mechanisms, including criminal prosecutions as appropriate.

The world will hold Russia to account for its actions in Ukraine. We have seen video showing Russian forces firing on peaceful protesters, nursing homes, hospitals, shopping malls, schools, and churches. On 18 March, Russian troops detained Oleh Nikolayev – an Orthodox priest – in Berdyansk and took him to an undisclosed location. He is still missing. Non-governmental organizations report at least 28 houses of worship or spiritual centres have been hit by Russian attacks over the last month, including Orthodox cathedrals, the Synagogue in Kharkiv, and mosques in Kostriantynivka and Mariupol.

Mr. Chairperson, Russian forces have fired on nuclear power stations and chemical plants with utter disregard for the ecological and humanitarian disaster it was courting. Russian forces have killed and injured Ukrainian and international journalists. There are reports of rape by Russian forces. It seems like every day the Russian Federation sinks to new lows.

It is not hard to understand why the people of Ukraine have resisted so fiercely – Russia is trying to erase their country from the map, destroying the work of past and present generations in the process.

But Russia will fail. Ukraine will prevail. And the United States will stay the course, providing unprecedented amounts of security and humanitarian aid to Ukraine for as long as it takes. Sanctions on Russia have already crippled its economy and exiled it from the international financial system. Russia and Belarus are pariah States. And more is coming if they do not change course.

As we meet here in Vienna, NATO is holding an extraordinary summit in response to Russia's brutal aggression. After the summit, President Biden will join G7 leaders and address the European Council. NATO, G7 and European Union leaders will continue to send a clear and unified signal to Russia that we remain more united than ever and determined to support Ukraine in defending itself against this unprovoked aggression; to degrade Russia's war machine; to defend human rights in Ukraine and neighbouring countries; and to fortify NATO by enhancing our posture on the eastern flank.

This war is only one month old but it will stain the Kremlin's leadership forever. To the representatives of the Russian Federation, I say: end it now, save the lives of your own soldiers – the many young conscripts duped into fighting, sometimes against their own relatives – and end this senseless suffering. You are not just killing and plundering a peaceful neighbour, you are bringing ruin to your own country. End this war now.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I request this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I am grateful to Ambassador Çevik for briefing the Permanent Council this morning. I would ask him to pass on the United Kingdom's heartfelt thanks to all his staff – both international and Ukrainian mission members – for everything they have done and continue to do for us. The experience, the expertise and the contacts built up by the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine over the last eight years remain invaluable. I would also like to take this opportunity to offer my personal condolences and those of my delegation for the death of Maryna Fenina – she, together with all Ukrainian victims of Russian aggression, remains in our thoughts.

Mr. Chairperson, today we mark one month of President Putin's war of choice against Ukraine.

One month ago in the early hours of Thursday, 24 February, the world woke up to bombs falling on Ukrainian cities and the news that Russia had launched a premeditated, unprovoked and entirely unjustified invasion of its sovereign, democratic neighbour. That same day my foreign minister joined dozens of others in this very council, condemning Russia's violation of the most basic principles of the UN Charter and international law, as well as their flagrant disregard for OSCE principles and commitments.

The Russian Government claimed to be acting in pursuit of peace. In reality, they started a war of aggression.

Sadly, in the days that followed, Russia's disregard for international humanitarian law and their willingness to indiscriminately attack civilian areas became crystal clear. Civilian casualties grew rapidly as reports came in of the Russian military bombing apartment blocks, schools and hospitals in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Sumy, Chernihiv, Mariupol and many other places.

The Russian Government claimed falsely to be acting to protect people in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions – instead they unleashed hell on the people of Mariupol and on towns and cities throughout Ukraine.

In an effort to stop the bloodshed, on the 27 February, 45 OSCE participating States, including the United Kingdom and the OSCE Chairmanship, Poland, called on the Russian Government to implement a humanitarian ceasefire. Shamefully, not only was that call ignored, but evidence emerged of Russia targeting agreed evacuation corridors – attacking civilians at their most vulnerable as they attempted to flee for safety.

The Russian Government claimed to be respecting international humanitarian law – instead they committed atrocities against civilians.

As Russia's war of aggression dragged on, we saw yet further evidence of Russia's irresponsibility and their willingness to endanger not only Ukrainians but people all across Europe. Russia occupied the Chernobyl nuclear power plant – interfering with the vital work of Ukrainian staff keeping the site safe and preventing them from being relieved by their co-workers for days. The Russian Government became the first State to attack a functioning nuclear power plant when they shelled Europe's largest nuclear power station in Zaporizhia.

Mr. Chairperson,

Sadly these are just some of the many heinous acts perpetrated by the Russian Government that we have been forced to confront in the last month. There were many others I could have named.

The Russian delegation can continue to attempt to distract and deflect us from their government's actions. But this is futile. No one believes them.

Instead, our colleagues should consider what it is they are defending and advise their government in Moscow that it will never succeed – neither in President Putin's senseless war, nor in its attempts to spread disinformation about that war.

So, Mr. Chairperson, what should the Russian Government do? No, what must the Russian Government do?

They must respect international humanitarian law:

- Civilians must be allowed to evacuate in the direction of their choosing – not be forcibly deported to Russia as shockingly is now being reported;
- International organizations, including the OSCE, must be granted safe passage throughout Ukraine. Russia must allow the delivery of humanitarian aid;
- Russia must stop targeting civilians and civilian areas – international humanitarian law is unbending and indisputable in this area.

Mr. Chairperson,

The above steps from Russia are urgently needed for humanitarian reasons, but they would no longer be necessary if Russia simply immediately ended this senseless war. This is a war that the Russian Government chose to start, in violation of international law, they can and must respect international law and end it.

Finally, Mr. Chairperson, Russia must return to respect for the OSCE principles and commitments that keep us all safe. They must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their neighbour Ukraine. They must withdraw all their troops and return all Ukrainian territory to the rightful control of the Ukrainian Government, including Crimea and the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

The Russian Government has made itself an international pariah through its own actions – the longer they persist in this war of choice, the longer they will remain a pariah.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson and I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 7

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF GEORGIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

We align with the statement delivered by the delegation of the European Union. In addition, allow me to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

First of all, I would like to thank Ambassador Çevik for his briefing today and to commend the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) for the valuable work that it has been carrying out on the ground, especially during these dreadful days and weeks following the Russian invasion. Ambassador Çevik, allow me to express my gratitude to you, alongside the Secretary General and the Polish OSCE Chairmanship, for all your efforts in ensuring the safe evacuation of the Mission's staff, including the Georgian monitors.

We mourn with you the death of SMM staff member Maryna Fenina, who was killed during shelling in Kharkiv on 1 March, and we thank you for your continued support for local staff.

Georgia strongly supports prolongation of the mandate of the SMM beyond 31 March, and we hope that the Mission's monitors and other staff will soon be able to return to their duty stations.

Dear colleagues,

Since a month already Russia's aggression against Ukraine continues to inflict the devastating consequences for the people of Ukraine.

The repercussions of this war of aggression have already reverberated across the European continent. Ten million civilians have been forced to flee from their homes in Ukraine, of whom 3.5 million have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. It is a major humanitarian crisis. Civilian infrastructure, including maternity clinics, hospitals and care homes, are brutally and directly targeted, which multiplies the number of casualties. Russia's actions constitute a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, which explicitly prohibits attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure.

As reported, the humanitarian situation in the cities of Mariupol, Kherson and Sumy is dire: their residents are facing critical and potentially fatal shortages of food, water and medicines. What is even more appalling, the attacks continue on civilians fleeing their homes through humanitarian corridors and the delivery of urgently-needed supplies into the besieged cities is impeded.

We are closely following the reports about mounting pressure being exerted by the occupying forces on civil society activists, abductions of local democratically elected mayors and attacks on peaceful demonstrators. These actions must stop immediately.

We are also following the environmental, nuclear and radiation safety risks stemming from the Russian aggression with great alarm. Georgia supports the efforts by the International Atomic Energy Agency to become involved and stabilise the situation, which is so important to avert any potential accident with gross hazard for the entire continent.

Mr. Chairperson,

Georgia reiterates its unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including Crimea and Donbas, and for Ukraine's navigational rights in its territorial waters.

We call on Russia to cease its aggression immediately, completely and without preconditions, to comply with the ruling by the International Court of Justice, to withdraw all its forces and armaments from the whole territory of Ukraine, and to allow all international humanitarian and human rights bodies and mechanisms immediate, safe and unhindered access throughout the country.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 8

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY**

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to begin by thanking the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), Ambassador Yaşar Halit Çevik, for his briefing.

We are personally grateful to him for his meticulous and professional leadership in safely evacuating the SMM monitors out of Ukraine. We are also grateful to his brave and dedicated team, who were the last to be evacuated. It is always easier to speak about doing something than to actually do it. Chief Monitor Ambassador Çevik and his brave team have successfully accomplished a difficult task at a time of unprecedented crisis.

As Ambassador Çevik has highlighted, the original aim of the SMM, namely “to contribute [...] to reducing tensions and fostering peace, stability and security”, is more relevant today. The Mission’s accumulated experience is needed now more than ever and will certainly be needed tomorrow. Therefore, it must be preserved as a unique OSCE asset. All participating States should carefully consider the current and future status of the SMM.

We strongly support the extension of the Mission’s mandate and budget as of 31 March.

Mr. Chairperson,

It has been one month since the start of the unprovoked, unjustified and illegitimate attack of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which is a clear violation of international law.

As we now speak, the humanitarian crisis is deepening in Ukraine every second.

More than 3.5 million refugees have been forced to flee Ukraine and millions are internally displaced within the country.

Around 13 million people have been affected in the areas hardest hit by the war within Ukraine and are in need of humanitarian assistance.

The pace and magnitude of the internal displacement and the exodus of refugees from Ukraine, along with the resulting humanitarian needs, will continue to increase. We are gravely concerned about this.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “[m]any people remain trapped in areas of escalating conflict and, with essential services disrupted, are unable to meet their basic needs including food, water and medicines.”

Children in particular are facing a dire situation. The dangers that so many women and children are currently confronted with cannot be justified on any grounds. There is no remedy for the trauma they are being exposed to.

On 3 March, 45 OSCE participating States invoked the Moscow Mechanism to “address the human rights and humanitarian impacts” of the situation on the ground. We will follow the future outcomes of this effort.

Full respect for and protection of objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population and civilian infrastructure is also needed.

According to the World Health Organization, at least 24 health facilities have suffered attacks. This is unacceptable.

Ukrainian cultural heritage in all of its forms is also under threat, as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has stressed. Cultural properties need to be protected. My country has supported the decisions taken at UNESCO in this regard.

Mr. Chairperson,

Turkish institutions and organizations continue to carry out humanitarian assistance operations to Ukraine. A Turkish team is stationed at the Siret Border Gate on the Ukrainian-Romanian border to assess the humanitarian needs in Ukraine and co-ordinate the Turkish ongoing aid operations. Efforts to provide further assistance are ongoing.

We wish to take this opportunity to reiterate our strong and sincere call for the urgent and permanent declaration of a ceasefire. The ongoing bloodshed must stop.

We strongly support the preservation of the sovereignty, political unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters. We reject the ongoing assault, as we rejected the decision to recognize the so-called breakaway republics of Donetsk and Luhansk, and as we rejected the illegal annexation of Crimea.

Like many other countries, my country is tirelessly working with all parties to facilitate a peaceful resolution of this crisis. We will resolutely continue to press for peace and stand by international law. My country will continue to mobilize her efforts on all occasions for facilitating a peaceful way out of this situation.

As always said, there are no winners in wars and no losers in peace. We hope that all the ongoing talks will pave the way for a return to dialogue and diplomacy.

We kindly ask that our statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF NORWAY**

Thank you.

Norway aligns itself with the statement by the European Union, but allow me to make some remarks in my national capacity.

Let me start by thanking Chief Monitor Çevik for his briefing to the Permanent Council. I commend you and your team for your tireless efforts in relocating the monitors and other staff of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). We continue to admire the professionalism, dedication and courage with which the Mission's staff have been performing their mandated tasks. We still see a role for the SMM in Ukraine. Collecting and presenting facts about the situation on the ground in an impartial and transparent manner, as the SMM has been doing for the past eight years, still matters. In the current situation we should make use of the Mission's assets on the ground and of its broad experience and comparative advantages, for instance to help mitigate the growing humanitarian crisis. We also envisage a role for the SMM once the Russian forces have withdrawn from Ukraine and ceasefires again need to be monitored. We stand ready to support the extension of the mandate of the SMM.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia has put forward a number of lies as pretexts for this war, and never seems to stop piling them on. The truth is that nothing happened in Ukraine that could have justified an attack by the Russian Federation. However, the Russian authorities do everything they can to hide the truth from people in their own country.

These lies are designed to divert attention away from Russia's role as the aggressor in its illegal invasion of Ukraine and to draw a veil over the long list of war crimes reportedly committed by Russia, which is growing by the hour.

Access to information is essential to be able to exercise the right to freedom of opinion and expression, not least in times of war.

We strongly condemn Russia for passing a draconian law that threatens people with up to 15 years' imprisonment if they spread so-called "fake" news about the military, thereby

silencing its own citizens and independent media actors. This law violates people's right to freedom of information and prevents journalists and other media workers from carrying out their vital work in an independent manner.

Several independent media outlets have been permanently closed and international media have suspended their operations in Russia as a result of this new legislation that criminalizes anybody who shares what the Russian authorities or courts choose to define as "fake" news. The hostile media environment was further demonstrated recently when the social media platforms Instagram and Facebook were declared "extremist".

The level of censorship has reached an absurd level now that the Russian authorities prohibit the media from using the word "war" about the war.

This obsessive clampdown on information is revealing: it shows the extent to which the authorities fear the reaction of the Russian public if they were to learn the truth about the atrocities being committed by their country's armed forces.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia's illegal war against a fellow OSCE participating State constitutes a clear violation of the prohibition on the use of force enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Indeed, Russia's war is a blatant attack on the fundamental obligations and principles of international law.

Last week, the International Court of Justice confirmed this and explicitly ordered Russia to stop its so-called "military operation". An investigation has also been opened by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. War crimes are being documented through various processes, including the OSCE Moscow Mechanism. It is incumbent on all of us to ensure that there is no impunity for war crimes and that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

Mr. Chairperson,

President Putin's illegal war against Ukraine is having serious consequences for the Russian people.

We commend the bravery of those Russians who continue to demonstrate against the war. We know that they are doing this at great personal risk to themselves.

Mr. Chairperson,

Norway condemns Russia's illegal war against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. We reiterate our call on Russia to withdraw its troops immediately, and to stop causing further death, suffering and destruction.

I kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 10

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF PORTUGAL**

Mr. Chairperson,

Portugal aligns itself with the statement by the European Union, but please allow me to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

Today, 24 March, marks the passage of a whole month since the beginning of the brutal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February.

During this shameful period of Russian history, cities have been massively bombed; hospitals, schools and other civilian infrastructure facilities have been deliberately targeted; hundreds of civilians have been killed; and more than ten million people have been forcefully displaced, including over 3.5 million Ukrainians who have fled to other countries, thereby becoming refugees.

The International Court of Justice has already ruled that the Russian Federation must immediately suspend its military operations in Ukraine. Moreover, the despicable actions by the Russian Federation and specific Russian individuals in Ukraine are already being investigated by the International Criminal Court. These actions could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. We call on Russia to abide by international law and to respect its commitments and obligations.

Portugal condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified and brutal war launched against Ukraine by the Russian Federation with the complicity of Belarus. We reaffirm our unwavering support for Ukraine. The Portuguese people stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to echo the words of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres: “Give peace a chance. Too many people have already died”, and to emphasize his call for an end to the “absurd war” brought about by Russia’s unprovoked and unjustifiable military aggression against a peaceful sovereign and independent neighbouring country.

The war being waged by Russia against Ukraine is unwinnable. All it can achieve is to prolong further the already appalling human suffering caused by President Putin's fateful decision to invade Ukraine.

Unilateral action in breach of the Charter of the United Nations and fundamental international norms is not acceptable. Russia is not addressing its security concerns through the current aggression. Indeed, no participating State could ever possibly hope to address any security issue on the basis of military aggression.

We reiterate that the Russian military offensive constitutes a grave violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and our common agreed OSCE commitments, and we call on Russia to cease immediately its aggression against Ukraine.

I kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 11

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Mr. Matteo Mecacci, to the Permanent Council. We have taken careful note of his report on the work of the Office in 2021. We will comment on it a little later, but first a few words on the current state of affairs in the Organization.

We are deeply disappointed by the ODIHR's biased position on Ukraine in the context of the special military operation being conducted by Russia since 24 February. The one-sided politicized press releases do not even attempt to think critically about the root causes of the situation. Moreover, in them you use terms, Mr. Mecacci, such as "armed attack" or "armed action" by Russia against Ukraine. This is unacceptable. Not to mention gross factual errors – I would hate to think that this is happening on purpose and is intended to mislead. Whatever is left of the Office's credibility is also undermined by its active involvement in the organization of the First Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (Vienna, 28 and 29 March), which has a distinctly anti-Russian orientation.

Such behaviour is inexcusable in an OSCE executive structure. Let me remind you that the ODIHR's activities were mandated by all OSCE participating States and not just by a group of countries whose biased assessments have been actively relayed by the Office over the years. In fact, this explains the silence of the entity headed by you, Mr. Mecacci, about the long-standing disastrous humanitarian situation in Donbas resulting from military action by Ukraine's armed forces and nationalist formations.

To back up our assertions, we plan to distribute a detailed summary in the near future of specific examples of violations of international law by the Ukrainian armed forces, including the killing of minors. We urge you to study this balanced document carefully.

In the light of these disgraceful press releases, the failure of the Office and other OSCE officials to react to the numerous violations of the rights of Russian and Russian-speaking citizens in European Union member countries is surprising. This boundless Russophobia is staggering. The hotline set up by the Russian Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International

Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo) receives thousands of reports every day of harassment of Russian children in schools, dismissals on ethnic grounds, expulsion of Russian students from Western European universities, and even refusals of medical assistance. Are there no limits to this rabid Russophobia? Where is the OSCE's response to these egregious incidents? Or do our colleagues consider that this is also a manifestation of the proverbial freedom of expression?

We should like to take this opportunity to ask the Director why there is no mention of the utterances by Ukrainian television presenter Fakhrudin Sharafmal? We would remind you that on live Ukrainian television he called for the murder of Russian children and promoted Nazi ideology, inter-ethnic hatred and enmity. We hope it is not out of sympathy for the ideas promoted by this person. After all, there are all the prerequisites for this. Unfortunately, history repeated itself at the meeting of the Permanent Council on 17 March, when the criminal and hateful ideas of the Nazis once again resounded within the walls of the Hofburg. All this confirms the imperative need to address the issue of neo-Nazism, especially in the framework of the annual OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting.

Mr. Chairperson,

Now for a few words about the report. As in the past, the activities of the Office remained geographically and thematically imbalanced. The ODIHR continued to be the standard-bearer for dubious extrabudgetary projects, such as the International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council. The collection of data on hate crime activities does not stand up to scrutiny. We have spoken many times on these subjects and will not repeat ourselves.

At the same time, social and economic rights, issues of statelessness, the rights of children, the rights of migrants and refugees and non-discrimination against Christians, including in the context of the implementation of the 2014 OSCE Ministerial Council mandate in Basel, for example, remain without due attention. We also call for a closer look at the growing problem of discrimination in sport.

On the question of electoral processes, it is encouraging to see the emphasis on the ODIHR's core activity, namely election monitoring. However, despite considerable work in that area, there are still many shortcomings. We have also repeatedly drawn attention to the double standards in describing electoral processes in the countries to the "west and east of Vienna", and also to the continuing imbalance in the geography of deployment and size of missions. This conclusion is also supported by current figures.

In 2021, all six large-scale missions were deployed either in the countries of the former Soviet Union States or in the Balkans. Meanwhile, electoral processes in the countries "west of Vienna" were observed either in a limited format or not at all. This has led to serious distortions in the funding of these activities: in 2021 around 899,000 euros were allocated to observation in the Western States, while over 4.95 million euros, 5.5 times as much, were allocated to the former Soviet Union and the Balkans. And yet there are still serious problems in the West in the electoral and political systems, numerous violations of human rights, the media and so on. Against such a backdrop, full observation of the expression of will in this part of the OSCE area has very real added value, despite attempts to prove otherwise and to hide behind the so-called "gold standard" methodology – which, by the way, has already become completely devalued.

We expect you, Mr. Mecacci, to take effective steps to solve the problems that have accumulated, not least through constructive interaction with the Russian Federation. The long-overdue elaboration of consensus principles for election observation will serve precisely this purpose.

I thank you for your attention and request that the text of this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting of the Permanent Council.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 12

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY**

Mr. Chairperson,

I warmly welcome Director Mecacci to the Permanent Council. I thank him and the entire team of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) for their comprehensive 2021 annual report.

Unfortunately, today we are in a position to discuss the ODIHR report in the middle of the grave humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. During crises like this, the ODIHR's activities and the effectiveness become more important than ever.

With this understanding, we believe that the Moscow Mechanism which was invoked by 45 participating States, including my country, will be a useful tool for collecting and evaluating information about the humanitarian issues and human rights situation on the ground.

We welcome the fact that the ODIHR is planning a number of measures to tackle human trafficking problems and risks stemming from the current situation in Ukraine.

On this occasion, I would like to underline that we have undertaken our commitments regarding displaced persons, irregular migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. My country still hosts the largest number of displaced persons and refugees. We have always pointed the importance of assuming responsibilities to host people who are fleeing from armed conflicts and providing the necessary support to countries hosting them. Now we are pleased to see that the policies and approaches of some participating States regarding refugees and asylum seekers have improved.

We have been helping Ukrainians and third country nationals during their evacuations from Ukraine. Over 56,000 Ukrainians have been admitted to our country with facilitated procedures. Our relevant institutions are also providing humanitarian assistance, in co-operation with Ukraine's neighbouring countries.

Mr. Chairperson,

There are certainly, lots of issues that we could discuss in connection with the ODIHR annual report, but I would like to mention just some of them.

As we all know, election observation is one of the well-established ODIHR mechanisms. Using an objective and impartial methodology, and ensuring equidistance and consistency, are important aspects of election observation function.

In 2021, despite the pandemic, the ODIHR was able to observe 19 elections. We commend the ODIHR's endeavours in this field.

Combating human trafficking is one of the areas in which the OSCE has vast expertise. This expertise has become more valuable during the ongoing Ukrainian humanitarian crisis.

Since the ODIHR annual report pays attention to the detrimental effects of modern border control technology, I would like to emphasize that conventional methods, particularly pushbacks, jeopardize the lives of irregular migrants. This point is also of particular importance under the current circumstances.

We commend the ODIHR for its efforts in the fight against intolerance and discrimination. We value its co-operation with and support for the three Personal Representatives of the Chairperson-in-Office.

We value the 15th annual Hate Crime Report of the ODIHR as a compilation of hate crimes in the OSCE area, since data collection is important to see the current situation and to develop adequate measures to counteract.

When it comes to women's political participation, it seems that the OSCE area is in a better situation. According to the annual report, at the end of 2021, women for the first time, women made up more than 30 per cent of parliamentarians in the OSCE area.

We welcome this progress.

Allow me also to stress that Turkish women have had the right to vote and to be elected since 1934. Although we still have much to do in this field, the number of women politicians has been increasing gradually in my country.

The ODIHR report also states that women are often underrepresented in the justice sector in the participating States. I would like to express that in my country at present three in five judges and prosecutors are women.

Mr. Chairperson,

The guidance and assistance of the ODIHR in implementing the OSCE human dimension commitments are important for all participating States.

On this occasion, I would also like to repeat our position that human dimension meetings have to remain as platforms for the exchange of opinions and dialogue with the civil society. Yet, the clear rules set out in Paragraph 16, Chapter IV of the 1992 Helsinki Document should not be disregarded. We are still of the view that the ODIHR has important responsibilities in that regard.

It is the responsibility of the participating States to secure the ODIHR's functioning by endowing it with the necessary financial means. I would like to restate our support for the mandate of the ODIHR and our determination to co-operate with it.

In closing, I wish you, Mr. Mecacci, and your team every success in your endeavours.

I kindly request, Mr. Chairperson, that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE HOLY SEE**

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of the Holy See joins the other delegations in welcoming Mr. Matteo Mecacci, Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), back to the Permanent Council and wishes to thank him for his presentation as well as for the timely circulation of the ODIHR annual report for 2021.

Covering a wide range of programmes and activities, this report confirms the ODIHR as one of the main partners of participating States in the implementation of their human dimension commitments. The ODIHR provides them with assistance, expertise and support.

Such work ultimately serves to achieve comprehensive and co-operative security from Vancouver to Vladivostok, because – as emphasized by Principle VII of the Helsinki Decalogue – respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is “an essential factor for the peace, justice and well-being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and co-operation among [...] [the participating States, n.d.r.] as among all States”.

In that regard, my delegation wishes to thank the ODIHR for ensuring the continuity of its activities during the COVID-19 pandemic and for standing ready and being available to provide appropriate assistance and support whenever requested.

The Holy See appreciates the reference made in the report to the obligation that tolerant and inclusive societies have to protect “religious minorities and majorities”. In fact, during these past few years, my delegation has repeatedly drawn attention to violations of freedom of religion or belief as well as to hate crimes which have targeted religious communities. In this regard, it is important that equal attention is afforded to all forms of religious intolerance and discrimination which can affect “both minority and majority communities”¹.

Therefore, my delegation continues to be confident that, benefiting from the expertise derived from the work already carried out in relation to the security needs of Jewish and

1 OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 9/09 on hate crimes.

Muslim communities², the ODIHR will carry out similar work on the security needs of Christian communities. Such work would be greatly furthered by the drafting of guidelines for educators on countering intolerance and discrimination against Christians as well.

Moreover, the Holy See appreciates the efforts highlighted in the report which promote true and authentic equality between women and men. This includes the advancement of equal opportunities for women in the activities carried out by the ODIHR as well as the implementation of measures to protect women from violence of any kind, including that which comes as a consequence of war, particularly the heightened risk of harassment and sexual violence.

Women's participation and engagement in all aspects of cultural, social, political and economic life can greatly contribute to ensuring sustainable peace and security, and should be encouraged wherever possible.

In conclusion, my delegation, while reiterating its gratitude to Mr. Mecacci for his leadership and efforts, wishes him every success in fulfilling the mandate entrusted to him by the participating States, and assures him of its continued availability for constructive dialogue and collaboration on issues of mutual concern.

Mr. Chairperson,

It would be remiss of me if I did not mention the situation in Ukraine.

We are witnessing a violent aggression against a participating State, which is “not merely a military operation, but a war”³. We have to recognize the senseless massacre that is taking place. Every day there is further slaughter and atrocities, including “the killing of children, and of innocent and defenceless citizens”⁴ as well as the destruction of their cities. The number of casualties is growing at an alarming rate, as is the number of people fleeing, especially mothers and children. Not to mention those who do not even have the possibility of escaping and are now starving and dying from dehydration: “Many grandparents, sick and poor people separated from their own families. Many children and fragile people are left to die under the bombs, without being able to receive help and without finding safety even in the air raid shelters.”⁵ Pope Francis has clearly stated: “All this is inhuman! Indeed, it is also sacrilegious because it goes against the sacredness of human life, especially against defenceless human life, which should be respected and protected, not eliminated, and which comes before any strategy!”⁶

Yesterday, Pope Francis spoke again in remembrance of the many victims of the conflict, recalling that there is “no victory” in war. Rather “everything is lost” in war, which is nothing but a self-destructive “defeat of humanity”.⁷

2 OSCE/ODIHR, “Understanding Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes and Addressing the Security Needs of Jewish Communities: A Practical Guide” (2017); OSCE/ODIHR, “Understanding Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes: Addressing the Security Needs of Muslim Communities – A Practical Guide” (2020).

3 Pope Francis, appeal after the Angelus, Vatican, 6 March 2022.

4 Pope Francis, appeal after the Angelus, Vatican, 13 March 2022.

5 Pope Francis, appeal after the Angelus, Vatican, 20 March 2022.

6 Pope Francis, appeal after the Angelus, Vatican, 20 March 2022.

7 Pope Francis, General Audience, Vatican, 23 March 2022.

I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate the Holy See's call for an immediate ceasefire, for respect for the most fundamental human rights, for the opening of and secure access to humanitarian corridors, and for a real and decisive focus on negotiation, which we hope will put an end to this war and lead to a sustainable and just peace.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is not the role of the Holy See to intervene on issues of a purely political or military nature, nor does it wish to do so. Rather, my delegation sees it as its duty to recall our common ground, which is based on what we started to build 50 years ago through the discussions that culminated in the Helsinki Final Act. My delegation is deeply concerned about the form and content of the discussions during the last meetings of the Permanent Council. Is it not the aim of our Organization to contribute to peace, security, justice and co-operation, and to join efforts to tackle any problems that may separate us, thereby working together in the interests of mankind? Did we not agree to respect each other's sovereign equality and individuality, territorial integrity and freedom and political independence? In fact, we must be committed to settling disputes among ourselves by peaceful means in such a way as not to endanger international peace, security and justice. Let us not allow the war in Ukraine to destroy our common understanding – let us, rather, draw on this understanding again and accordingly employ all our efforts and good will to stop this war and bring the suffering of the people in Ukraine to an end.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



1364th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF KAZAKHSTAN**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

My delegation would like to welcome Mr. Mecacci and his team back to the Permanent Council and to thank them for the annual report of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). We appreciate the ODIHR's efforts to continue its active engagement with participating States, particularly under Mr. Mecacci's leadership, and we look forward to deepening our dialogue with the ODIHR this year, especially given the large-scale democratic reforms taking place in our country.

We are in fact opening a new chapter in the transformation of Kazakhstan's society as a result of President Tokayev's latest proposed programme of reforms.

Four previous comprehensive packages of political and economic reforms have been successfully implemented.

On 16 March this year, President Tokayev presented a new package aimed at modernizing Kazakhstan's political system. I will present it in detail later under the "Any other business" item of our agenda.

President Tokayev's overall plan is to strengthen democracy by overhauling the judicial system; introducing elections of regional governors; relaxing legal requirements for the registration of new political parties; and imposing new constraints on presidential power, including limiting the President's ability to influence the Parliament, prohibiting the President from chairing any political party, and forbidding the President's relatives from holding any positions in politics or in State-owned businesses. The overarching goal of President Tokayev's reforms is for Kazakhstan to move from a "super-presidential" political system to a "presidential-parliamentary" one.

Allow me to inform you about just a few of the major electoral changes envisaged in the programme of reforms that are relevant to this agenda item of our meeting today.

- The system of election of deputies to the Majilis (the lower house of the Kazakh Parliament) will be reformed: 70 per cent of Members of Parliament (MPs) will be elected on a proportional (party) basis, while 30 per cent will be elected on a

majoritarian (direct vote) basis. This will pave the way for individual non-party candidates to run for a seat in the Parliament and increase both political competition and citizens' direct engagement with their elected MPs.

- Procedures for the registration of political parties will be greatly simplified. For example, the registration threshold (that is, the minimum number of members) will be lowered from 20,000 to 5,000 – a fourfold reduction, though, all in all, there will have been an eightfold reduction over the past three years (from 40,000 initially).
- The quota of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan in the Majilis will be abolished. This quota will be transferred to the Senate (the upper house of the Kazakh Parliament) and reduced from nine to five members. Accordingly, the controversy of double elections for the Majilis will be avoided, while the Assembly's role as a constitutional body designed to represent and protect the interests of over 130 ethnic communities will be preserved in the Senate. This would bring the system in line with our OSCE commitments. Mr. Mecacci knows about this issue, which is now being positively resolved thanks to the aforementioned reform.
- One more important development is that, on 27 December 2021, President Tokayev signed the Commissioner for Human Rights Act. It was a landmark event for our civil society, since the Commissioner's mandate has been strengthened tremendously. The Commissioner is now a completely independent entity. Moreover, the staffing of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights has been increased significantly in all 14 regions and the three largest cities of Kazakhstan. Accordingly, the Commissioner's powers have been greatly enhanced and scaled up, which will help to ensure a strict observance of human rights in our country.

I am sure that now would be a timely moment to establish close interaction between the ODIHR and the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, as was agreed by the parties during the productive visit that you, Mr. Meccaci, undertook to Kazakhstan in November last year. This would ensure effective co-operation on the ongoing human rights reforms in our country. We for our part would be glad to facilitate this process in every way that we can.

Kazakhstan supports the ODIHR's mandate to provide assistance and expertise to participating States and civil society with a view to promoting democracy, the rule of law, human rights, tolerance and non-discrimination.

At the same time, we wish to draw attention to a number of areas in which the work of the ODIHR could be further streamlined.

Since election observation is one of the main activities of the ODIHR, it is of the utmost importance that its election reports should be unbiased, objective and helpful for the participating States to improve their electoral laws.

Closer interaction between the ODIHR and individual participating States would be beneficial in terms of addressing any outstanding issues in the electoral process and avoiding unnecessary politicization of the preliminary and final reports of election observation missions. I should like to recommend that the ODIHR work together with participating States

in between election cycles to assess the success of its efforts in achieving the desired results during the election process.

We would also welcome constructive interactions before and after elections between limited election observation missions and local authorities on specific aspects of the electoral process and ways of improving these.

On another note, we urge the current and upcoming OSCE Chairmanships to properly address the concerns of participating States regarding the participation of radical or banned non-governmental organizations in the work of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. We insist on finding a solution that is acceptable to all participating States – otherwise, any legitimate concerns raised by participating States should prevail.

In closing, I should like to wish you, Mr. Meccaci, and your team every success in your activities and to assure you that Kazakhstan will continue to support your efforts to make the ODIHR an even more effective OSCE institution helping the participating States to achieve progress in the human dimension.

Thank you.

I kindly request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 15

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF NORTH MACEDONIA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

We subscribe to the statement by the European Union, but would nevertheless like to add a few remarks in our national capacity.

First of all, let me join the previous speakers in warmly welcoming you, Director Mecacci, and in thanking you for your presentation today.

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) remains the key platform for safeguarding democratic standards in the OSCE area, ensuring respect for human rights and strengthening democratic institutions.

Today, as we are confronted with a flagrant violation of the fundamental principles of international law and the democratic order, and above all a direct attack on human rights and freedoms, the role and purpose of the ODIHR acquire particular relevance.

The ODIHR has an immensely important role to play in the face of the ongoing violence and violations of human rights that we have all been witnessing daily for one month now as a result of the aggression against Ukraine.

I should like to take this opportunity to again call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and for the resumption of negotiations and diplomacy.

Mr. Chairperson,

We stress the ODIHR's active contribution to addressing the grave humanitarian and human rights situation in Ukraine. We commend its swift response and adaptation through the Ukraine Human Rights Monitoring Initiative, as well as its role in the initiation of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism, which was supported by 45 participating States, including North Macedonia. We are counting on the ODIHR to help to establish the facts and present findings concerning all violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

The first Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting of 2022, to be held next week and jointly organized by the Chairperson-in-Office and the ODIHR, is yet another

opportunity to continue discussing the highly relevant topic of international co-operation to address violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

We stand ready to further support the ODIHR in the implementation of its mandate, in particular with regard to the ongoing aggression.

Mr. Mecacci,

We highly value the important work performed by the ODIHR – as reflected in the annual report presented today – in ensuring that commitments in the human dimension are honoured by participating States. This work was also showcased at the conference convened in October last year to mark the ODIHR's 30th anniversary.

To provide a national perspective: my country is involved in long-standing co-operation and active dialogue with the ODIHR in a number of areas, including the ODIHR's continuous support for our efforts to organize free and fair elections, the implementation of relevant electoral reforms, tolerance and non-discrimination, and gender equality. We look forward to continuing this dialogue and diversifying our co-operation when North Macedonia assumes the OSCE Chairmanship in 2023. I remain hopeful that you will use your forthcoming visit to Skopje to discuss ways of ensuring an even more productive engagement to that end. We wish you a successful visit.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

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24 March 2022
Annex 16

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF NORWAY**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

Norway has aligned itself with the statement by the European Union, but please allow me to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chairperson,

We join the other delegations in warmly welcoming Director Mecacci back to the Permanent Council and thank him and his team for the 2021 annual report of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The report gives a good overview of the extensive work carried out by the ODIHR during yet another difficult year and highlights that institution's ability to respond to new challenges in a timely and adequate manner. This ability has been demonstrated again over the past few weeks, as the ODIHR has been redirecting its work and making itself relevant amid the unforeseen and rapidly deteriorating situation in Ukraine.

As you, Mr. Mecacci, mentioned, in 2021 we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the ODIHR. The participating States established the ODIHR to assist us in ensuring full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and all other commitments under the human dimension. That mandate is still pivotal.

The ODIHR has long-established competence in fields which are of great importance in the current situation and will continue to be highly relevant in the days and weeks ahead. These areas of competence range from a human rights-based approach to border management and a victim- and survivor-centred approach to the problem of trafficking in human beings, through human rights monitoring, to the promotion of diversity and inclusion.

Mr. Chairperson,

Last year, our Organization again failed to hold the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. On this occasion it was due to the obstructionism of one participating State. Once again, representatives of governments, international organizations and civil society were deprived of an essential arena for meeting and discussing human dimension issues. It is now more important than ever to have such a venue for dialogue.

In the meantime, let us make the most of other human dimension platforms, such as the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting next week.

As regards the ODIHR's election observation activities, it is our conviction that these are key to both safeguarding and strengthening democracy in the OSCE area. We congratulate the ODIHR for having deployed observers to 19 elections in all parts of the OSCE area in 2021. Norway continues to strongly support this work.

It is also encouraging to hear that an increasing number of participating States are drawing on the competence of the ODIHR.

Mr. Chairperson,

As we are on the topic of human rights and democratic institutions, I feel compelled to make a few comments on the human rights situation in Russia, which has deteriorated severely.

Russian citizens have a right to know the truth about what is happening in their own country and in Ukraine. The right of access to information and to freedom of expression must be protected.

The violent crackdown on recent protests across Russia is a violation of that country's international commitment to ensuring freedom of assembly and expression.

We are deeply concerned about the brutal arrests of peaceful protesters. Over the past few days, we have seen the Russian authorities carrying out undignified arrests of older people, young women and even little children.

Norway is deeply disturbed by the recent issuing of yet another harsh verdict against opposition leader Alexei Navalny. We will continue to hold Russia accountable for its politically motivated persecution of Mr. Navalny. Russia must adhere to its international human rights obligations and stop persecuting dissidents and political opponents.

We support the Russian people's right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Norway urges the Russian authorities to protect the fundamental freedoms of its citizens in line with the OSCE's fundamental principles and other international commitments that Russia has signed up to.

Needless to say, the Russian leadership should also allow the citizens of Ukraine to enjoy the protection of their human rights by withdrawing its forces and stopping the military attacks. It is also important that the ongoing violations of human rights and humanitarian law should be well documented, and we attach great importance to the OSCE Moscow Mechanism process in that regard.

Mr. Chairperson,

All participating States need assistance and advice in implementing their common commitments. I am pleased to assure Mr. Mecacci and the ODIHR that they can count on Norway's full support as they assist the participating States in upholding our human dimension commitments.

We agree with Mr. Mecacci that we should stand up for and defend the multilateral institutions and make sure that they are sufficiently funded. Democracy and the rule of law cannot be taken for granted – they are, rather, values that we must actively espouse and work towards every single day.

I kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 17

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian special military operation to protect Donbas is intended to put an end to the protracted conflict in Ukraine, whose political settlement the OSCE has failed to support. According to information from the Russian Ministry of Defence, in the course of this special operation high-precision weapons are being used against military facilities, while civilians and infrastructure are not being targeted. The main objectives of the special operation – demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine – will be met.

It is extremely disappointing that, against this backdrop, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Zbigniew Rau and Secretary General Helga Schmid have engaged in an anti-Russian propaganda campaign to blame the Russian armed forces for alleged attacks on civilian objects in Ukraine, in particular the Mariupol Drama Theatre. Their statement of 18 March is completely untenable, first of all in terms of the facts. Russian aircraft did not carry out any tasks related to strikes against ground targets in the city of Mariupol on 16 March. The Drama Theatre building had never been considered as a target by the Russian armed forces. It was rigged with explosives and blown up by Azov nationalist battalion fighters, while civilians were sheltering inside.

As for the accusations of “deliberate and inhuman attacks on civilian areas” in a number of cities, this is nothing more than a blind replication of the propaganda coming from the Ukrainian Government. On the contrary, the Russian army is doing its utmost to ensure the safety of the civilian population and is regularly establishing humanitarian corridors for their evacuation. This cannot be said of the tactics of the nationalist battalions, which use civilians as “human shields”, as confirmed by numerous surviving witnesses.

In that connection, Mr. Rau and Ms. Schmid once again failed to mention the horrendous shelling last week by the Ukrainian armed forces of densely populated neighbourhoods in Donetsk and Makiivka using the Tochka-U tactical missile system. We spoke about this at the Permanent Council: these strikes resulted in dozens of casualties, including children. There is video evidence. Why are these facts ignored?

In such circumstances, the OSCE leadership's talk of expressing concern about the humanitarian consequences of the armed confrontation sounds at the very least contrived. If the OSCE really wants to find its role in facilitating a settlement in the current circumstances, its leadership should rethink its approaches and engage in real action rather than political populism.

Let us emphasize: the assessments in the aforementioned statement by the OSCE leadership are blatantly biased, distort reality and grossly violate OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 485 on public statements on behalf of the Organization. In accordance with that Decision, the Chairperson-in-Office and the Secretary General may not relay the opinion of individual countries or groups of countries unless it has consensus support among all participating States.

Here is a clear example of what is in fact happening. The Ukrainian Government has been asked repeatedly to withdraw its armed formations from Mariupol, declare a ceasefire and carry out a humanitarian operation to evacuate people both to Russia and to territory controlled by the Ukrainian armed forces. This has been met with groundless refusals. More than 130,000 people remain trapped in the city. Despite all the obstacles, almost 60,000 residents, including 139 foreign nationals, have been evacuated from Mariupol to Russian territory in recent days. In total, the Russian military has evacuated more than 330,000 people, including almost 69,000 children, from Ukraine during the military operation.

More than 4.5 million people, including almost 7,000 citizens from more than 20 foreign countries, are trapped in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Sumy and other cities because of the Ukrainian formations. The Russian appeals to the OSCE leadership to bring its influence to bear on the Kyiv regime so as to ensure the operation of humanitarian corridors and thereby help to safely evacuate people and save their lives also remain unanswered. We regret that at the United Nations Security Council meeting on 23 March the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France and several others abstained from adopting a draft resolution on the situation in Ukraine calling for a ceasefire to facilitate the safe evacuation of the population. They preferred to politicize the humanitarian issue rather than provide practical assistance in the provision of humanitarian aid to those in need. As a result, the Ukrainian formations have still not received the signal to stop using civilians as "human shields" and placing weapons near civilian objects, and will continue doing so.

Ukrainian nationalists are planning to set up their combat positions in hospitals in Odessa and Chernihiv. According to the information available, patients, including those in a serious condition, are being urgently discharged from medical facilities in these cities so that the nationalists can set up strongholds and firing positions in these buildings, along with depots for military equipment and ammunition. And what about the story in Kherson, where Ukrainian soldiers disguised their stronghold as a Red Cross station? Or how they placed multiple-launch rocket systems in the Vynohradar residential area in Kyiv, among the multi-storey residential buildings and under the roof of a large shopping centre, and conducted massive shelling from there? Video evidence of these crimes by the Ukrainian military and nationalists has been published by the Russian Ministry of Defence and is publicly available.

The United States and other Western countries continue to pour oil on the fire by stepping up military supplies to Ukraine. The US Government is particularly zealous in this –

it recently announced another package of such aid worth 800 million dollars. It is planned to ship directly from the Pentagon warehouses 800 Stinger man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS), 2,000 Javelin anti-tank missile systems, 6,000 AT-4 anti-tank rocket launchers, 1,000 light anti-tank weapons, 100 unmanned aerial vehicles, 100 grenade launchers, 5,000 rifles and more than 20 million cartridges and charges. In total, in one week, the volume of US military supplies to the Ukrainian Government amounted to 1 billion dollars, and the current US administration has sent a total of 2 billion dollars in military cargo to Ukraine. We would remind you of the danger of these weapons spreading further across Europe and of this entire arsenal falling into the hands of bandits and terrorists, not to mention the fact that MANPADS in their hands would pose a huge threat to civil aviation.

Let us take a look at who the United States is supporting. For example, Serhii Deineko, head of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, who on 19 March on his official social media page called for the “killing of wives, children, parents, brothers and sisters” of Russian military personnel, or the head of the Mobile Hospital project, doctor Gennadiy Druzenko, who said on 21 March on the nationwide television channel Ukraine-24 that he had ordered his doctors to castrate wounded Russian servicemen, adding that he considered them “cockroaches, not people”. You say there is no Russophobia and neo-Nazi sentiment in Ukraine?

Let us recall everything the United States and the “collective West” have been doing to Ukraine in recent years. First, the West sponsored and supported the coup d’état there in February 2014. As everyone should remember, after the bloody provocations on the Maidan, the so-called “revolutionaries” usurped the authority of the democratically elected President, Viktor Yanukovich, on 22 February 2014 while he was still in the country. After that, the West fully condoned the transformation of Ukraine from a peaceful non-aligned State into a *de facto* testing ground for military threats to Russia’s security. The unbridled militarization began – modern weapons poured into the country, foreign military “instructors” became “permanent residents” figuratively speaking and the army grew in size multiple times. Like mushrooms after the rain, numerous paramilitary nationalist battalions proliferated there, and they were the first to rush, with weapons in their hands, to suppress political dissent in Donbas – under the slogans “death to the Moskals [Muscovites]” and “Donbas will either be Ukrainian, or it will be emptied of its people”. Inhabitants of Ukraine who dissented began to be exterminated. This nightmare has been going on for eight years.

During this time, the country was steered completely from outside and “manually” administered by the West – both economically and politically. Joe Biden, current US President and in 2016 US Vice President, personally decided who should be prosecutor general in Ukraine and who should not. Remember the story of Viktor Shokin – recounted in January 2018 by Joe Biden himself, who said he gave six hours for him [Shokin] to be fired, “well, son of a bitch, they fired him”. Yet, under such manual external steering, Ukraine’s economy has not been doing well and the level of corruption has grown immensely. The Ukrainian Government received financial handouts and loans from the United States and the European Union and the international financial institutions they control to “keep it on its feet”.

At the behest of the West, a clause was added to the Ukrainian Constitution, without any national referendum, stating the goal of joining the NATO politico-military bloc, which

proclaimed Russia as its main adversary. The territorial claims against Russia and hostility towards our country were also enshrined in the doctrinal documents of Ukraine itself. And then the Ukrainian politico-military leadership – for example, Lieutenant General Valerii Zaluzhnyi, Commander-in-Chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces – began to publicly speculate about driving “a tank around Red Square and the Arbat” (September 2021 in an interview with Yanina Sokolova – a video recording is publicly available).

All this was accompanied by an unprecedented attack on all things Russian in Ukraine: the Russian language, Russian culture, the status of the Russian people as such. They were simply erased from the list of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine in an attempt to impose a change of identity. As we have said previously, manifestations of aggressive Ukrainian nationalism, neo-Nazism and Russophobia have become commonplace in Ukraine. Our Russian-speaking compatriots have been forced to love and glorify the Nazi collaborators Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych.

What is more, the country became a site for biological weapons research and the relevant co-operation between the US and Ukrainian defence ministries was formalized. We recommend that you take a close look at the detailed materials of the Russian Ministry of Defence on this subject that we distributed at the OSCE this week (SEC.DEL/118/22, SEC.DEL/119/22).

To sum up. Ukraine has been turned into an “anti-Russia”, a militarized society of aggressive Russophobic neo-Nazis whose leaders dreamed of their military parades in Moscow, while decisions were made for them abroad.

Ukraine did not become this all by itself. Its Western foreign handlers made it that way by taking its population of millions of people hostage in order to achieve their geopolitical goals – to weaken Russia and prevent the development of our country. That is, to use it as a “battering ram” against the Russian statehood as such. No one, except ordinary Ukrainians themselves, has suffered more from such US geopolitical experiments. To be blunt, they didn’t give a damn about Ukraine itself – it was just a tool for solving their problems.

I will not quote at length now Zbigniew Brzezinski, former US presidential adviser, who once wrote in his book *The Grand Chessboard* that the task of US policy in Eastern Europe is to sever the close ties between Russia and Ukraine. Let me just say that the US approach has not changed – Under Secretary of State Victoria Nuland said at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on 9 March that the US goal in Ukraine is to “inflict a strategic defeat on Russia”. That is what they need it for. And they are certainly not concerned about democracy, welfare or a better future for the Ukrainian people themselves.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of today’s meeting of the Permanent Council.

Thank you for your attention.

1364th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to exercise my right of reply in response to the statement just made by the Russian ambassador.

We have just heard Ambassador Lukashevich say that we do not hear enough dialogue based on facts. And then he proceeded to recite a long list of lies. This surprises no one in this room, as we have become used to hearing lies from the Russian delegation, not only over the past month, but back to April 2021 when they told us that the troops and equipment they were building up along the Ukrainian border were nothing to be concerned about, and not intended for any aggressive action against Ukraine.

Let me summarize the facts:

- Russia is waging an unprovoked and premeditated war of aggression against Ukraine.
- Russian armed forces invaded Ukraine from the territory of Belarus and conduct offensive bombing operations from airfields on Belarusian territory. This makes Belarus a co-aggressor.
- Russian armed forces are killing and injuring Ukrainian civilians and damaging and destroying civilian infrastructure – including schools, hospitals and bomb shelters. This has wreaked unspeakable damage on Ukrainian cities, causing death, dismemberment, starvation, dehydration, and immense trauma.
- Russia has bombed to destruction Kharkiv, Mariupol and other cities, while the Russian-speaking inhabitants of those cities have been fiercely and determinedly resisting, defending their Ukrainian sovereignty against the attacks they are enduring from the Russian Government. The Russian Government is killing the Russian speakers it claims to need to defend.
- Over 3.5 million civilians have been forced to leave Ukraine, and close to 7 million have been displaced internally, all fleeing Putin's war.

- Russia has the distinction of being the first country in history to have attacked nuclear power plants in a war, putting the safety of Ukraine, Russia, and Europe at risk.
- Domestically, Russia has imposed severe prison sentences for what it deems false reporting on the war, in an attempt to gain total control over the domestic narrative.
- Domestically, the Kremlin has arrested some 15,000 anti-war protesters who have been brave enough to speak out.
- The International Court of Justice has ordered that “the Russian Federation shall immediately suspend military operations that it commenced on 24 February 2022 in the territory of Ukraine”.
- There is only one aggressor in this conflict – Russia.

I agree with Ambassador Lukashevich that we need to find ways to speak to each other and work on establishing a real dialogue. But unless and until the Russian delegation starts dealing with the facts, not fabrications, it will be very difficult to do this.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I would like to request that my right of reply be attached to the journal of the day.



1364th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(a)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF LITHUANIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you very much for giving me the floor. Lithuania fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union under the main agenda item of today's meeting ("The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine") and with the European Union's reply under this current issue. However, by way of reply to the Russian Federation, allow me also to add some remarks in my national capacity.

At the beginning of his statement, the Permanent Representative of Russia lectured the other delegations around this table on what proper and professional conduct on their part at OSCE meetings should look like. I would ask him whether the same lecture was given to his own colleagues, including the head of the Russian delegation to the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC).

Last week, at the FSC meeting of 16 March 2022, the head of the Russian delegation to the FSC, Mr. Konstantin Gavrilov, openly threatened the delegate of Lithuania. He made his menacing remarks in oral form only – nothing in writing was circulated afterwards. First of all, he complained that the Lithuanian delegation kept talking about the individual responsibility and accountability of those behind the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Russia, with the help of Belarus, in Ukraine. He did not like the fact that we had stressed the personal responsibility of Russian and Belarusian diplomats as well, who are unfortunately doing their utmost to justify, whitewash and hide these heinous crimes. He then said that making such accusations against Russian diplomats was a criminal offence under Russian law, that the Lithuanian delegate "should draw his own conclusions in this regard" and that "it should be well known [to the Lithuanian delegate] that Russia, if it wants, can reach anyone, anywhere." Such threats are completely unacceptable and must stop.

A few words about emotions. The Permanent Representative of Russia also complained that delegations around this table were too "emotional", that they did not set emotions to one side when talking about Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and that they were therefore unprofessional.

I have to admit that it is, of course, possible to keep diplomatic discussions free of emotions and that in many cases this is precisely what we do. For example, if we were to

negotiate another Ministerial Council declaration on the fight against organized crime or another Ministerial Council decision on countering terrorism, or if we were to try to formulate and agree on some new OSCE commitments on border security and management, we would most probably do so without any spikes of emotion.

But when we are dealing with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, when war crimes and crimes against humanity are conducted daily on such a large scale, when entire Ukrainian cities, towns and villages are razed to the ground, when we see thousands of images showing the consequences of indiscriminate shelling and destruction of residential buildings, hospitals, nursing homes, schools, kindergartens and many other civilian facilities in which Ukrainian people are simply hiding from Russian bombs – we are and will be emotional. Because we are human. Because we have hearts. Because we care. At the end of the day, being emotional is not a bad thing.

And it is a pity that the Russian delegation can still talk about all this without emotions; that Russia's military commanders can give orders to shoot at Ukrainian children, women and older people without any emotion; that Russian soldiers then obey these illegal and even criminal orders without any emotion; that the Russian propaganda machine and Russian diplomats are doing their utmost to justify, whitewash and hide these heinous crimes, again without any emotion.

Last but not least – Lithuania fully supports the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and the Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council. There are no grounds whatsoever for the Russian delegation to complain about them. Their reaction to what is being done against Ukraine by Russia with the help of Belarus was adequate. In fact, it could have been even harsher.

I kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day. Given the threats made by the Russian delegation against the Lithuanian delegation, this will also facilitate the work of the law enforcement authorities should anything happen to anyone in our delegation.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 20

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(b)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SERBIA**

On this day 23 years ago, NATO commenced its act of aggression against the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – an act undertaken without the authorization of the United Nations Security Council. This war of choice blatantly violated the Charter of the United Nations and the CSCE/OSCE Helsinki Final Act, thereby undermining the international legal order, which prohibits the unauthorized use of force and protects the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States.

In the course of over 38,000 sorties, the overwhelming NATO forces drawn from 19 countries conducted around 2,300 air strikes, including strikes with cluster bombs and depleted uranium ammunition, on 995 mostly civilian facilities. A total of 148 residential buildings and 62 bridges were destroyed; 300 schools, 20 hospitals and 176 cultural heritage sites were severely damaged, in addition to heating plants and water supply systems throughout the country.

During a relentless campaign that lasted 78 days, around 2,500 civilians were killed, including 89 children aged between 2 and 17 years. Today it would be appropriate to give the names of all of them. For us as Serbian citizens, those children will never be a mere statistic.

However, I will mention just a few of them here. The youngest victim, Bojana Tošović from Merdare, was only 11 months old. Today she could have been a mother herself. Two-year-old Marko Simić from Novi Pazar died in his father's arms. Three-year-old Milica Rakić was killed in the bathroom during a cluster bomb attack on Batajnica. The list goes on and on: each child's name is like a badge of shame that will always have to be worn by all those responsible for that campaign.

Mr. Chairperson,

According to Article 35 of Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, “[i]t is prohibited to employ methods or means of warfare which are intended, or may be expected, to cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment.” The destruction of an oil refinery and chemical plants in densely populated areas around Belgrade inflicted long-lasting, and in some cases irreparable, environmental damage. On 18 April 1999, the oil refinery in Pančevo was hit, igniting 80,000 tonnes of oil and causing

the concentration of carcinogens in the ambient air to rise to over 10,500 times the permitted limit.

Violating Article 54 of Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which stipulates that “[i]t is prohibited to attack, destroy, remove or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population”, NATO simultaneously dropped graphite bombs on five Serbian power plants on 2 May 1999, disabling 70 per cent of the country’s power grid and causing a devastating effect on the everyday life of countless civilians.

During the campaign, up to 15 tonnes of depleted uranium ammunition were dumped on the country. The use of such ammunition leads to lasting severe health effects and contaminates the environment over a long period of time. Health problems, including kidney damage, lung cancer and breathing difficulties, can appear many years after exposure.

Humanitarian law prohibits acts of violence, attacks and reprisals against civilian objects. Article 52 of Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 defines civilian objects as “all objects which are not military objectives”, specifying that “military objectives are limited to those objects which by their nature, location, purpose or use make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture or neutralization [...] offers a definite military advantage.”

However, most of NATO’s targets were not military objectives. Allow me to recall just a few:

On 3 April 1999, the maternity ward of the Obstetrics and Gynaecology Clinic in Višegradska Street in Belgrade was damaged. This was followed on 19 May by an attack on another maternity ward in Belgrade, namely that of the Dragiša Mišović Medical Centre. The bombings damaged other medical facilities as well, including hospitals and medical centres in Ćuprija, Aleksinac, Raška, Prokuplje, Čačak, Mitrovica, Leposavić and Priština. These attacks flagrantly violated Articles 12, 13 and 15 of Protocol Additional I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. In particular, Article 12 stipulates that “medical units shall be respected and protected at all times and shall not be the object of attack”.

On 12 April 1999, 15 civilians were killed and 44 wounded during an attack on a passenger train crossing a bridge at Grdelička Klisura in southern Serbia. A freshly married couple, Ana Bjeletić and Ivan Marković, lost their lives in this massacre, which NATO referred to as an “unfortunate incident”. We will never know how big their family might have been and what their children would have been called.

On 16 April 1999, the Belgrade headquarters of Radio Television of Serbia was deliberately hit by a missile, killing 16 employees. This was, of course, a clear breach of all acknowledged norms pertaining to the safety and physical protection of journalists.

At midday on 30 May 1999, NATO bombed a bridge full of people returning from Sunday service in the central Serbian town of Varvarin. A few minutes after the first laser-guided bomb strike, as people rushed to the bridge to help the injured, two more bombs were fired. In total, ten people were killed and 17 severely injured. Sixteen-year-old Sanja Milenković, a talented pupil at the Mathematical Grammar School of Belgrade, was

among the casualties that day. NATO cynically labelled them “collateral damage”. If Sanja had not become “collateral damage”, today she might have been a successful mathematician or scientist, the pride of her parents and fellow citizens.

At midday on 6 May 1999, NATO bomber aircraft dropped cluster bombs on a crowded central outdoor market in Niš, the third-largest city in Serbia, killing 15 and injuring 16 civilians. Among the victims was a 26-year-old medical student, Ljiljana Spasić, who was pregnant at the time. Today she could have been a doctor helping others. Her child might have followed in her footsteps and gone on to study medicine.

Niš was one of the 16 central Serbian municipalities that were hit by cluster bombs, despite not having any legitimate military targets. The use of cluster munitions and other explosive weapons poses a serious hazard to civilians for years or even decades afterwards. Furthermore, unexploded ordnance can have severe socio-economic consequences for communities, preventing, *inter alia*, the resumption of agricultural activity and the reconstruction of infrastructure.

Despite huge demining efforts, undertaken with significant international assistance, unexploded cluster ammunition still poses a severe threat in an area stretching over more than 1 million square metres. There is also the threat of unexploded aerial bombs and missiles lurking in the soil and in waterways at 150 sites in central Serbia.

Protecting civilians during armed conflict is a cornerstone of international humanitarian law. Thus, Article 48 of Protocol Additional I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 clearly states: “In order to ensure respect for and protection of the civilian population and civilian objects, the Parties [...] shall direct their operations only against military objectives.”

Mr. Chairperson,

Although the trauma of this unlawful military aggression against my country still runs deep, we are not trapped in the politics of grievance. As stated on many occasions, Serbia remains committed to peace, stability, the unselective preservation of territorial integrity and sovereignty, and the diplomatic resolution of all conflicts and disputes in the OSCE area. It is the only way to prevent human suffering and avoid repeating the mistakes of the past.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
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Annex 21

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(b)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

On 24 March 1999, the illegal and unprovoked armed aggression of the NATO bloc led by the United States of America against the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia began, lasting until 10 June 1999. The formal reason was an ultimatum to the Serbian authorities to immediately withdraw all forces from Kosovo and Metohija – legal territories of Serbia – and the trigger was the tragedy in the village of Račak orchestrated by William Walker from the United States, Head of the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission.

Later the world witnessed other staged events of the calibre of Colin Powell’s “Iraqi test tubes” and the White Helmets’ supposed chemical weapons attacks, giving Western countries a pretext for military interventions. The disastrous consequences of such a lie should have been the subject of debate for weeks at Permanent Council meetings and for unequivocal condemnation. But that is not what we are talking about today.

The attack by coalition forces on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia consisted of massive bombing of Serbian military positions in Kosovo and other targets within Serbia, including residential areas, broadcasting facilities, hospitals, factories and businesses, along with infrastructure and even diplomatic missions. In addition to the United States, 18 other NATO countries participated in the operation. Banned types of munitions with radioactive material were used in the air strikes. Numerous civilian objects were hit: 82 railway and road bridges, 48 hospitals and infirmaries, 25 post and telegraph offices, 70 schools, 9 university departments and 4 student dormitories, 18 kindergartens, 35 churches and 29 monasteries (including UNESCO cultural heritage sites), the Belgrade television centre, a convoy of Albanian refugees and the Chinese embassy in Serbia.

Air operations were supported by a naval force of 3 aircraft carriers, 6 attack submarines, 2 cruisers, 7 destroyers and 13 frigates. During 78 days of military operations, 38,000 sorties were made by strike aircraft, 2,300 missiles were launched and 14,000 bombs were dropped, including ammunition containing depleted uranium. In March 2002, the United Nations confirmed radioactive contamination in Kosovo as a result of NATO bombing. Some time later, there were cases of cancer in what is now Serbia.

During the NATO raids on Yugoslavia, 152 containers of cluster bombs, a particularly dangerous weapon for human life and health, were dropped. Graphite bombs hit a number of thermoelectric power plants, along with energy facilities in Lajkovac, Resnik, Leštane and Bežanijska Kosa, leaving more than 5 million residents without electricity and water. This is all documented in United Nations documents and elsewhere.

The Serbian authorities estimate that some 2,500 people, including 89 children, were killed during the bombing. Some 12,500 people were injured. More than 860,000 people, mostly Serbs living in Kosovo, left the region, while another 590,000 were internally displaced. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in two weeks alone, from 24 March to 5 April 1999, more than 350,000 people effectively fled from Kosovo. In all, up to 50 per cent of the Serbian population abandoned their homes during the aggression. In this way, the NATO attacks grossly breached the norms and principles of international humanitarian law as enshrined in the Hague Conventions of 1907, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 relating to the protection of war victims, and the 1977 Protocols Additional to these, and also the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

The country has suffered enormous material damage. The exact amount is still uncertain, but at any event it amounts to tens of billions of dollars. By the way, the economic potential of the countries involved was 679 times greater than that of Yugoslavia. But this was not enough: in parallel, sanctions against Yugoslavia were stepped up. The United States, in typical fashion for that country, unilaterally announced a freeze on Yugoslavia's assets on its territory. Today, this kind of asset-grabbing by the US Government and a number of other countries in the "civilized" West no longer surprises anyone.

This is the price that the people of the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia paid for the North Atlantic Alliance's unsolicited "humanitarian aid". Such is the sad, tragic reality. Have any of the leaders of this "defence bloc" or the decision-makers on the other side of the ocean assumed any responsibility? We all know the answer: just royalties for writing memoirs about the destruction of a sovereign State at the end of the twentieth century.

I should like to conclude with a quote from former Senator Joe Biden, the current US President, from a speech in 1999 at special congressional hearings: "I was suggesting we bomb Belgrade. I was suggesting that we send American pilots in and blow up all of the bridges on the Drina. I was suggesting we take out ... oil supplies. I was suggesting very specific action."

Thank you for your attention.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 22

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ALBANIA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

Twenty-three years ago, NATO's allied forces launched an operation to end the horrendous crimes that were being perpetrated against the Albanian civilian population in Kosovo.

After making every last effort to reach a negotiated agreement, it was the moral imperative and legal responsibility of the international community to act to protect these people in the face of relentless atrocities and the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo Albanians by the criminal regime of Slobodan Milošević, and to reverse the humanitarian catastrophe unleashed by his machinery.

The military and paramilitary forces of Milošević moved systematically from village to village, shelling and burning houses, expelling, raping and murdering defenceless civilians in cold blood, only because they were Albanians. Milošević's genocidal campaign displaced 80 per cent of Kosovo's population and forced around 1 million people to flee the country as refugees. Over 10,000 civilians were murdered, an estimated 20,000 people were raped. The forces involved tried to cover up their crimes – including by transporting the bodies of Kosovo Albanians to mass graves in Serbia, hundreds of kilometres away.

They were the same forces that, fuelled by blind nationalism, had carried out similar ethnic cleansing campaigns in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia not long before.

Albania and other countries in the region opened their doors to hundreds of thousands of refugees who had been forced to flee their homes in Kosovo.

Mr. Chairperson,

A vast number of chilling images, footage, mass graves, judicial and other evidence documenting the campaign of crimes and of the suffering population in Kosovo has emerged over the years – they are still very much vivid in our memory.

The discovery, in November 2020, of a mass grave in Serbia believed to contain the remains of at least 15 Kosovo Albanians killed during the war is a recent painful reminder of

what happened then. Our heart goes out to the loved ones of over 1,600 other Kosovo Albanians who have disappeared since the war. Work should not cease until they are found and those responsible are brought to justice.

More than two decades later, survivors still struggle for justice. Many courageous women of Kosovo have spoken up and have broken the silence, fear, shame and social stigma. They have shared the painful truth of the conflict-related sexual violence that they suffered. Addressing this truth as it should and harnessing the great transformational power that women have to offer when it comes to promoting peace and security are key to the future of our region.

What we had hoped to hear from Serbia yesterday – we have in fact been waiting for 23 years – were words of remorse, an admission of responsibility and an apology to the survivors of those crimes. This would have been the necessary approach to ensure accountability for the crimes committed and the serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. It would have been the right and significant thing for Serbia to do towards normalizing relations with its neighbours. Instead, we once again heard words of self-victimization and attempts to conceal the truth about what led to NATO's intervention in the first place.

Peace and reconciliation can never be sustainable unless justice is done and the crimes against humanity committed in Kosovo in the 1990s are properly addressed. That is why we must all look truth in the eye and history in its fullness, condemning evil unequivocally.

Only by acknowledging the truth without ambiguity can we pave the way for a better future of peace and prosperity. Regrettably, we still hear echoes today of the dark past and derogatory language that should have no place in our societies. There should be no room in Europe, or indeed anywhere else, for the denial of crimes against humanity, attempts to revise history or the glorification of war criminals. This anniversary must serve as a moment of reflection for us all and to condemn the crimes committed by the Milošević regime.

Mr. Chairperson,

Our region has fortunately come a long way since. Albania welcomes and supports the Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue and the practical steps undertaken towards normalization of relations between the two countries. The final result should be a comprehensive legally binding agreement that enables mutual recognition and Kosovo's full membership in international organizations, and that ensures fair treatment of minorities in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo.

Two days ago, Albanians lost a dear friend. The late Madeleine Albright, former United States Secretary of State, was a champion of peace, freedom and democracy, a formidable stateswoman, and a role model for generations of women and girls. Today we pay tribute to her memory and mourn together with her family and the American people.

NATO's resolute response in 1999 laid the foundations for the peace, stability and regional co-operation that the Western Balkans enjoy today, which should not be taken for granted. Albania remains unwavering in its commitment to a peaceful, stable and prosperous

Western Balkans, and to continued co-operation with its neighbours as we progress on our common European path.

Mr. Chairperson,

Please allow me now to make some additional remarks. I believe we should be careful when comparing conflicts. As Tolstoy famously observed: “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.”

We have heard in this hall and outside it, Russia’s absurd and deplorable attempts to compare its illegal and brutal aggression against Ukraine with NATO’s intervention in 1999. Let us be clear. The comparison being attempted here is utterly groundless. The United Nations Security Council repeatedly referred to the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and the rising number of refugees as a threat to international peace and security. The crimes of the Milošević regime in Kosovo were not only well documented by international observers, but its highest-ranking officials were convicted of these crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

And we strongly reject the term “genocide” used so lightly by Russia, which is thereby bringing renewed hurt and an affront to all those people who have truly suffered from it. It is regretful that after eight years of the Special Monitoring Mission – which this Council deployed to Ukraine to establish and report the facts on the ground – Russia refused to engage with these facts. Instead, it is offering us here and the world its own made-up “facts”. The ruling by the International Court of Justice earlier this month and the provisional measures approved by it also clearly expose Russia’s lies for what they are.

The people of Kosovo know very well what it means to be under ruthless and constant oppression and aggression, and to struggle and fight for freedom and dignity. And the people and the Government of the Republic of Kosovo today stand with Ukraine.

I kindly request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 23

ENGLISH
Original: GERMAN

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY**

Mr. Chairperson,
Dear colleagues,

NATO initiated Operation Allied Force 23 years ago to end a decade of bloodshed in the Balkans.

The intervention by NATO had clear and limited objectives: to save innocent lives, end a humanitarian catastrophe, and preserve peace, freedom and stability in Europe. It was never directed against the Serb population. Its sole purpose was to protect the civilian population of Kosovo. The use of force by NATO was both necessary and legitimate.

The mission took place after the diplomatic community had exhausted all of its diplomatic resources to force the Milošević regime by peaceful means to end its brutal ethnic cleansing actions.

The NATO operation was justified as a last resort under the exceptional circumstances of the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Kosovo, as described in United Nations Security Council resolution 1199 of 23 September 1998. This resolution and resolution 1203 of 24 October 1998 adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations clearly noted that the situation in Kosovo represented a serious threat to peace and security in the region.

Participation in the NATO operation against Yugoslavia in 1999 was not an easy decision for Germany. In the particular situation at the time, however, it was the only way of ending the devastating humanitarian catastrophe and massive human rights violations in Kosovo. Not to have acted would have been irresponsible.

Mr. Chairperson,

Every human life lost was and is a tragedy. We mourn all of the civilian victims and express our condolences to their families.

Let us honour the memory of those who lost their lives by working together towards a future in peace and prosperity for our children and neighbours. The best way to do this is for the authorities in Kosovo and Serbia to engage constructively in the EU-led dialogue to achieve a comprehensive normalization of the relations between their countries.

In the European Union and together with the international community, the Federal Republic of Germany will support the people in the region on their way to sustainable peace in a common European perspective. Foreign Minister Baerbock clearly emphasized this commitment by the Federal Government during her visit to the region from 9 to 11 March.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

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24 March 2022
Annex 24

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Mr. Chairperson,

The cascade of ethnically motivated conflicts that followed the break-up of Yugoslavia remain a difficult and troubled period in the recent history of Europe. We reflect on the many lives lost in these tragic conflicts, the homes destroyed, the families torn apart, and the millions of people displaced. Efforts to recover from the consequences of these conflicts continue to this day, including through the OSCE, working to build a peaceful, stable and prosperous future for the Western Balkan region.

At the time, the conflict in Kosovo was generating significant humanitarian consequences, including civilian deaths and mass displacement. The United Nations Security Council expressed its concern about the grave humanitarian situation in Kosovo and the growing number of refugees, and the threat that these posed to international security.

Operation Allied Force, an air campaign that included Canada's participation, followed efforts at the United Nations and in the Contact Group that had spanned more than a year, attempting to reach a peaceful solution to the conflict and to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo. The Operation was intended to bring an end to the large-scale violence and repression. Following the air effort, KFOR, a NATO-led peacekeeping mission was launched to provide safety and security in Kosovo.

Mr. Chairperson, it is due precisely to the cost of conflict that we must never forget the past. We must learn from it and ensure that we move forward together with positive commitments to a lasting and stable peace. In this way, we can work together to honour the sacrifices of those who lost their lives and those whose lives were irrevocably changed by the tragedy of this conflict.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 25

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1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(c)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

Mr. Chairperson,

As my country was mentioned by distinguished Albanian representative, I should like to exercise my right of reply.

The so-called ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina was not a direct consequence of any single action by any single government or regime in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, but the consequence of war crimes that were committed by all sides in the conflict during the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The results of this mutual ethnic cleansing were clearly reflected in the most recent population census in my country, conducted in 2013.

I myself am a victim of ethnic cleansing, but this cannot be ascribed to the actions of neighbouring countries' governments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1364
24 March 2022
Annex 26

Original: ENGLISH

1364th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 3(d)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

We originally had no intention of raising a current issue during this meeting of the Permanent Council. However, in view of the evolving situation on the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh, we have now decided to do so.

Dear colleagues,

Against the backdrop of a profound security crisis in Europe, when the situation in Ukraine understandably commands the bulk of the OSCE participating States' attention, the delegation of Armenia is once again obliged to draw the Permanent Council's attention to the recent provocative actions by the Azerbaijani armed forces on the line of contact in Artsakh.

In addition to the impending humanitarian crisis in Artsakh due to Azerbaijan's disruption of the gas supply, the unresolved issue of Armenian prisoners of war, which I spoke about yesterday, and the destruction of the Armenian cultural heritage of Artsakh, there have been further developments.

You may know that yesterday in the late afternoon, Azerbaijani forces infiltrated the village of Parukh in Artsakh in a clear violation of the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020 on a ceasefire, which stipulated that the forces had to remain in the positions they were holding at the time of its signature.

Russian peacekeepers unsuccessfully tried to negotiate with the Azerbaijani side to induce them to withdraw their forces from the village to their previous positions.

Yesterday evening and during the night, the Azerbaijani armed forces attempted to advance further. The Azerbaijani military opened fire on the positions of the Artsakh Defence Army, using firearms of various calibres and unmanned combat aerial vehicles. The Artsakh forces were forced to engage with the aggressor in order to halt its advance. As a result, two soldiers of the Nagorno-Karabakh Defence Army have been killed and 14 wounded.

This morning, as at 9 a.m. local time, the situation was relatively calm, though it continues to remain tense.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia issued two statements yesterday and today pointing out that these aggressive actions by Azerbaijan once again demonstrate that the authorities in Baku continue to grossly violate the trilateral statement of 9 November 2020, which provided for the cessation of hostilities, for the parties to remain at their current positions and for a peacekeeping contingent from the Russian Federation to be deployed along the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Ministry stressed that these actions had been preceded by Azerbaijan's complete disruption of the only gas pipeline supplying Artsakh, the targeting of civilian infrastructure with large-calibre weapons, terrorizing threats against the Armenians of Artsakh, and other steps aimed at ethnic cleansing.

Together with the drastic escalation of the security situation in Europe, such actions by the authorities of Azerbaijan gravely endanger regional stability and peace.

We expect the Russian peacekeeping forces, in whose area of responsibility the provocation has taken place, to take measures to ensure that the Azerbaijani troops immediately return to their initial positions and adhere to the commitments undertaken under the trilateral statement of 9 November.

We strongly condemn this unprovoked escalation and call upon Azerbaijan to abandon its maximalist and aggressive policy and to engage, in good faith, in negotiations on all issues related to and resulting from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

We call on the Chairperson-in-Office, the OSCE institutions and executive structures, our partners and the international community in general to make a clear assessment of Azerbaijan's provocative actions aimed at undermining the peace process, and to support efforts to establish peace in the South Caucasus and achieve a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

We reiterate that the Government of Armenia is committed to all efforts to bring peace and prosperity to our region. To that end, it has adopted a strategy of opening an era of peaceful development for the region and is resolutely undertaking necessary steps in that direction. Reaching a lasting and sustainable peace in the region is one of our Government's priorities.

Thank you.



1364th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1364, Agenda item 6

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF KAZAKHSTAN**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to inform the Permanent Council that on 16 March 2022 President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev delivered his annual State of the Nation Address, entitled “New Kazakhstan: Path of Renewal and Modernization”.

Yesterday we already presented several major initiatives in Kazakhstan related to the human dimension in our statement in response to the report by the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Mr. Matteo Mecacci.

Today we wish to draw your attention to some key elements of the aforementioned address by President Tokayev – in particular, to the preliminary findings of the investigation into the tragic events in January and to various measures for the further economic and political modernization of Kazakhstan.

It is obvious that the tragic events in January posed a serious challenge and threat to our country’s stability and independence. Referring to the preliminary findings of the ongoing investigation, President Tokayev mentioned that among those who tried to carry out a coup in January there were some high-ranking officials who committed treason against the State and society, prevented law enforcement agencies from acting in accordance with the law and provided the country’s leadership with false information about the situation on the ground. The President emphasized that all those responsible would be brought to justice, regardless of their position in society.

Following the events in January, President Tokayev has vowed to build a new Kazakhstan. This means striving for a more resilient and diversified economy that ensures equal opportunities for all citizens, a fairer society, and a more vibrant, dynamic and responsive political system. To achieve these goals, the President put forward several initiatives aimed at addressing critical social and economic problems, such as inequality and poverty, and ensuring the well-being of the people of Kazakhstan in the long term.

The President outlined a number of far-reaching political reforms and initiatives that require up to 30 amendments to the Constitution and are designed to further transform our country.

Mr. Chairperson,

As for political reforms, President Tokayev stressed that Kazakhstan would not deviate from the intended path and would accelerate systemic transformations in all spheres of life. Accordingly, he presented a programme for comprehensive modernization of the country's political system, which we wish to share with you at the Permanent Council today.

The programme includes the following aspects:

- Transition from “a super-presidential form of government to a presidential republic with a strong parliament”. As our Head of State put it: “Such a system will provide an optimal balance of power for institutions and will contribute to the country’s sustainable development”;
- Legislation that obliges the incumbent President to terminate his or her membership in any political party for the entire duration of his or her tenure. This norm will foster political competition and ensure equal conditions for the development of all parties;
- Governors and mayors and their deputies will be prohibited from holding positions in party branches. This will encourage the development of a multi-party system;
- Close relatives of the incumbent President will be prohibited from holding positions as senior civil servants and managers in the quasi-public sector. This will help to prevent corruption and nepotism;
- The independence of provincial and local governors will be increased. For example, the President currently has the right to dismiss heads of districts and rural entities. Such legal provisions should be abolished;
- A Constitutional Court will be established. The Prosecutor General and the Commissioner for Human Rights will be given the right to appeal to the Court, in addition to their existing right to appeal to the President and the Parliament;
- A reduction of the quota for presidential appointments in the Senate from 15 to 10 senators will be approved to give a stronger voice to social groups that are under-represented in the Parliament;
- The Senate should only approve or reject laws already adopted by the Majilis (the lower house of the Kazakh Parliament). Consequently, the Majilis is vested with the power to pass laws;
- Parliamentary control over the implementation of the State budget should be strengthened through the creation of a Supreme Audit Chamber;
- The Mass Media Act will be revised to help the media in Kazakhstan to become more competitive and independent;
- The penalties for violence against women and children will be increased;

- Broader involvement of non-governmental organizations and civil society activists in the preparation and implementation of reforms will be ensured;
- A decree on further de-bureaucratization of the public sector will be issued;
- The preparation of a new package of structural reforms in the economy and public administration is under way; it will take into account the strategy of political modernization.

It should be noted that the proposed reforms reflect the wide range of views that exist in Kazakh society and that they are a logical continuation of the transformations that have already been launched to tackle two urgent tasks. Firstly, to promote consistent democratization, and secondly, to ensure the stability and manageability of the State.

Kazakhstan is currently faced with unprecedented financial and economic difficulties owing to an acute aggravation of the geopolitical situation. The harsh sanctions are already leading to major costs not only for individual countries, but also for the entire global economy.

Today my country has embarked on a path of large-scale political, social and economic reforms to create a democratic, transparent, resilient and accountable State alongside a vibrant civil society.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I kindly ask you to attach this statement to the journal of the day.