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Delegation of Canada

**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR VÉRONIQUE PEPIN-HALLÉ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF CANADA TO THE OSCE, AT THE 1566th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

28 May 2026

The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me, first of all, to wish a happy and prosperous Eid al-Adha (Greater Bairam) to all the Muslims in our region, in particular to the Crimean Tatars who are unfortunately enduring yet another Eid under Russian occupation.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Kremlin launched an illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine and is now seeking to elicit sympathy for the very consequences of this war. We have only one response to this: every loss, no matter how tragic, every bereaved family and every hardship arising from this war stem from a single decision, namely, Russia's unilateral decision to invade Ukraine.

From the outset, we warned the Russian Federation of the consequences of this war, especially its human cost. We then called upon the Russian Federation to change course, and we continue today to urge it to return in earnest to the negotiating table. The Russian Federation is ignoring these calls and instead choosing to intensify and broaden the scope of this war, making the situation even more dangerous for the entire region.

Nothing good will come of Russia's recent military escalation. If the Russian Federation knowingly persists in taking this path, it should not feign outrage when the consequences of its own actions increasingly backfire on it, particularly after repeated warnings as regards the foreseeable outcome of such a course of action.

Mister Chair,

Diplomacy enables the maintenance of relations between States, including and especially during times of conflict. Yet Russia has recently directed threats towards foreign nationals and diplomats carrying out their duties in Ukraine.

Two days ago, the Deputy Chair of the Security Council of the Russian Federation tweeted that “The EU has said it will maintain its diplomatic presence in Kiev unchanged, despite Russia’s warnings. Well, apparently, they’ve got diplomats to spare and need to trim the headcount.”

This is shocking. Threats against the lives of foreign nationals and diplomats serving in Ukraine are unacceptable, unwarranted, and absolutely, without exception, indefensible.

Mister Chair,

We are not confused about who violated the UN Charter, who shattered the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and who continues to undermine European security.

Our support for Ukraine remains enduring and unwavering. We will continue working closely with partners to provide Ukraine with the political, economic, humanitarian, and military assistance it needs to defend itself and prevail. This is where we stand since 2014, and this is where we will remain.

We furthermore remain committed to a just and lasting peace grounded in international law, in respect for Ukraine’s sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, and in accountability for Russia’s actions.

Thank you.