



Statement by Ms. Eva Dröfn Hassell Gudmundsdóttir, Temporary Officer at the Permanent Mission of Iceland, at the 1377th Permanent Council Meeting, Vienna, 9 June 2022.

Mr. Chair, Madame Secretary General,

Iceland fully aligns herself with the statement delivered by the European Union on this agenda item. Please, allow me nonetheless to make a few remarks on behalf of the Icelandic Delegation.

Iceland warmly welcomes the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to the Permanent Council. My country will chair the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe starting November of this year. We attach great importance to the fundamental values of the Council of Europe, including human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, as well as gender equality and the elimination of violence against women.

As over 100 days have passed since the Russian Federation launched an unjustifiable brutal military attack on Ukraine, the importance of upholding these values, the implementation of all OSCE and Council of Europe commitments, as well as the full respect for international law, cannot be stressed enough.

Hard won gains in human rights, in building an international rule-based order, and our efforts to strengthen our common security architecture are actively being rolled back by Russian aggression. This is a development which must be stopped and reversed.

The war has not only caused a humanitarian and refugee crisis, it has also caused a human trafficking crisis, where Ukrainian women and children are being targeted for the purposes of trafficking and exploitation.

This war is testimony to the necessity of the full realization and implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. We strongly condemn the emerging pattern of the systematic use of sexual and gender-based violence by Russian troops in Ukraine.

Russia's illegal and unjustified invasion of Ukraine has caused a serious threat to European and global security on many fronts, including economic, energy, food and nuclear security, and the looming threat of famine for a great proportion of the global population demands an urgent response.

Madame Secretary General,

It is our firm belief that the only means of resolving disputes in the international systems is through peaceful approaches and diplomacy, carried out in good faith and grounded in international law and practice. This brutal war must be stopped.

We urge Russia to shoulder its responsibility as a member of the international community, to immediately stop the unjustifiable military aggression, unconditionally withdraw its troops from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine and abide by its international commitments.

We reiterate our unwavering support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine and demand that Russia does the same.

To conclude, I would like to express our gratitude for your address here today, Madame Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and we wish you continued success in your work. My country looks forward to cooperation during our Presidency, with the values of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, as a guiding light.

I thank you.