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auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR  
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE  
1379 MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022**

Mr. Chair,

Last week, as we were meeting in this hall, listening to the “alternative reality” account of the situation in Ukraine offered by Russia, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, was presenting an oral update on the human rights situation in Mariupol.

Her summary of the situation was clear: “between February and end of April, Mariupol was likely the deadliest place in Ukraine.” She went on to say that the level of destruction and human casualties in Mariupol “strongly suggest that serious violations of international humanitarian law and gross violations of international human rights law have occurred.”

Once a city of more than 430,000 people, Mariupol today has not more than 40,000 people by the latest account. 90% of its population is gone – killed, fled or deported to Russian filtration camps.

High Commissioner Bachelet’s presentation of the situation in Mariupol was a grim account. The circumstances of the survivors and the tragedies of the dead expose a chilling lack of humanity in the way Russian forces treated the civilians of Mariupol.

In two months, 90% of residential buildings were destroyed and 60% of private houses were reduced to rubble. In the words of the Moscow Mechanism rapporteurs, it is highly unlikely that such devastation could be in line with respecting international humanitarian law principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution: “The weapons and ammunitions used in densely populated areas make it particularly implausible that the precautionary obligations were respected.”

This devastation results from indiscriminate and relentless attacks on civilians and on civilian objects of no military value. The number of recorded civilian casualties was 1,348 killed, including 70 children, but High Commissioner Bachelet warns that the actual number is likely thousands higher. She further reported that many of the dead are still to be buried, and many others were found in improvised graves all around the city, in parks, on the streets, and in private yards.

With no gas, no water, and no electricity since early March in Mariupol, people were forced to melt snow to get water, others were exposed to shelling when they had to go outside to cook their food on open fires, while some were burned or suffocated in fires because there were no fire services.

High Commissioner Bachelet also expressed her concern about the so-called ‘filtration’ camps, by which the Russian armed forces segregate and interrogate civilians without any due process, and without any oversight mechanism. As a result of this interrogation, some civilians are deported, and some are detained. All of them are intimidated, humiliated, and brutalized.

These so-called ‘filtration’ camps were confirmed by the Ukrainian Human Rights Ombudsperson, who said that these camps have been established “in every city of the occupied territories”, and that more than 37,000 Ukrainians were subjected to their brutal process. The Russian occupier has not stopped there. According to the Ombudsperson, more than 121,000 children have already been forcibly deported to the Russian Federation. These are both orphans and children ripped away from their living relatives in Ukraine.

On June 21, in a meeting at the European Parliament, the Chairperson of the European Network of the Ombudspersons for Children noted that the Russian Federation is currently developing amendments to its legislation in order to accelerate the procedure of adoptions of children from the temporarily occupied territories. Such practices are in clear violation of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. These practices are shamelessly putting Ukrainian children at risk of forcible deportation, exploitation, and trafficking.

Mr. Chair,

These graphic and devastating accounts describing the tremendous suffering of the citizens of one participating State, Ukraine, at the hands of another participating State, its neighbour Russia, are difficult to hear and difficult to fathom. But we must not turn away. We must not become inured to the war as days and weeks have turned to months. These Russian actions must not go unpunished, and those responsible must be held accountable.

Mr. Chair, I will repeat the sad conclusion that I drew in my statement last week of how history will remember Vladimir Putin: that his actions have brought unspeakable destruction to Russia’s neighbours and tyranny and isolation to the Russian people, and have compromised Russia’s own future.

Thank you, Mr. Chair