



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE

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

1559th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

Agenda Item 1, “The Russian Federation’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine”
(26 March 2026)

Mr Chairperson,

As President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy recently stated: “It is important for all of us in the world that diplomacy continues and that we work to end this war - Russia’s war against Ukraine. No one wants this war.”

Indeed, no one except Putin’s Russia wants this war.

For its part, Ukraine remains fully committed to ensuring the success of the diplomatic process and maintaining a constructive approach across all tracks - humanitarian, military and political.

Fully in line with this approach, the Ukrainian negotiating team, headed by Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine Rustem Umerov, took part in a new round of Ukraine-US bilateral consultations held on 21–22 March in Florida, United States.

We are grateful to the American side for working tirelessly to create the conditions necessary for effective diplomacy. Ukraine will continue working to ensure readiness for a leaders’ meeting to resolve issues that cannot yet be settled at the current level. A leaders’ format could prove decisive.

Mr Chairperson,

While Ukraine continues to take all possible measures to stop the bloodshed and restore peace, the Russian side demonstrates the opposite approach - first and foremost by expanding its brutal attacks against the civilian population.

Last week, Russian attacks killed at least 21 people and injured around 93 civilians across the Dnipropetrovsk, Sumy, Donetsk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa and Kharkiv regions.

This Monday, Russian attacks in the Poltava, Zaporizhzhia and Sumy regions killed at least four people and injured more than ten others.

During the 24-hour of 23-24 March, Moscow has carried out one of the largest aerial assaults on Ukraine to date, launching a record 982 air attack assets. The strike package consisted of 34 missiles and 948 attack drones of various types. This massive and indiscriminate barrage was deliberately aimed at civilian infrastructure and populated areas across Ukraine. As a result, according to the UN, at least six civilians were killed and almost 100 were injured, including five children.

In Lviv, a Russian drone attacked the historic city centre, which is part of the UNESCO World Heritage, striking XVII century Bernardine Monastery.

Despite the unprecedented scale of the attack, Ukrainian air defence units demonstrated outstanding efficiency and professionalism, successfully intercepting and destroying 948 out of 982 aerial targets. This corresponds to an interception rate of 06.5% - one of the highest ever.

Distinguished colleagues,

These attacks once again confirm that, desperate with its snail-speed army – meet grinder or not, Moscow cowardly pursues terror against the civilian population. It also clearly shows what Russia does to maximise casualties.

They concentrate large volumes of weapons to launch them in a single large-scale strike in order to suppress the air defence.

They deliberately strike residential buildings when civilians are most likely to be at home.

They widely employ the tactic of “double-tap” strikes targeting rescuers.

This was exactly the case in the Sumy region on the night of 22 March, when Russian forces attacked first responders working at the site of a previous strike.

All these actions are thoroughly documented by independent international observers, who are also closely monitoring the situation in the occupied territories of Ukraine, where the aggressor continues to conduct a large-scale campaign of repression.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has recently published yet another report on forced displacement from the occupied territories of Ukraine.

The findings underscore a deliberate state policy by the Kremlin aimed at the forced transfer and deportation of civilians, forcible passportization, unlawful mobilisation, and the systematic suppression of Ukrainian identity. This includes restrictions on access to education, the displacement of the Ukrainian language and culture, and persecution on religious grounds.

Mr Chairperson,

Through its actions, Russia continues to demonstrate that it is not interested in peace.

According to information from the Armed Forces of Ukraine, in 2026 Russia plans to recruit another 409,000 troops, indicating that it has not abandoned its plans for further aggression. In addition, this year it intends to engage additional 18,500 foreign fighters – on top of already recruited 27,000 mercenaries. Russian military spending also continues to grow.

Under such circumstances, Ukraine has no choice but to continue exercising its inherent right of self-defence.

Fully in line with Article 51 of the UN Charter, Ukraine is scaling up its campaign of deep strikes against legitimate military targets on the territory of Russia, used by Moscow to kill the Ukrainians.

As Minister Andrii Sybiha stated: “These are our own, Ukrainian sanctions against the Russian war machine, and we are not going to ease them.”

Ukraine now has the capability to reach targets thousands of kilometres inside the aggressor state. Ukraine’s deep-strike campaign is precise, effective and strategically measured. It is already weakening Russia’s terrorist potential. It also undermines Russia’s ability to spread terror further into Europe and to support Kremlin’s fellow pariah regimes in other regions, such as Iran.

Ukraine’s approach is simple and clear: it is far more effective to destroy the sources of terror than to deal with its deadly consequences.

And as Russia persists in blaming everyone but itself, let me underline: all of this is the direct result of the Kremlin launching this illegal war and being unable to end it. The longer Moscow procrastination with this senseless war, the war it cannot win, the worse the consequences will be for it, for generations to come.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.