



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

1560th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

16 April 2026

Monsieur le président,

En premier lieu, suite aux tragiques incidents en Turquie, je partage nos sincères condoléances et nos pensées sont avec les victimes, leurs familles et le peuple turque.

Au cours des deux dernières semaines, la Fédération de Russie a mené des frappes soutenues et de grande ampleur par missiles et drones à travers l'Ukraine, touchant de multiples régions, y compris des zones éloignées des lignes de front. Les rapports récents confirment que les frappes menées durant cette période ont visé d'importants centres de population, notamment Odesa, Kharkiv, Kyiv et dans l'oblast de Dnipropetrovsk, causant la mort et des blessures parmi la population civile.

Selon le Bureau de la coordination des affaires humanitaires de l'ONU (OCHA) les attaques contre Odesa et d'autres zones urbaines ont perturbé l'approvisionnement en électricité des quartiers civils. La Mission de surveillance des droits de la personne des Nations Unies en Ukraine a publié le 10 avril des informations faisant état d'une augmentation des victimes civiles à l'échelle nationale des civils étant touchés tant à proximité des lignes de front qu'au cœur du territoire ukrainien.

Les frappes russes contre les infrastructures essentielles ont des effets en cascade sur l'accès à l'électricité et aux services de base, aggravant les besoins humanitaires et les risques pour les populations vulnérables sur le court et long termes.

Mister Chair,

Canada recalls that the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine constitutes a clear violation of the principles of the UN Charter and Helsinki Final Act, including respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the inviolability of borders.

Against this backdrop, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stated on 12 April that disagreements between Kyiv and Moscow are limited to a few kilometres.

This characterization diminishes what is being demanded: that Ukraine accept the redrawing of its internationally recognized borders by force, legitimize attempted annexations of its territory, and surrender its sovereign right to determine its own political, security, and international alignments. Would any of us in this room accept these conditions?

The language of “kilometres” erases the human reality of this war, which is recognized in the OSCE’s comprehensive concept of security. Each kilometre represents homes and communities whose inhabitants face displacement, insecurity, erasure of their identity, and a grim life under Russian occupation.

Therefore, calling it “just a few kilometres” amounts to nothing more than wishful thinking. This is an inventive fallback when more traditional options aimed at subjugating Ukraine have fallen short. However, international law does not recognize borders created by visualization.

Mister Chair,

In this context, Canada recalls that Ukraine is exercising its inherent right of self-defence, consistent with the UN Charter and international law.

Continued political, military, and practical assistance enables Ukraine to protect its population, sustain essential state functions, and mitigate humanitarian harm. It also reinforces the principles at the core of the OSCE’s comprehensive concept of security, which derive their strength from consistent defence, especially when they are most clearly violated.

Ukraine is a test for us all, including whether the OSCE remains a credible framework for cooperative security, or whether its core norms can be eroded through endurance and coercion. Our actions will shape the expectations of behaviour across the OSCE area for years to come.

For these reasons, Canada firmly believes that a just and lasting peace must rest on international law, as enshrined in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.

Canada will continue providing multifaceted support to Ukraine in defending itself against attacks on the battlefield, in political and diplomatic fora, in the information space, and in efforts to document violations and promote accountability. This support reflects our conviction that assisting Ukraine is inseparable from defending the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and respect for international law that underpin our security.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.