UK reaffirms support for Ukraine’s legal right to self defence: UK statement to the OSCE

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The UK reaffirms Ukraine’s right to self defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter and voices concern over external military and dual use support to Russia, stressing the need to uphold international law and maintain regional and global security.

Madam Chair, the United Kingdom reiterates its unwavering support for Ukraine as it exercises its inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter, in response to Russia’s unprovoked, unjustifiable and illegal war of aggression. Russia’s ongoing invasion constitutes a manifest violation of the prohibition on the use of force and of the most fundamental principles underpinning European and global security.

As Ukraine faces sustained and intensified attacks across its territory, recent OSCE reporting shows that Russia’s missile and drone strikes have targeted critical civilian and energy infrastructure, including medical facilities, power substations, and nuclear safety-related electrical infrastructure, causing widespread civilian casualties, energy outages, and severe humanitarian impacts. Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population and civilian objects is a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

In this context, the provision of weapons and ammunition to Ukraine by partners, including the UK, is fully consistent with international law. Under Article 51 of the UN Charter, Ukraine retains the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence in response to armed attack. Supporting Ukraine strengthens the rules-based international order; it does not undermine it.

By contrast, Russia continues to seek illicit external support to sustain its aggression. Open-source intelligence indicates that the DPRK has supplied munitions and ballistic missiles used against Ukrainian cities, in violation of multiple UNSC Resolutions on DPRK arms exports.

The People’s Republic of China has supplied large quantities of dual-use goods, microelectronics, machine tools, optics, and UAV-related technologies that fuel Russia’s weapons production. As previously reported in this forum, over 73% of Russia’s dual-use imports since February 2022, worth approximately $16 billion, originated from China, including nearly 90% of semiconductors imported in 2023.

Iran also continues to supply Russia with weapons components and systems enabling attacks on Ukraine, including UAV (including Shahed) technologies and missile-related items, in violation of the prohibition on Iranian arms exports reinstated by the snapback of UN sanctions on Iran in October 2025, which called upon Iran not to undertake activities related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons and restricted missile-related transfers for eight years.

Collectively, all these transfers represent a deliberate and persistent pattern of unlawful support to an aggressor state — support that violates international non-proliferation obligations and undermines the security of every OSCE participating State.

Madam Chair, Russia’s actions continue to endanger regional stability and global security. Russia’s

violations of international law must be met with resolute, coordinated international action. The United Kingdom will continue to support Ukraine for as long as necessary. So we will repeat: the provision of weapons and ammunition to Ukraine by partners, including the UK, is fully consistent with international law. Under Article 51 of the UN Charter, Ukraine retains the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence in response to armed attack.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/uk-reaffirms-support-for-ukraines-legal-right-to-self-defence-uk-statement-to-the-osce