



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY CHARGÉE D'AFFAIRES KATHRYN POWERS
UNDER AGENDA ITEM:**

The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

1574th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

23 July 2026

Mr. Chair,

Russia's relentless assault on Ukraine, day after day, continues to drive civilian casualties to ever higher levels. Recent UN reports show that civilian casualties in Ukraine are on a clear upward trend, and increased sharply in recent months, reaching their highest monthly levels since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. Russia's extensive use of long-range missiles in highly populated areas far from the frontline is reportedly the main factor for this increase. Closer to the frontline, civilians report feeling hunted by short-range drones while carrying out the most ordinary daily activities. The overwhelming majority of civilian casualties occur in Government-controlled territory of Ukraine.

The civilian suffering in Ukraine is the direct and foreseeable consequence of Russia's war of aggression. It is the result of a deliberate decision to continue a conflict that has inflicted immense suffering on civilians.

We note that neither our calls to end this war, nor the mounting civilian casualties has altered Russia's conduct. We draw from this the unfortunate conclusion that the Russian Federation has no intention of changing course voluntarily, even if doing so would spare lives on both sides. Continued pressure on Russia, including through sanctions in coordination with allies and partners, and steadfast support for Ukraine as it exercises its inherent right to self-defence, will therefore remain the means by which we will seek to persuade Russia to change course.

Mister Chair,

Canada condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the Russian Federation's illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine, which has been ongoing since 2014 and constitutes a violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, and runs counter to the Helsinki Final Act.

We affirm Ukraine's right of self-defence, as enshrined in Article 51 of the UN Charter, and remain committed to supporting Ukraine in exercising this right through appropriate assistance, including military assistance and training through Operation UNIFIER.

The Russian Federation is responsible for starting this war of aggression and for its devastating consequences. The immense human suffering and civilian casualties, including in Russia, are a direct result of this unilateral decision.

We remain committed to ensuring accountability for the crime of aggression and other violations of international law committed by the Russian Federation, and to supporting relevant international investigative and judicial mechanisms in doing so.

We reaffirm our steadfast support for the security of our Allies subject to 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.

Mr. Chair,

We reiterate the following calls upon the Russian Federation:

To immediately and unconditionally release the unlawfully detained officials of the OSCE, Vadym Golda, Maksym Petrov and Dmytro Shabanov, and request the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Secretary General to prioritize their release.

To release all unlawfully detained civilians and to ensure the safe return of thousands of Ukrainian children unlawfully deported or forcibly transferred from Ukraine or within its temporarily occupied territories.

And finally, to cease its aggression immediately, to withdraw all its armed forces, proxies and military equipment from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine, and to engage in good-faith diplomatic efforts consistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.