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Delegation of Canada

**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR VÉRONIQUE PEPIN-HALLÉ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF CANADA TO THE OSCE, AT THE 1573rd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 July 2026

The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine's sovereignty, security, and ability to defend itself remain critically important for the collective security of our region. In this regard, we thank France for hosting the important Leaders' meeting of the Coalition of the Willing this past Monday. To this end, we will continue our multifaceted support to Ukraine and will continue to pressure the Kremlin until it meaningfully engages in negotiations towards a meaningful peace.

Mister Chair,

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 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.

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. Chairperson,

We reiterate the following demands as far as the Russian Federation is concerned:

- To immediately and unconditionally release the illegally detained OSCE officials, namely Vadym Golda, Maksym Petrov and Dmytro Shabanov, and we call upon the OSCE Chairmanship and the OSCE Secretary General to make their release a priority.
- To release all illegally detained civilians and to ensure the safe return of the thousands of Ukrainian children who have been unlawfully deported or forcibly transferred out of Ukraine or to that country's temporarily occupied territories.
- Finally, to put an immediate end to its aggression, to withdraw all its armed forces, representatives and military equipment from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine, and to engage in good faith in diplomatic efforts in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.