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Delegation of Canada

**STATEMENT BY  
AMBASSADOR VÉRONIQUE PEPIN-HALLÉ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF CANADA TO THE OSCE, AT THE 1543rd MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

20 November 2025

**The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine**

Mister Chair,

Last week, Russia accused Canada of being too remote from the war in Ukraine and indifferent to the suffering of Ukrainians. Russia makes these claims not because they are credible. It makes them because it can't answer our legitimate concerns about its conduct in Ukraine, so it deflects and distracts.

It is striking for Russia to question the commitment of other states to upholding human rights obligations. This is the same state that initiated an unprovoked and unjustifiable invasion of a sovereign neighbour, unapologetically striking civilian infrastructure, and causing profound human suffering. Just yesterday, a Russian strike hit a residential building in Ternopil, resulting in the deaths of 26 people, including children, and injuring 93 people, 18 of them children. Canada condemns the strike on Ternopil and will continue to work with its international partners to hold Russia accountable for its actions against Ukrainian civilians.

This is sadly only one day in a conflict that has already spanned 1,365 deadly days. The toll of this war on civilians is devastating and represents a flagrant disregard for human life.

Canada's commitment to freedom and human rights is deeply rooted in our history. As is our connection to Europe and European security. Canadians have fought and died on this continent for these values, and we continue to honor that legacy by standing with Ukraine. Our support is grounded in respect for the choices Ukrainians themselves have made, through their votes, their voices, and, tragically, their sacrifices. Ukraine's future belongs to Ukrainians, and Canada stands firmly with them.

Russia has repeatedly sought to delegitimize Ukraine's choices and treat its sovereignty as optional. Yet Ukrainians have made it clear that they reject subjugation.

Mr. Chairperson,

Most countries in the region prioritize openness, trade, strong partnerships and good-neighbourly relations based on mutual respect, with the aim of ensuring their shared prosperity. They seek to invest in their people, strengthen their economies and build a future full of promise.

Canada's support for Ukraine is based on these enduring principles. From the very first hours of the invasion, we provided military assistance and humanitarian aid, imposed sanctions on the aggressor and offered diplomatic and political support. Our approach bolsters Ukraine's sovereignty, security and democratic choices.

The Russian model, on the other hand, is based on decisions dictated by the authorities in Moscow that serve only their own interests and that offer nothing attractive to Ukraine or to any other country in our region. Russia also continues to violate, in a deeply troubling manner, the diplomatic norms that we have all established together.

In that regard, Russia continues to refuse to disclose information about the three arbitrarily detained OSCE officials: Dmytro Shabanov, Maksym Petrov and Vadym Golda. Their detention is illegal and violates the principles of this Organization and international law. They must be released immediately and without preconditions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.