



United States Mission to the OSCE

The Russian Federation's Ongoing Aggression Against Ukraine

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Katherine Brucker
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 18, 2024

On April 11th, Russia carried out yet another devastating attack on Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Russia targeted infrastructure sites across Ukraine, destroying the Trypillia Thermal Power Plant, the main electricity supplier for three oblasts. This deprived people across the country, including 240,000 civilian residents of Kharkiv, of heat, water, and electricity.

The bombardment is an acute reminder of Vladimir Putin's persistent efforts to break the spirit of the Ukrainian people and plunge them into darkness. These large-scale attacks are horrifying. Yet no less so than the smaller attacks taking place almost every day, relentlessly, killing civilians across Ukraine. Today, I would like to raise just a few examples:

On April 7th, Russian forces launched two surface-to-air missiles and drones at Kharkiv, killing at least seven people and badly damaging nine apartment buildings.

On April 8th, Russian forces bombarded a settlement in Donetsk, reportedly killing five residents, including a child.

On April 9th, a Russian missile struck a factory in the city of Zaporizhzhia, reportedly killing at least three civilians and injuring at least eight others.

On April 11th, attacks in both Odesa and Kharkiv killed seven people. This included two women and a 14-year-old girl at a pharmacy. In Odesa, on the same day as the city commemorated its World War Two liberation from the Nazi invaders, four people, including a ten-year-old girl, were killed by Russian attacks.

And yesterday, on April 17th, a large Russian Federation attack on central Chernihiv reportedly killed 18 and wounded another 78.

I would like to remind us of what the Representative of the Russian Federation told us all in the Permanent Council on February 24th, 2022. He said "this is, of course, not a war, as many participants in today's discussion are trying to portray it. No missile, air or artillery strikes are being carried out on the cities of Ukraine or on the civilian population. A 'special operation' is being conducted, in the course of which high-precision weapons are being deployed to disable military infrastructure facilities."

This lie is one in an endless litany of lies over the past two years, designed to distract and deaden us to the shocking reality of Russia's brutal war against its sovereign neighbor and to inure us to Russia's violence. Last week, we again heard the Russian Representative's false and appalling assertion that the accounts of atrocities in Bucha were manufactured for propaganda purposes. A shameful claim. The evidence makes plain the awful truth: that members of Russian forces raped, tortured, and murdered scores of civilians in Bucha. History, contrary to Russia's assertion, is not on its side. The truth is out, and all the Kremlin's disinformation will not make it otherwise.

The United States will continue to work with all of our international partners, including here in the OSCE, to expose the brutal reality of Russia's actions in Ukraine and its attempts to evade responsibility. Together, we *will* hold Russia to account.

###