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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY BY  
MR. DMITRY POLYANSKIY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1558th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 March 2026

**On Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

I shall speak in exercise of my right of reply.

First of all, I should like to congratulate everyone on the 12th anniversary of Crimea's reunification with Russia. This momentous event, which is widely celebrated in our country, demonstrated that there is an alternative to violence, hatred, humanity-hating ideology and disregard for human rights – in other words, to everything that the criminal Kyiv regime brought upon its own country following the unconstitutional coup d'état in 2014. I will come back to this topic later.

We regret that, at the instigation of Western States, the OSCE continues to be used not as a platform for dialogue, but as a mouthpiece for anti-Russian propaganda. What we have heard today in this room regarding Ukraine bears no relation whatsoever to either the truth or objectivity. In your distorted “world view”, nothing has changed: “squeaky clean” Ukraine is selflessly fighting against the evils of the world, embodied by Russia. It might be a decent plot for a Hollywood blockbuster, but the OSCE is not Hollywood, and we do not need to be told fairy tales here. And we all know perfectly well who is actually waging war against Russia using the Ukrainians as pawns, and how long the Ukrainians would last without the West's overwhelming support.

Believing in this fairy tale about the infallibility of the current Ukrainian authorities and driven by a fierce hatred of Russia and all things Russian, the ruling elites in most Western capitals have consciously chosen to ignore the true nature of those who have usurped power in Kyiv and are bleeding their compatriots dry, rounding them up like cattle in the streets and sending them to their certain and senseless deaths on the front line. And also to ignore any crimes they commit against the Russian people, whether in Russia or in Ukraine. It is hard for us to understand how countries that pretended to be civilized have sunk to such depths of hypocrisy and moral degradation, but the fact remains: you have cast off your masks, revealed your rotten, Russophobic core, and stubbornly refuse to see what the authorities in Kyiv are doing. That is why one of our tasks here is to try to fill this void as well.

Meanwhile, in the past week alone, strikes by the Ukrainian armed forces claimed 239 civilian casualties. Thirty-seven people lost their lives and 202 were injured. Six children were among the casualties.

On 10 March, Ukrainian formations launched a targeted missile strike on the centre of Bryansk. On a densely populated area, during rush hour. We have already spoken about this tragedy. But since then, the tally on Zelenskyy's bloody scorecard has risen: the strike resulted in 55 civilian casualties, with eight killed. Also on 10 March, Zelenskyy's formations attacked a hospital in the Donetsk People's Republic. Four drones struck the hospital, with 130 patients and 50 medical staff inside. Ten doctors were killed. In the Zaporozhye region, a strike by the Ukrainian armed forces hit a bus carrying pupils from a children's sports school. The children were returning from a competition. Three pupils – aged 13, 14 and 15 – were injured. Their coach was also injured.

More than 170 people have been injured in drone attacks – accounting for 71 per cent of all casualties. Drones packed with submunitions are striking residential areas, schools, places of worship and museums. Up to 200 drones are being recorded every day in the Belgorod region alone. Last week, a school, a museum of local history and the Church of Saints Peter and Paul were targeted.

In your statements, you call upon Russia to exercise restraint and accuse it of striking Ukrainian energy infrastructure. But why, then, do you fail to mention that our strikes are reactive in nature? If Ukraine were interested in de-escalation, it would surely have ceased its provocations and stopped striking substations in Russian cities, leaving entire towns, cities and districts without heat and water. Just last week, 177,000 people were left without electricity as a result of targeted strikes on energy facilities. The attempts to damage the infrastructure of the Blue Stream and TurkStream gas pipelines also continue unabated. Terminals and vessels involved in the export of Kazakh oil are being attacked. And this is in the midst of an energy crisis in Europe!

The only conclusion that can be drawn from all this is that Zelenskyy and his sponsors have no interest in de-escalation; they need to keep provoking Russia, as the tragedies suffered by the Ukrainians work to their advantage. It is only by exploiting these tragedies that they can justify to European citizens and taxpayers – who are facing ever-greater difficulties – the need to continue supporting a Government that brazenly cashes in millions of dollars and euros and brings them into the country from the territory of the European Union. The end of hostilities would also spell the end of the current Ukrainian Government, which would have to answer to its own people for all the crimes it has committed against them. These include crimes against Ukrainian children, hundreds of whom have been taken to EU countries or have been removed from their Ukrainian mothers in those countries. Their fate remains unknown, and this issue is being hushed up in Europe by every possible means.

Given that a number of participating States continue to make insinuations regarding the issue of so-called abducted children, I should like to set the record straight.

The list handed over by Kyiv representatives during the negotiations in Istanbul on 2 June 2025 does not contain 20,000 “children abducted by Russia” – as the Zelenskyy regime continues to trumpet to the whole world – but 339 Ukrainian minors. The Russian side has been working on this list.

It turns out that, along with the children, the list includes 67 adults. Among them are both young people with disabilities living in care institutions in the Russian Federation and adults with full legal capacity who make their own decisions about where to live.

As of 2 March 2026, 13 minors from the “list of 339” have been reunited with their relatives and loved ones. One adult with a disability was assisted in travelling to Ukraine.

Twenty-two children are with their parents (one of them) or close relatives. Thirty-one minors aged ten or over refused to travel to Ukraine, as evidenced by written statements. There is no information regarding the whereabouts of 33 individuals in the Russian Federation.

With regard to the remaining names on the list – which include minors classified as orphans or those left without parental care – painstaking work is continuing in liaison with the Ukrainian side to identify any potential relatives.

We should like to point out that the information received from the Ukrainian agencies does not allow us to carry out a full-scale “investigation”. We are forced to request such information repeatedly, and often to no avail.

It would appear that Ukraine is not interested in locating the children and reuniting them with their families, but rather in staging PR stunts and further exploiting this sensitive issue to obtain political dividends.

We will continue to speak the truth at our meetings, however disagreeable it may be to you, until all those guilty of crimes against the Russian people since at least 2014 have been brought to justice. There is no other way to achieve a just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

Thank you for your attention.