



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Yurii Vitrenko, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna, to the 1520th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

15 May 2025

Mr Chairperson, dear colleagues,

I would like to start with words of appreciation.

Seeing so many colleagues today wearing Vyshyvanka, or blue-and-yellow colours today, is very inspiring and moving.

I am grateful for keeping this tradition in the OSCE.

Celebrating one's identity and our diversity – is one of the greatest freedoms.

Yet, it is also a sign of our shared resilience in defending our principles and values.

It demonstrates the aggressor's failed attempts to erase Ukraine's identity.

It is also a stark reminder of my fellow citizens living under occupation.

For them, expressing their national identity means, at the very least, filtration, and often torture and a high probability of loss of life.

It also brings to my mind the impressive scale of the destruction of cultural property - burnt books, occupied museums, and stolen artefacts.

For us, it also evokes Moscow's centuries-long attempts to subjugate and assimilate the Ukrainian people.

And about the struggle and sacrifice of many, thanks to whom the idea of the Ukrainian statehood has been preserved for our days. Against all odds.

It is also a stark reminder of Moscow's centuries-long impunity, which has once again resulted in an attempt to conquer my country, leading to the biggest land war and largest security crisis in Europe since Second World War.

That is why we are grateful to all participating States - that, on 9 of May in Lviv, supported the adoption of the Statement on the Establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine.

The memory of the victims, and heroes of the Second World War could not be better honored than by committing to bring to justice those who are responsible for unleashing a new war of aggression in Europe - the greatest crime against peace.

As Minister Sybiha noted, I quote: "With the adoption of the Lviv Statement, we have brought international criminal law back to Lviv. This is a city that is closely associated with – Hersch Lauterpacht, who introduced the concept of a crime against humanity, and Rafal Lemkin, who is one of the founders of the Genocide Convention". End of quote.

It is high time to break the vicious circle of violence, and human rights violations.

To that end, we are taking all necessary steps, including within the Council of Europe, as to the creating the Special Tribunal.

The recent conclusion of the ICAO Council clearly reaffirming Russia's responsibility for the downing of the MH17.

This testifies to the fact that justice, accountability and truth will prevail.

Sooner or later.

Each lost life reminds us that we must end Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the senseless killings.

Esteemed colleagues!

We are grateful to all our partners for their unwavering support and tireless efforts to achieve a just peace, particularly over the past week.

The intensity of our contacts is a clear and strong sign of our united commitment to giving peace a chance.

A true and just peace.

President Zelenskyy even proposed meeting Putin in person.

To prevent the Russian usual manipulations, I would like to set the record straight.

The Ukrainian legislature does not forbid contacts with Putin.

It is the victim's right to decide when to speak with the aggressor.

We will exercise this right appropriately.

Ukraine is ready for peace talks in any format.

Such talks will have much more chances for success if there is a full and durable period of silence at the frontlines.

If humanitarian confidence-building measures are implemented, such as the exchange of prisoners of war, and the return of deported Ukrainian children, and the release of illegally detained civilians – of course including the three OSCE officials.

Dear friends!

We welcome the fact that the call for a ceasefire is widely supported across the world.

Let me remind its key elements:

- the ceasefire cannot be subject to any conditions;
- if Russia calls for such conditions, this can only be considered as an effort to prolong the war and undermine diplomacy;
- the ceasefire must be comprehensive – in the air, at sea, and on land;
- the ceasefire requires effective monitoring, which could be successfully implemented in close coordination with the United States;
- the ceasefire should last for at least 30 days, to create room for diplomacy.

Unfortunately, we still do not see Russia's willingness to cease fire.

Russian assaults continue all along the frontline.

As it was the case with the 'Easter ceasefire', Moscow has again failed to comply with its own so-called 'parade ceasefire'.

According to the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, there were 2,430 drone strikes, 4,003 cases of shelling, 38 air strikes and 66 glide bombs dropped.

From 8 to 10 of May, the average number of engagements was 183 per day.

This is only 14,7% less than the average number of clashes the previous week.

Even this night Russia has attacked Ukraine with 110 drones.

Sadly, Russia missed another chance to stop the killings on May 12. As before rejecting the US proposal on March 11.

So, if Russia is only interested in war, we must enforce peace.

Dear friends!

If Russia bets on the military solution, we must deprive Moscow of the revenues fueling its war machine.

If Russia is planning a new summer offensive - we must prevent it.

Sanctions - including against Russia's banking and energy sectors - and increased defense assistance to Ukraine – are those “wake up” moments that could encourage Moscow to choose peace over continuing the war.

And the diplomatic process must leave no room for Russia to delay long-overdue decisions - to reward its aggression, or to prepare ground for future attacks.

The only ‘root cause’ that must be removed is Russia's war.

The only our goal is a just, comprehensive and lasting peace.

According to the Helsinki Final Act, the participating States voluntarily committed to

‘respect each other's sovereign equality and individuality, all the rights inherent in and encompassed by its sovereignty, including in particular the right of every State to territorial integrity and to freedom and political independence, [...]

to freely choose and develop its political, social, economic and cultural systems as well as its right to determine its laws and regulations [...]

to define and conduct as it wishes its relations with other States in accordance with international law [...]

to belong or not to belong to international organizations, to be or not to be a party to bilateral or multilateral treaties including the right to be or not to be a party to treaties of alliance’.

This is the basic of our secure, peaceful and prosperous future.

For everyone.

Colleagues - if these principles and values are protected and reinforced, there will be no more losers in this war.

I thank you, Mr Chairperson.