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Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE
1455th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 December 2023

Mr. Chair,

On the day of our last Council meeting, November 23, Russian forces shelled the Kherson region 119 times. Three civilians died and 11 more, including 2 children, were injured in what Ukrainian authorities describe as deliberate targeting of civilian areas. This attack preceded a Russian missile attack in Donetsk that hit a hospital, killing three and injuring at least eight.

The next day, on November 24th, Russian forces destroyed a children's library in the Kherson region, denying Ukrainian children the option of even vicariously escaping the hell Russia has brought them.

The night after, on the eve of Holodomor commemorations, Russia launched a record number of Shahed drones against Ukraine. Some 75 drones targeted the capital and subjected locals to hours of continuous air raids. Fortunately, Ukraine thwarted the attack, but falling debris reportedly injured several, including an 11-year-old child. Residential buildings were damaged, among them a kindergarten.

And the night after that, Russian forces attacked a thermal energy plant, for the fifth time in November.

And the attacks kept coming, day after day, night after night, without a pause.

On November 30th, the first day of the Ministerial Council, as Foreign Minister Lavrov lectured us about the dangers of a defensive alliance, his country's forces were attacking Donetsk with missiles, killing at least two people and injuring at least ten, including four children.

We repeat, once again: civilians and civilian infrastructure are not legitimate military targets and attacking them could constitute war crimes.

In the meantime, nuclear safety concerns continue to grow due to Russia's irresponsible occupation of Europe's largest nuclear power plant. The Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant lost off-site power for the eighth time since February 2022, and had to rely on diesel generators to cool its reactors and for other essential nuclear safety and security functions, said Director General of the IAEA.

Mr. Chair,

Over the last week, a lot has happened on the international scene.

Starting with our own Ministerial Council: I took away from our discussion strong support for Ukraine, and an overwhelming call for Russia to end its illegal war and withdraw from Ukraine – troops, equipment, and all.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also re-affirmed Canada's commitment to Ukraine at the Canada-EU Summit in November. Canada will continue to provide military and defence support to Ukraine, and ensure Ukraine has the long-term security commitments it needs while it pursues its Euro-Atlantic integration. In this regard, the Prime Minister announced Canada's latest donation of military equipment to Ukraine, including almost \$60 million worth of assault rifles, machine guns and 9 million rounds of ammunition.

In our support to Ukraine, there is fortitude and determination, not fatigue.

Mr. Chair,

The world is growing tired of Russia's disrespect for international law and the rules-based international order, and no longer sees Russia as a constructive force in the world. Russia's influence is waning significantly.

A month ago, Justice Kirill Gevorgian of Russia lost his bid for re-election to International Court of Justice, and for the first time ever there is no judge from the USSR or Russia on the Court.

Shortly after, Russia was ousted from the UNESCO Executive Board, having lost its seat there, also for the first time in history.

Earlier in October, Russia failed to secure a seat on the UN Human Rights Council.

Last week saw two failed re-elections in a single week.

Russia was voted out of the OPCW's governing body, also for the first time ever. We congratulate Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania for being elected to represent the Eastern European group, and we have no doubt they will uphold the object and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention, including holding Russia accountable for its violations.

Russia also failed to be re-elected to the International Maritime Organization's governing body for the first time in history.

And though not recent, Russia failed to be re-elected to the International Civil Aviation Organization's governing Council in October of last year.

A country that has violated international law, targeted cultural heritage sites, committed egregious human rights violations, poisoned its own citizen with nerve agents, targeted civilian ships and violated Ukraine's airspace is not fit to influence the work of bodies who work to protect the world from these crimes and violations.

Russia is a master of its own self-isolation.

We call on Russia to withdraw its troops and equipment from all of Ukraine's internationally recognized territory and to end this bloody war that has already taken the lives of too many.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.