

Joint Statement of the OSCE PA Bureau

Action on the One-Year Anniversary of Russia's War Against Ukraine and the International Legal Order

24 February 2023

On 24 February 2022, the Russian Federation, under the direction of President Vladimir Putin and with the support of Alexander Lukashenko of the Republic of Belarus, launched a full-scale military invasion and war of aggression against Ukraine, dramatically escalating the illegal and unjustifiable violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity it has perpetrated since 2014.

Consistent with its condemnations of Russian aggression toward Ukraine since the OSCE PA's 2014 Baku Declaration, this Assembly denounces Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine as constituting clear, gross, and uncorrected violations of its commitments under the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE commitments. Russia's conduct of its war of aggression has been marked by extreme and deliberate brutality; the indiscriminate targeting of Ukrainian civilians and destruction of civilian infrastructure; the use of torture and rape as weapons of war; the kidnapping of thousands of Ukrainian children for forced adoption and assimilation; efforts to assail Ukrainian identity and the destruction of cultural property; and countless other violations of the fundamental tenets of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Meanwhile, Russia's disinformation campaigns, including at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, to deny or obscure the nature of its criminal and barbaric war against Ukraine, are as transparently false as they are repulsive. The truth of Russia's crimes is plain for all to see.

The resistance by the Ukrainian people and their leaders to Russia's invasion has been nothing short of inspirational. They have demonstrated valor, resolve, and dignity. We salute their bravery and are heartened by their hard-won successes in liberating temporarily occupied Ukrainian territory.

Millions of Ukrainian lives have been lost or irrevocably damaged by Russia's actions, and the human costs of Russia's brutal war grow on a daily basis. We recognize the outsized burden borne by Ukraine's neighbors in supporting the Ukrainian people, welcoming refugees into their homes, schools, and workplaces, and alleviating a modicum of the humanitarian suffering wrought by this war.

We recognize that Ukraine's defensive battle against Russia's invasion is not only morally just, but also a defense of the principles and commitments on which our shared security depends, and which underpin this Parliamentary Assembly that brings us together today.

On this solemn anniversary of this tragic and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine, we, members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, pledge to use our voices, votes, and influence as members of our national parliaments to urge our governments and international institutions to:

- Uphold Ukraine's fully justified defense against Russia's illegal and unjustifiable aggression and Ukraine's efforts to restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity to its internationally recognized 1991 borders;
- Support Ukraine through security, humanitarian, economic, and other assistance to contend with the mounting damages Russia's aggression inflicts on a daily basis;
- Impose costs on Russia, as well as on Belarus as long as it supports Russia, in response to Russia's illegal and unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine until Russia reverses course and Ukraine's full sovereignty is restored;
- Never recognize the illegal occupation of Ukraine's territory;
- Counter Russia's efforts, including in this Assembly, to propagate false narratives regarding its war of aggression and the scale of the horrific offenses being committed by Russia's forces and their proxies;
- Condemn violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law by Russia in Ukraine, especially war crimes, crimes against humanity, and acts of genocide perpetrated on the Ukrainian people;
- Provide support to Ukrainian institutions, international organizations, civil society, and media workers who strive to faithfully document such crimes, particularly in a manner that can be used in judicial proceedings;
- In co-ordination with Ukraine, hold accountable those responsible for such crimes, including by supporting existing international judicial structures or mechanisms, and consider the establishment of a special international tribunal for the crime of aggression;
- Support Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction as it emerges from Russia's illegal and unjustifiable assault;
- Examine potential legal mechanisms for the use of frozen assets of the Russian Federation for the reconstruction of Ukraine's ruined critical infrastructure;
- Support the children of Ukraine to overcome the trauma they may have experienced as well as provide educational opportunities;
- Assist Ukraine in recovering or restoring its cultural heritage;
- Advocate for the release of prisoners of conscience in Russia and Belarus, including those unjustly imprisoned for speaking out against this war of aggression;
- Remain alert to, and actively counter, Russia's efforts to undermine the sovereignty and security of any other OSCE participating States.