



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
AT THE 1005th FSC PLENARY MEETING
(23 March 2022)**

**Agenda item 1, General Statements,
on the subject of “Russian war of aggression against Ukraine”**

Mr Chairperson,

Esteemed colleagues,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine let me deliver a statement on the subject of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

Today is the 28th day of the heroic resistance of the Ukrainian people to Russia’s brutal, unprecedented and unprovoked military invasion. Despite significant military advantage, Russia failed to reach its key goals. Ukraine did not surrender in three days, as Kremlin was expecting. Kyiv as a political and military command centre is not broken and continues to operate and provide services to its residents. We managed to establish effective defence and counter-attack the enemy in all directions. Russian troops continue regrouping and attempt to control the already captured positions.

According to our estimates, all Russian troops prepared for the invasion have already been sent into Ukraine. They were stopped everywhere and face severe logistical challenges. Up to 40% of tactical groups lost their combat capability.

The Russian troops are also suffering heavy losses. As of 22 March, the aggressor state already lost over 15,600 soldiers and officers in Ukraine. Up to 1000 Russian military were taken captive. In line with its obligations under international humanitarian law, Ukraine established special prisoner of war camps. These camps are functioning in line with the provisions of the

III Geneva Convention, all Russian prisoners of war in these camps are provided with sufficient food, water and medical care.

The total number of destroyed or captured Russian weapons and military equipment as of 22 March includes:

- 517 tanks;
- 1578 armoured fighting vehicles;
- 267 artillery systems;
- 80 MLRS;
- 47 air defence systems;
- 101 aircraft;
- 124 helicopters;
- 42 medium-altitude long-endurance UAVs;
- 4 boats/ships/cutters;
- 1008 vehicles;
- 70 tanks with fuel and lubricants;
- 15 pieces of special military equipment.

On 18 March, the Ukrainian Armed Forces destroyed the Russian command post in Chornobayivka. Russian Lieutenant General Andrei Mordvichev, commander of the 8th Army of the Southern Military District, was also eliminated. This was the sixth high-level commander of the Russian forces eliminated since the beginning of the invasion. Destruction of Russian forces and hardware in Chornobayivka continued until this past night – the invaders kept supplying these military targets to the aforementioned location.

Trying to replace its war casualties, the leadership of the Russian armed forces continues engaging private military companies and foreign mercenaries, in particular from Syria and Libya. Besides, in complete disregard for the norms and principles of international humanitarian law, in particular the provisions of the IV Geneva Convention, the Russian Federation continues to conduct forced conscription in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

The failure of its initial plan to defeat Ukraine within days forced the Russian Federation to change its tactic. As a result, the invading forces have significantly increased the number of air and missile strikes, including those targeting the civilian population.

The main objective is the intimidation of the civilian population of Ukraine and, of course, the destruction of Ukrainian infrastructure.

Moscow does not even hide its desire to destroy all Ukrainian enterprises, to leave Ukraine without an economy as such, without metallurgy, without industry, without anything that makes a profit and benefits the economic revival of the country.

The destruction of the Azovstal plant in Mariupol - one of Europe's biggest iron and steel plants - became another symbol of these actions of the Russian armed forces (the last time this plant halted its operations was in 1941 due to Nazi invasion).

Due to the Russian army strike on 22 March, the infrastructure of the Mykolayiv seaport has suffered significant damage.

The residential areas of such cities as Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Mariupol, Melitopol, outskirts of Kyiv and many others, are intensively shelled, leaving daily dozens of innocent civilians killed and wounded. The number of civilians killed by Russian troops by far exceeds military losses.

The worst situation remains in the besieged city of Mariupol, which is now almost totally destroyed. Daily, 50-100 aviation bombs are dropped by Russians. Thousands of civilians lost their lives due to Russian attacks and blockade. Russia's crimes include seizure of a hospital with 400 civilians in it – now Russians use them as a human shield, bombardment of an art school, which served as a shelter for around 400 civilians, and of a drama theatre where up to 1300 civilians found shelter. Fortunately, the bomb shelter of the Mariupol drama theatre mostly withstood the impact, although information on the consequences of the air strike is not yet complete. However, the very fact of this airstrike clearly demonstrates the tactic that is being used by the Russian armed forces that deliberately attack civilians and facilities clearly marked as civilian.

On 18 March, a 96-year-old Borys Romanchenko, who survived several Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War, was killed during an attack in the city of Kharkiv. The multi-storey building where he lived was hit by a Russian projectile. The Buchenwald concentration camp memorial Foundation informed, Borys Romanchenko had been vice-president of the Buchenwald-Dora International Committee and worked intensively on keeping alive the memory of Nazi crimes.

On 20 March 2022, in the Kreminna settlement (Luhansk region) the Russian forces deliberately shot and destroyed a retirement home. As a result of this crime, 56 persons were killed and 19 were wounded.

On the same day, the Russian forces launched a missile strike against a shopping mall in Kyiv. The building was completely destroyed, 8 civilians were killed and 1 was injured.

These facts constitute only a small part of all atrocities committed by the Russian forces in Ukraine. It is particularly cynical that the Russian ministry of defence does not even try to deny its responsibility. Fully ignoring all norms of international humanitarian law, Russian military leadership defined in its sole discretion civilian objects as military facilities and then destroyed them.

It is obvious that there will be many more such crimes, because now the Russian armed forces do not even choose particular targets for their bombardments. There are fewer and fewer high-precision missiles, and Russia starts to use old Soviet weapons – with “wherever it hits, nobody cares” mode of operation.

According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, as of 21 March 2022 (midnight), there were 2,510 civilian casualties recorded, including 953 killed and 1,557

injured. As it is stated by the OHCHR, most of the civilian casualties were caused by the use of explosive weapons with a wide impact area, including shelling from heavy artillery and multiple-launch rocket systems, missile and airstrikes. This is a direct consequence of indiscriminate and deliberate attacks committed by the Russian armed forces against peaceful civilian settlements in Ukraine. OHCHR also stated that “the actual figures are considerably higher, especially in Government-controlled territory and especially in recent days, as the receipt of information from some locations where intense hostilities have been going on has been delayed”.

The situation around the nuclear facilities in Ukraine also remains of high concern to us. Russia continues committing acts of nuclear terrorism against Ukrainian nuclear facilities, their infrastructure and personnel. The Russian occupying forces unlawfully seized and hold hostage personnel of two Ukrainian nuclear power plants: the Chornobyl NPP and the Zaporizhzhia NPP.

On 20 March 2022, the long-awaited full rotation of operational personnel, who remained in the occupied site territory since 24 February 2022 for almost 600 consecutive hours, was carried out. The use of the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone as a logistics base, explosions of munitions at the site of the Zaporizhzhia NPP and permanent pressure against the staff of the NPP may cause serious consequences not only for Ukraine but for the entire world.

This morning, we have learnt that the Russian troops have illegally seized a state-of-the-art 6 mln Euro laboratory located at the Chornobyl NPP. As reported by the State Agency of Ukraine on Exclusion Zone Management, the Russian occupants looted and destroyed the newest Central Analytical Laboratory in Chornobyl, a unique complex with powerful analytical capabilities. It can provide services at any stage of radwaste management, from air conditioning to disposal, as well as for research and technology development. More worrisome is the fact that the laboratory housed highly active samples and samples of radionuclides, which are now in the hands of the enemy.

We urge the international community to disregard any information about the nuclear facilities of Ukraine or the nuclear-related situation in Ukraine communicated by Russia. The information provided by the aggressor state that is committing war crimes on the sovereign Ukrainian territory cannot be regarded as credible.

Mr Chairperson,

Our today's presentation will illustrate only a small number of war crimes committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine.

[Presentation] [Slide 1]

[Slides 2-3] The armed forces of the Russian Federation continue to use cluster munitions against residential areas. Although the Russian Federation has not acceded to the Convention on the Prohibition of Cluster Munitions, their use against the civilian population is a war crime because of their non-selectivity.

[Slide 4] Incendiary weapon is another type of weapon that is widely used by the Russian forces against peaceful settlements. Protocol III of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons clearly states: “It is prohibited in all circumstances to make the civilian population as such, individual civilians or civilian objects the object of attack by incendiary weapons”.

[Slide 5] Russian troops keep massive mining of streets and residential districts in Kherson, Chernihiv and Kyiv regions (you can see the map of affected regions on the screen). There is also a documented case of remote mining by Russian combat aircraft of the residential district in Sumy with PFM-1/PFM-1S landmines on 17 March.

While retreating, Russian troops plant mines in the previously seized Ukrainian territories, leaving them even in children’s toys. As of 21 March, the estimated area of Ukraine’s territory to be demined is at least 82,525 sq. km – that is 14% of the total area of Ukraine.

[Slide 6] On this slide you can see an example of what is used by the Russian forces to transport munitions. Protocol I of the IV Geneva Convention clearly states that «It is prohibited to make improper use of the distinctive emblem of the red cross, red crescent or red lion and sun or of other emblems, signs or signals».

[Slide 7] The destruction of civilian infrastructure is catastrophic and has terrible consequences. About 3,780 residential buildings were partially damaged, 651 residential buildings were completely destroyed since the start of the war. The Russian forces damaged 490 educational facilities (including 64 that were completely destroyed) and 117 hospitals (including 12 that were completely destroyed).

These statistics reflect only those facilities where rescuers can assess the amount of damage without endangering their lives. It does not apply to the occupied territories. Therefore, the scale of the destruction is much greater.

The indiscriminate use by Russia of military force against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals and residential buildings, protected under the international humanitarian law, is a war crime.

[Slide 8] The responsibility of the Russian military for war crimes is inevitable. According to the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, as of 23 March 2022, there were registered 2401 war crimes. This number includes 2336 cases of violations of the laws and customs of war. We proceed from the strong premise that all persons responsible for the numerous atrocities committed in Ukraine should be and will be accountable for their actions. Ukrainian law-enforcement agencies continue to register all such facts.

[End of presentation]

Mr Chairperson,

Ukraine continues to use all available military, political, diplomatic and legal instruments to stop the ongoing Russian war of aggression and to bring peace back to Ukraine.

On 16 March 2022, the International Court of Justice issued its Order in Ukraine's case against the Russian Federation under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The ICJ clearly stated that the Russian Federation should immediately suspend the military operations that it commenced on 24 February 2022 in the territory of Ukraine and ensure that any military or irregular armed units which may be directed or supported by it, as well as any organisations and persons which may be subject to its control or direction, take no steps in furtherance of the military operations.

We find it unacceptable that the Russian Federation decided to ignore the ruling of the International Court of Justice and continued its war of aggression against Ukraine. We urge the Russian side to stop the hostilities immediately and to comply with the Order of the International Court of Justice.

We once again reiterate our position on the readiness to negotiate with the Russian Federation on how to stop this bloody war. As it was stated by the President of Ukraine in his address of 16 March 2022: "We can and must defend our state, our life, our Ukrainian life. We can and must negotiate a just but fair peace for Ukraine, real security guarantees that will work."

Russian-Ukrainian consultations on the cessation of hostilities continue. However, Russia continues putting forward demands on Ukraine as a condition for ending the war: those are Ukraine's neutral status and refusal to join the North Atlantic Alliance, demilitarization of Ukraine according to the requirements set by the Russian Federation (that is, the number of Ukrainian armed forces and weapons will be decided by the Kremlin), and rejection of the law on the Ukrainian language. So, the Russian Federation wants to deprive Ukrainians not only of Euro-Atlantic perspective, not only of our own army, but also of our language.

And, of course, there is a demand to recognise the Russian status of the occupied Crimea and to recognise the so-called independence of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions occupied by the Russian Federation within their administrative borders. It is clear that the Russian Federation is not going to leave the territories that it has already occupied or is going to occupy soon.

Such ultimatum conditions undoubtedly deprive Ukraine of its sovereignty. Obviously, the continuation of the war and creation of humanitarian catastrophe in Ukrainian cities are intended to force Ukraine to accept such humiliating conditions and sign such a bondage agreement.

As President Zelenskyi stated, Russia should move away from its ultimatums against Ukraine, because they would not lead to any results. On the contrary, the fulfilment of the Russian ultimatum would actually lead to the destruction of the Ukrainian people, so it cannot be fulfilled physically. Ukraine seeks peace; thus, it is open to dialogue. However, the issue of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is a "red line".

In conclusion, we demand that the Russian Federation immediately ceases its war of aggression against Ukraine and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment

from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, including the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.