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Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR VÉRONIQUE PEPIN-HALLÉ
UNDER AGENDA ITEM:**

The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

1557th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

12 March 2026

Mister Chair,

Since our last meeting, the Russian Federation has, again, demonstrated the stark brutality of its conduct.

On the night of 7 March, according to Ukrainian authorities, the Russian Federation launched approximately 480 drones and 29 missiles across Ukraine in a single coordinated barrage.

The city of Kharkiv was among the hardest hit. A ballistic missile struck a residential building, killing 11 people, including two children, and injuring many more.

Civilians continue to be put in harm's way and, the human toll continues to mount. The Russian Federation is solely responsible for launching this war and for inflicting this suffering.

Ukraine continues to demonstrate clear determination and near Zaporizhzhia, their forces disrupted logistics and forced Russian troops to scale back operations.

Canada firmly supports Ukraine's legitimate right to self-defence, in line with the UN Charter.

The news that Russia released approximately 500 Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilians as part of a negotiated exchange was encouraging. Prisoner exchanges are vital humanitarian tools, and every life returned is meaningful.

At the same time, these developments remind us of those who remain unjustly detained, in inhumane conditions, not in line with Russia's international obligations with regards human rights and the treatment of PoWs.

We must also continue to draw attention to the three former OSCE Special Monitoring Mission staff members who are unlawfully detained by the Russian Federation. In 2025, Maxim Petrov and Dmitry Shabanov were transferred from a penal colony in the Luhansk region to remote areas of Russia.

As discussions advance regarding potential future monitoring arrangements in Ukraine, we must not forget that three OSCE staff members remain behind bars. Their release should not be a matter for bargaining.

Monsieur le Président,

Le Canada continue de soutenir les efforts visant à instaurer une paix juste et durable en Ukraine. L'Ukraine ne cesse de démontrer sa volonté de parvenir à un tel résultat de manière constructive, soutenue et engagée. Nous appelons la Fédération de Russie à faire de même.

L'issue de cette guerre a des répercussions bien au-delà des frontières de l'Ukraine. Elle est fondamentale pour la sécurité de l'ensemble de notre région et pour nos partenaires à travers le monde qui accordent de l'importance à un environnement international stable et prévisible. Si les frontières peuvent être modifiées par la force, si les civils peuvent être mis en danger sans conséquence et si les engagements peuvent être ignorés à volonté, alors aucun État ne peut se sentir véritablement en sécurité.

Il est de la plus haute importance que cette guerre ne se termine pas d'une manière qui renforce l'insécurité dans notre région ou encourage de nouvelles agressions.

Je vous remercie.