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Delegation of Canada

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR VÉRONIQUE PEPIN-HALLÉ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA TO THE OSCE, AT THE 1582nd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

22 October 2026

The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine is now in its fifth year of an unjustifiable war of aggression, launched unilaterally, unlawfully and without provocation by the Russian Federation.

The burden of this war is borne by Ukrainians across the country, including, tragically, the youngest among them. For yet another generation of Ukrainians, Russia is synonymous with violence that strikes even during the most innocent moments of childhood. On 19 October, 14-month-old Anhelina was sitting in her pushchair beside her mother in a park when both were killed by a Russian drone.

Allow me, therefore, to assure the Ukrainian people that Canada will stand alongside them on their path to freedom, until that freedom is fully achieved and securely guaranteed.

Our support has never wavered, and it will not waver. The future of Ukraine lies with its people, and Canada's position on this matter is unequivocal.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine has every reason to want this war to end. Russia does not. And both are acting accordingly.

Ukraine has demonstrated its willingness to negotiate. Moscow, by contrast, continues to calculate that further violence will allow it to dictate through force the terms on which it will end its deadly war of aggression.

The challenge before us is therefore to change Moscow's calculation.

That means continuing support for Ukraine, including military assistance, while constraining the funding that fuels Russia's war of aggression.

We must see Russia's rhetoric of confidence for the Potemkin façade that it is, designed to foster the perception that Moscow holds the stronger hand. To fall captive to that narrative is to allow the Russian Federation to define the limits of how its aggression can end. We need to look beyond Moscow's position to identify existing opportunities to create the conditions for meaningful negotiations.

And the sooner meaningful negotiations take place, the sooner a just and lasting peace can be achieved.

Mr. Chair,

How this war ends matters.

Ukraine should not surrender the very rights that each of us around this table cherishes.

A peace imposed on such terms would be neither just nor lasting. After all that the Ukrainian people have endured at the hands of the Russian Federation, it is reasonable that any peace should offer them more than the prospect of having to endure it all over again.

The Ukrainian people have made clear the future they seek, and Canadians know very well all the reasons to respect and support it.

Finally Mr. Chair,

Canada is concerned about the most recent airspace violations in Romania, Bulgaria and in other European allies, and express our solidarity in confronting these threats. Such incursions are violations of international law.

Between October 10th and 18th, 2026, alone, Romanian authorities reported nine major drone incidents. Direct strikes affecting civilian shipping, including inside or immediately bordering Romania's and Bulgaria's territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone this month, have now directly led to the loss of lives. Across parts of Europe, these are not isolated incidents. They are repeated and increasing in frequency and scope

We reaffirm our steadfast support for the security of our Allies impacted by the Russian Federation's destabilizing and escalatory actions, including hybrid threats and other malign activities, and reiterate our commitment to collective defence and transatlantic security through NATO, recalling that NATO is a defensive Alliance.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.