



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council,

Vienna, 4 May 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Norway has aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. In my national capacity, though, I would like to make a few remarks.

Mr. Chair,

Like others we condemn Russia's massive launch of missile and drone attacks across Ukraine this last week. These attacks were yet another assault on civilians and critical civilian infrastructure and demonstrate Russia's disregard for the suffering they are causing millions of people.

On Friday last week, 23 civilians were killed when a high-rise apartment building in the city of Uman was hit by a missile as part of Russia's countrywide wave of air strikes. Three children were among the dead. These attacks were conducted during the night, which we see as an attempt to inflict as many casualties as possible.

On Monday, Pavlohrad, in the eastern Dnipropetrovsk region, was hit by missiles. The strike sparked a major fire, destroyed dozens of houses, killed two people, and wounded almost 40 people.

While Russia claims that the targets were Ukraine's military-industrial facilities, results show that the attacks damaged apartment blocks, houses, schools, kindergartens, shops, and energy infrastructure.

These Russian attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure are unacceptable. Civilians must be protected, and humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law respected.

Mr. Chair,

In last week's supplementary human dimension meeting, participants heard testimonies from people who had survived Russian captivity. There were accounts of severe beatings and sexual violence, and the use of aggressive dogs, electric shocks, confinement in small cages, forced confessions, mock executions, isolation and degrading treatment.

The Moscow mechanism report we have discussed today describes cumulative effects of numerous and overlapping violations of the rights of the children deported to the Russian Federation. The report explains how this "give[s] rise to very serious concerns that the rights of these children to be free from torture and ill-treatment and other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment have been violated".

We urge the Russian Federation to stop the deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia, stop adoptions of Ukrainian children by Russians and return the children to parents or guardians in Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to commend the Government of Ukraine's resilience, leadership, and tireless efforts in these trying times. Let me also express my admiration for the impressive endurance and ability of the Ukrainian people in defending their country.

I reiterate Norway's strong support for the Ukrainian people. We will continue to support Ukraine's legitimate self-defence against Russia's aggression. Norway will support Ukraine for as long as it takes.

Thank you.