

The UK stands with Ukraine in our unwavering commitment to a just and lasting peace: UK Statement at the UN General Assembly

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Statement by Steven Doughty MP, Minister of State for Europe, North America, and the Overseas Territories, at the General Assembly's General Eleventh Emergency Special Session on Ukraine.

I want to start by speaking directly to President Zelenskyy and you, dear Mariana, and all Ukrainians who have carried this war on their shoulders for four long years.

The United Kingdom stands with you, in our unwavering commitment to a just and lasting peace.

And we salute your courage, and dear members of this General Assembly, despite the claims of the Russian representative, I tell you that Ukrainian civilians are living under relentless missile and drone attacks on their homes, businesses, hospitals and schools.

Since October alone, Russia has fired almost one thousand missiles and tens of thousands of drones.

Millions have been left without heat or power, in temperatures falling to minus twenty.

And like some in this room, I, too, have been in Kyiv under bombardment and have seen the destruction and the damage with my own eyes.

This is the reality of Russia's war.

But of course, the truth is that Russia is failing on the battlefield, so it is weaponising winter.

And it is stepping up attacks on civilians, it is tearing families apart, through death, displacement and deportation.

In a particularly heinous act that shames our world, Russia has abducted tens of thousands of Ukrainian children, ripping them from their communities and attempting to erase their identities. And UN reports have pointed to extensive evidence of men, women and children being subjected to sexual violence.

But let me clear, dear members of this Assembly.

Russia's war against Ukraine is a flagrant violation of the UN Charter.

And it has involved countless violations of human rights.

And it must end.

But the path to peace is clear.

Ukraine agreed to a full, immediate and unconditional ceasefire almost a year ago.

Russia must now do the same.

It must engage meaningfully with the US-led peace process.

Withdraw its troops.

Return every stolen child and every prisoner of war.

And let there be no doubt – Russia must and will be held accountable for the crimes it has committed.

Because peace built on anything else less than this will not last.

And that is why the UK and France are leading a Coalition of the Willing, with partners from across Europe, alongside Canada and countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Together, we are supporting Ukraine now and working to ensure that any peace endures.

As Minister responsible for Europe, Ukraine has been at the centre of my discussions with partners around the world.

We are increasing pressure to choke off the Russian war machine, including through sanctions.

And we are keeping the focus firmly on a just and lasting peace.

Madam Chair,

The UK has also signed a 100-year partnership with Ukraine, making clear our long-term commitment to a sovereign, secure and independent future for Ukraine.

Our support is practical and sustained. We are helping to protect Ukrainian skies.

We are supporting urgent energy repairs, so schools can open and hospitals can function.

We are providing generators, equipment and protection for critical infrastructure.

Indeed, today, we have announced another twenty million pounds in support for Ukraine to fix the damage caused to its energy grid by Russia's brutal attacks.

And we are also working relentlessly for justice, so that Russia's crimes are documented and answered for.

So, I say to members of this Assembly:

Remain steadfast in your commitment to the UN Charter.

To the principle that international borders must not be changed by force.

Because the consequences of this invasion reach far beyond Europe, whether that is in relation to food security, energy markets or indeed global stability and security.

If we turn away from our common values and the laws that uphold the international system, the consequences will be graver still for all of us, for all of you, and all of your peoples.

And I say to the people of Ukraine:

We know you are fighting for your freedom and your security.

But also for the freedom and security of all nations.

Your courage will never be forgotten.

It inspires this Assembly.

It inspires the people of the United Kingdom.

And it reminds the world what is at stake when aggression goes unanswered.

We know that all too well from our own history.

And that is why we must continue to speak with clarity, unity and resolve.

Russia can end this war.

It can do so tomorrow, by withdrawing its troops, ending its atrocities, ending its attacks on civilians, and children, and innocent civilians across Ukraine.

Until then, this Assembly has a duty:

To keep the truth on record.

To build and sustain global pressure.

And to stand, unmistakably, on the right side of history.

On the side of peace, of sovereignty and of justice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-uk-stands-with-ukraine-in-our-unwavering-commitment-to-a-just-and-lasting-peace-uk-statement-at-the-un-general-assembly>