



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
in response to the address by the Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of
Europe, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism of Malta,
H.E. Mr. Ian Borg**

As delivered by Ambassador Yurii Vitrenko,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1524th meeting of the Permanent Council

12 June 2025

Thank you, Mr Chair

The delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes H.E. Ian Borg in his new capacity as President of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe at today's meeting of the Permanent Council.

I would like to sincerely thank Minister Borg for Malta's strong and unwavering stance on Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine and its devastating implications for security of the entire OSCE region and beyond.

Despite all the profound war-related challenges and difficulties that remain dominant on the OSCE's agenda, the Maltese Chairpersonship last year demonstrated a strong commitment and determination to defending the fundamental principles of the Helsinki Final Act. Such a principled stance of Malta will be a meaningful contribution to advancing democratic security during its Presidency in the Council of Europe.

Dear Minister Borg,

This year Ukraine is celebrating its 30th anniversary of joining the Council of Europe.

We welcome the priorities of Malta's presidency and express our gratitude that support for Ukraine and achieving justice for its people remain among the top priorities for your country.

As you have mentioned, this year not only marks the anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, but also the 75th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights - each and every article of which has been violated by Russia. The right to life, the prohibition of torture, the right to a fair trial, the protection of property, the right to education – just to name a few basic ones that have been severely violated since 2014 in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and later during the full-scale invasion launched in 2022.

In this regard, Malta's readiness to take all necessary steps to establish the Special Tribunal for the Crimes of Aggression against Ukraine is highly appreciated and has our full support. The establishment of the Tribunal is a much-needed next step in holding Russia's military and political leadership to account and restoring justice for victims. And first and foremost, for the protection of the rules-based international order.

We are grateful for your participation in the Core Group meeting on 9 May, where the joint Lviv Statement was adopted – the first high-level political decision toward establishing the Special Tribunal.

The role of the Council of Europe is pivotal in advancing further practical steps to this end, and we count on the Maltese Presidency to ensure the full implementation of all necessary decisions.

To this end, we welcome the Committee of Ministers' decision of 6 June 2025 on setting up a Working Party on the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine (GT-TRIBUNAL) that will prepare the decisions required to establish the Special Tribunal.

Your Excellency,

In general, I would like to emphasize that all your country's priorities in the Council of Europe fully resonate with my country. We are convinced that prioritizing equality and defending the most vulnerable is a direct demand of the current times, marked by the most terrible and inhumane war that Russia continues to wage against Ukraine.

We value your focus on the protection of children and promotion of their best interests.

Unfortunately, for Ukraine this issue is highly painful. You and all colleagues here are well aware of one of the deepest tragedies inflicted by Russia upon Ukraine – abducted Ukrainian children, who were illegally deported to Russia.

Bringing these children back from the aggressor-state, which deprived them of a peaceful childhood and aims through the so-called “re-education” to turn them into future soldiers, is our common moral and legal obligation. No child must be abducted, deprived of a family and homeland, subjected to military training and taught that his or her nation, language and history never existed.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to sincerely thank the Maltese Side for providing strong political leadership during its Chairpersonship for a highly important OSCE project aimed at supporting Ukraine in bringing our children back.

In general, we find it very meaningful that Malta pays considerable attention to safeguarding children's rights and empowering youth. As the future of our world depends on our children and youth – we must do our utmost to ensure that they will grow up as responsible leaders. To this end, we are very much looking forward to the upcoming events that Malta will organize throughout the year.

In conclusion, dear colleagues, ensuring justice for the Ukrainian people and holding Russia accountable for all the crimes committed in Ukraine are imperative to restoring the international rules-based order and prevent future wars.

The OSCE and Council of Europe have all necessary tools to contribute to this goal. Moreover, both organizations complement each other to this end: the OSCE by documenting Russia's crimes and the Council of Europe by managing the Register of Damage and the Special Tribunal for these crimes.

We have everything we need to bring the aggressor-state to justice, the rest depends on our political will. We are grateful to the Maltese Side for demonstrating leadership in this regard last year as the OSCE Chairpersonship and this year as the Presidency of the Council of Europe.

Thank you.