



**Buantosaireacht na hÉireann**  
**don Eagraíocht um Comhoibriú agus Slándáil san Eoraip**  
Permanent Mission of Ireland to the  
Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe

Rotenturmstrasse 16-18  
1010 Vienna  
Austria

**Statement by Minister of State Burke**  
**OSCE Reinforced PC on 24 February 2023**

Mr Chair

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU and would like to add the following points. I would like to thank the Chairperson in Office, Foreign Minister Osmani, for convening this important meeting and for his leadership of the OSCE at this critical time.

As we mark the first anniversary of Russia's unprovoked war on Ukraine, we see the terrible consequences for Ukraine and its people of the Kremlin's brutal attempts to alter territorial borders by force.

The cold hard reality is that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has needlessly taken many thousands of lives and forced 14 million people from their homes.

Ireland is appalled by continued reports of the detention of civilians and accounts of ill-treatment, torture, intimidation and conflict related sexual violence.

We strongly condemn the forced deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia. Russia's war has also disrupted the education of more than five million children.

Ireland has granted temporary protection to some 75,000 Ukrainians, mostly women and children. Over €50 million has been provided in bilateral support since 24 February 2022 and in-kind support has also been delivered to Ukraine. Ireland is contributing to Ukraine via the EU Budget, including €77million under the European Peace Facility exclusively for non-lethal equipment.

For those who have remained or been internally displaced within Ukraine, Russia's indiscriminate attacks on Ukraine's civilian infrastructure continue to intensify. Energy and even water infrastructure has been cynically targeted in an effort to break the will of the Ukrainian population and increase pressure on Ukraine's partners.

Compounding its attacks, Russia's behaviour around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant is unacceptable and reckless. A catastrophe there would endanger millions in Ukraine and neighbouring countries.

Russia's aggression and cynical tactics have also had impacts far beyond Ukraine's borders. Its weaponisation of food and energy has resulted in high energy prices across Europe, and increased insecurity for vulnerable populations across the Global South.

In the face of the appalling toll of Russia's illegal war, the determination of Ukraine's partners, including Ireland, to ensure accountability for all crimes committed in Ukraine is stronger than ever. We are resolved to defend the rules

based international order, the UN Charter and the OSCE acquis. The protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is a cornerstone of this approach.

Mr Chair

Ireland is concerned about the ongoing unjust detention by Russia of three OSCE SMM staff. I renew my Government's call for these staff to be immediately and unconditionally released.

Finally, let me commend OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid and the staff of the OSCE Secretariat, autonomous institutions and field missions for their important work and support to Ukraine.

Thank you.

[440 words]