



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International  
Organizations in Vienna

## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**

As delivered by HE Yuriy Vitrenko, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the  
International Organizations in Vienna

### **1550<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

Agenda Item 2, “The Russian Federation’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine”  
(22 January 2026)

#### **Mr Chairperson,**

As we gather today in Vienna to once again address Russia’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, Putin’s forces keep escalating their campaign of inhuman warfare, deliberately terrorising civilians in an attempt to break Ukraine’s resolve and force it into surrender.

Since the last special meeting of the Permanent Council, the aggressor has continued its intensified attacks, cynically weaponising winter to undermine the endurance of the Ukrainian people. This week, in an already well-known pattern, Russia has launched strikes across multiple regions, including Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Dnipro, Odesa, Zaporizhzhia, Poltava and Sumy, targeting critical energy and water infrastructure amid extreme sub-zero temperatures, sometimes falling to minus 15 degrees Celsius and below. These attacks have resulted in civilian casualties and caused severe, widespread damage.

During the most recent wave of strikes, on the night of 20 January, Russian attacks left 5,635 multi-storey residential buildings in Kyiv without heating. Nearly 80 per cent of these buildings had only just had heating restored following outages caused by the large-scale attack on 9 January.

The situation is particularly dangerous for the most vulnerable group of the civilian population - children. For them the impact of such harsh conditions is both physical and psychological. As warned by UNICEF, darkness and freezing temperatures intensify fear and stress and can lead to, or exacerbate, health conditions. UNICEF also highlights the extremely negative consequences for education. Extreme cold has forced schools and kindergartens in many parts of Ukraine to switch to remote learning, while power outages, in turn, disrupt online classes.

**Esteemed colleagues,**

Kremlin's actions amount to nothing less than war crimes and crimes against humanity that can be justified neither legally nor morally. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk rightly underlined in his recent statement that Russian attacks "can only be described as cruel".

The Russian side may believe that its unrestricted warfare demonstrates military strength. In reality, it is a sign of weakness and desperation. The Russian Federation seeks to change the situation on the frontline by terrorising the civilian population.

When Moscow launched its full-scale invasion in 2022, it expected a blitzkrieg. Instead, the invasion has already lasted longer than the war between the Third Reich and the Soviet Union in 1941–1945.

Moreover, the average daily Russian casualty rate continues to rise. In January alone, according to information from the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, daily losses of the aggressor state on the battlefield reached up to 1,300 soldiers. Combined with the scale of destroyed weapons systems and military equipment, the reality of Russian military performance is far from the image promoted by official Russian propaganda to domestic and foreign audiences.

Against this backdrop, the Russian political and military leadership is forced to invent ever new pretexts to justify its war efforts. One illustrative example is the fabricated story of an attack on Putin's residence, used to justify sabre-rattling with strategic missiles and presented by the Kremlin as grounds for yet another wave of escalation.

Russian forces deliberately pursue a strategy of sowing fear, demonstrating their total disregard for international humanitarian law. In doing so, the Kremlin undermines the entire system of international rules established to prevent atrocities and protect civilians from the horrors of armed conflict.

It is also evident that the Russian leadership acts in an attempt to create pretexts for blocking or delaying peace efforts. There is no other explanation for Russia's persistent rejection of all peace initiatives.

**Mr Chairperson,**

Today Ukraine celebrates the Day of Unity, a national holiday marking the anniversary of the historic unification of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the West Ukrainian People's Republic in 1919.

The Act of Unity proclaimed more than a hundred years ago on Sofia Square in Kyiv remains a powerful symbol of national integrity and solidarity for all Ukrainians. It embodies the unity and indivisibility of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, as well as the consolidation of the global community in the struggle for our state's independence and European future.

Despite persistent efforts by the aggressor state to undermine this unity, including through distorted historical narratives, Ukraine remains resolute in resisting the invaders and will not surrender.

Equally important is the unity of the international community and its readiness to take all necessary measures to restore the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.

We express our sincere gratitude to all countries that continue to support Ukraine in its self-defence and that have endorsed Ukraine's vision of peace based on the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.

In close cooperation with the United States, European states, Canada and other partners, Ukraine continues to make tireless efforts to achieve a dignified and lasting peace. We are deeply grateful for the assistance already provided and for the readiness of our partners to urgently step up support for the Ukrainian people to withstand Russia's winter terror. This assistance is critically important, both to help people survive and to demonstrate that a strategy of terror will not succeed.

As Foreign Minister of Ukraine Andrii Sybiha stated recently: "Support for the Ukrainian people are urgent. There will be no peace in Europe without a lasting peace for Ukraine. Peace can only be achieved through strength. We need urgent additional energy assistance, air defence and interceptors, as well as increased sanctions pressure on Moscow."

**Thank you, Mr Chairperson.**