



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1384th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

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Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian war of aggression has entered its sixth month of senseless killings and destruction.

Russia continues to terrorize Kharkiv and the region, localities in the Zaporizhzhia region and Dnipropetrovsk region, border areas of the Sumy region and Chernihiv region. The city of Mykolaiv remains under massive missile attacks.

The Odesa region is also among Russia's key targets. It has become a routine for the Russian troops to destroy the ordinary private sector at the seaside. A similar attack was repeated this week.

Heavy shelling, missile attacks and airstrikes continue along the front line in the Donetsk region.

It is terrible that these shellings continue along with mass repressions in the occupied territories.

Yesterday's testimonies of survivors of Russia's so-called filtration were heartbreaking. I would like to highlight one of the key points made at the meeting – every resident of the occupied territories is subject to filtering. This means that any new settlement that may come under Russia's control would witness the same crime, the same degrading and inhumane treatment.

The filtration is one of the most heinous tools of Russia's illegal war against Ukraine. Russian conduct searches to find local activists, volunteers, former soldiers, their relatives, and friends.

This is how the Russian president wants to break people's will, to eliminate the most active and to assimilate others. Or to put it simply – just to destroy the Ukrainian nation. To tell the truth, this is not the first time that Moscow has planned such a fate for the Ukrainian people.

I am especially grateful to the witnesses for their willingness to talk about what they experienced. Because Russia would be happy to commit its crimes in the shadow.

A report of the Human Rights Watch, which was issued on July 22, also sheds light on what is happening in the southern regions of Ukraine, namely in the occupied areas of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

According to the Human Rights Watch, "Russian forces have turned occupied areas of southern Ukraine into an abyss of fear and wild lawlessness. Torture, inhumane treatment, as well as arbitrary detention and unlawful confinement of civilians, are among the apparent war crimes and Russian authorities need to end such abuses immediately and understand that they can, and will, be held accountable".

The HRW findings, likewise reports prepared under the OSCE Moscow mechanism and by ODIHR, prove that crimes committed by the Russian soldiers are not an isolated case. It is a pattern of behavior blessed at the highest political level.

Recently Minister Kuleba has given a neat characterization what Russia's state policy is about. And I quote.

"For centuries, Russian elites have cultivated notions of Russian superiority and exceptionalism, as well as chauvinism, false messianism, and toxic masculinity. This led to a consistent policy of hatred against other nations, religious groups, and sexual minorities. Domestically, the Russian regime persecutes Jehovah's Witnesses, the LGBT community, and other minorities, as well as political dissidents and opposition figures. From the outside, and in relation to Ukrainians as a national group, this general policy of hatred and chauvinism has acquired a genocidal character".

By insisting that Ukraine is a "mistake" and artificial country, President Putin has been laying the ideological foundation for genocide for a long time and now incites his soldiers to kill Ukrainians just because we belong to the certain national group.

For too long we have closed our eyes on what was developing in Russia. Now we are facing grave consequences of what Russia has been turned into by the current Kremlin regime.

Unfortunately, for long eight years Crimea has been a testing ground for policies Russia is currently implementing in newly occupied areas.

That's why, Crimea has to remain high on the OSCE agenda and we count that this year the OSCE flag will be duly represented at the second "Crimea Platform" summit scheduled for 23 August.

Distinguished colleagues,

Today Ukraine is celebrating the Day of Ukrainian Statehood. For the first time. And this day is starkly symbolic against the background of ongoing war.

Today we more than ever understand why sovereignty matters for people and why our ancestors were sacrificing their lives for Ukraine's independence.

The killings and tortures in the occupied territories show that our freedom and physical survival of the nation are at stake.

We have already seen what means to lose or not to have a state. Like, in 1932-1933 when the Soviet regime exterminated millions during the Holodomor. In 1937 when the Ukrainian intelligentsia, known today as the Executed Renaissance, was simply shot. In 40s when the Jews and other vulnerable groups became victims of the Nazis.

We have suffered the repetition of pure evil on the Ukrainian soil too often to allow it to happen once again.

Today the front line in Ukraine demarcates a deep gulf between completely different notions of statehood and sovereignty.

While we are fighting for our sovereignty to protect people's rights, the Russian president deprives his people of their last rights to consolidate his personal power.

It is with sincere regret to watch how neighboring Belarus is selling out its sovereignty to Russia. Yesterday's visit of Pushylin, a Russian puppet from Donetsk, to Belarus was not only shameful but quite illustrative of Minsk's dependency on already bankrupted Moscow.

Furthermore, Putin is trying to redefine a sovereignty in a dangerous way by speaking about so-called "genuine sovereignty".

He sees historical destiny of russia in waging aggressive wars, reestablishment of zones of influences and subjugation of free people. What a dangerous self-deception. First of all, for russia and its future.

In the meantime, moscow's envoys on their tours around the globe are trying to convince the international community that russia is too big to lose in Ukraine. But do russia's arguments match with the reality?

Does russia have any strong army? Definitely, not. This myth has been dispelled after the 24 of February. Only failed adventure with the Zmiinyi Island together with the infamous cruiser moskva cost russia about 900 mln US dollars.

Does moscow have strong economy? Definitely, not. A genuine big power does not introduce so-called "special measure" in economy and does not legalize so-called "parallel import" or smuggling that displays how russia badly needs access to Western technologies, especially to maintain the combat capability of its army.

Does russia enjoy some values that could contribute to the world's progress? Definitely, not. Bucha, Mariupol, Irpin and many other localities in Ukraine mirrored what russia's values are about. They are about the destruction, killing and regress. With such "values" one cannot build a prosperous and resilient state.

At the same time since russia's offensives in Ukraine have largely stalled, moscow is trying to turn the tide.

Having faced unprecedented international solidarity with Ukraine, russia has resorted to its last instrument of coercion – gas supplies. And they don't even hide their demands – if Europe wants gas, it has to stop supporting Ukraine. But who will be next after Ukraine? So, it is high time to cut finally this dependency on russia.

In parallel, in recent days, russian officials have pretended they are ready for negotiations. The only real reason for russia to talk about negotiations now is a need for a tactical pause – in order to preserve control over the occupied Ukrainian territories, to regroup its forces, and to launch a new attack in coming months.

Recent statement by the russian foreign minister on russia expanding its war aims and on intentions to oust Ukraine's president and Government also prove that they are not ready to negotiate a compromise but want Ukraine's capitulation.

Dear colleagues,

No one in the world has ever wanted this war except russia and president putin, and no other country wants peace as much as Ukraine. But Ukraine seeks a lasting peace, not a ceasefire dictated by russia.

That's why russia's intentions must be judged by its actions not empty words.

Brutal attack on the port of Odesa in violation of agreements regarding the restoration of safe export of Ukrainian agricultural goods proves how fragile is the agreement reached thanks to tireless efforts by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and President of Türkiye Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

And this attack testifies once again to one simple axiom that bringing russia to meaningful negotiations and making russia to respect following agreements require an increased international support for Ukraine, including military aid and comprehensive sanctions.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.