



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

Statement on the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

**As delivered by Permanent Representative of Slovenia
Ambassador Barbara Žvokelj
at the 1359th (Special) Meeting of the Permanent Council of the OSCE
27 February 2022**

Mr. Chairperson,

It is difficult to say something new, but I would like to reiterate and add some of our national remarks to what we have already expressed through EU statement.

Today's images from Ukraine seemed an unrealistic scenario a week ago. As the events in and around Ukraine are unfolding fast, so are growing our concerns, especially for civilian population. We strongly condemn the direct targeting of civilians and deplore the tragic loss of life, human suffering and destruction. We call on Russia to respect international humanitarian law and to allow unhindered humanitarian access and assistance to all persons in need, including the staff of Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. "The Children of Ukraine need peace. Desperately. Now" (UNICEF).

We reiterate our call on Russia to immediately stop the aggression on Ukraine.

Responsibility for this act of war lies with Russia. They violate international law and disregard our shared principles. Not the People of Russia, but their leaders.

The logic of Putin turned out to be illogic. He was continuously opposing the Ukrainian membership in NATO because this would move the NATO threat directly to the Russian border. Now he is invading Ukraine and coming to the NATO border himself.

Standing in solidarity with Ukraine and its people Slovenia has already responded with humanitarian aid and in accordance with the request for international assistance for Ukraine in the field of civil protection, closed the airspace for any aircraft registered in Russian Federation, provided material assistance as well as arms and equipment and we will continue to help. For Ukrainians to defend themselves, and defend all of us. They need our help! And, they need it on time.

Putin has, on several occasions, denied the very existence of Ukrainian people. And, in these last days, more than ever, Ukrainians demonstrated what Putin doubted – Ukraine is a nation. They are now giving their lives to defend their country.

Slovenia continued to stand with Ukraine also in co-sponsoring the UN Security Resolution. At the same time, we deplore the misuse of veto by Russian Federation,

preventing the UN Security Council from upholding its responsibility to maintain international peace and security. Together with Ukraine and partners, we will work to put forward a General Assembly resolution to demand immediate withdrawal of Russian forces.

We reiterate our unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders including autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol and will never accept territorial changes as a consequence of the use of force.

This must not and will not remain without consequences. We will support all measures that will be adopted as a response to this invasion.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask to add this statement to the journal of the meeting.

Thank you.