



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR VÉRONIQUE PEPIN-HALLÉ
UNDER AGENDA ITEM:**

The Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

1538th SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

16 October 2025

Mr. Chair,

With winter approaching, Russia has again turned to Ukraine's energy infrastructure — the same failed strategy it has pursued each winter since 2022. Despite three years of effort, Russia has neither broken Ukraine's will nor gained strategic advantage. What it has achieved, is only the systematic destruction of civilian infrastructure and the deliberate infliction of hardship on the Ukrainian people.

Canada fully supports the Troika statement of 13 October condemning Russia's renewed missile and drone campaign against Ukraine's energy facilities.

Moscow's previous claims that such sites are "legitimate military targets" is difficult to reconcile with the civilian impact, timing, and repeated nature of these strikes. We remind the Russian Federation of the principles of distinction and proportionality.

We note Russia's representatives often lament the "consequences" their population faces from this war. The truth is simple: those consequences are self-inflicted. Moscow alone chose this path, and it can end it by stopping the shelling and bringing its troops back on the Russian side of the 1991 established border.

Mr. Chair,

Our statement last week held an editing error that referred to Russia's involvement in Yemen and I wish to retract this allegation. This being said, we note with concern that the Russian delegation did not deny the use of dirty and inhumane double tap strikes tactics in Syria and Ukraine. How could they? Russia's actions in Syria and Ukraine are well documented and reflect an overall disregard for international law and international humanitarian law.

Russia's repeated use of "double-tap" strikes in Ukraine reflects a calculated approach to warfare to impede life-saving work and inflict maximum punishment on the civilian population. Since the start of the full-scale invasion, dozens of such incidents have been recorded. Most recently, on October 10 in Zaporizhzhia, a rescuer was wounded in a second strike as emergency teams worked the scene.

Sadly, we can share further examples of such punitive actions against humanitarian operations.

Recently, the United Nations has reported that the Russian Federation attacked a clearly marked UN humanitarian convoy in the Kherson region. UN vehicles delivering essential aid from the World Food Programme, OCHA, and WHO came under Russian artillery and drone fire. Two WFP trucks were destroyed. This was not a case of missile misfire. Russia released the footage showing a first-person view drone, deliberately attacking the well identified UN convoy.

Mr. Chair,

Beyond the battlefield, Russia's disregard for international rules also extends to the maritime domain. The working group co-chaired by Canada and Denmark on shadow fleets recently met to counter the activities of shadow fleets engaged in illegal and dangerous operations. These activities, which aim to circumvent sanctions, evade insurance standards, and conceal the transport of sanctioned goods, contravene International Maritime Organization resolutions and undermine our shared commitments within the OSCE to behavior based on international law.

Canada will continue to support Ukraine's defense, strengthen collective measures to increase the cost of Russia's aggression, and uphold international accountability for violations of humanitarian and international law.

In this context, we once again call on the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally release the three OSCE staff members it continues to detain. Their detention is unjustified and symptomatic of a disregard for the principles of our organization and international law in general. These detentions do nothing to further Russia's hegemonic aspirations; on the contrary, they are counterproductive.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.