

UK denounces Russia's appalling attempts to legitimise war against Ukraine: UK statement to the OSCE

Thank you, Mr Chair. Since Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, week after week we have seen the brutality of Russia's actions.

The Russian Federation has attempted, in vain, to legitimise its war. This includes in the southern city of Kherson, where Russia has sought to assert its control of the city and surrounding areas through installing a pro-Kremlin administration. So far this administration has stated a return to Ukrainian control is "impossible" and announced a four-month currency transition to the Russian rouble from 1 May. These statements are likely indicative of Russian intent to exert strong political influence in Kherson over the long term.

We are further appalled by reports that Russia intends to stage a referendum in Kherson oblast, in an attempt to provide a pretext for consolidating its control over the area. We saw this in 2014, when Russia held an illegitimate referendum on the accession of Crimea into the Russian Federation to retrospectively justify its seizure of the Peninsula. This so-called referendum was conducted in a heavily militarised environment and was clearly illegal under the Ukrainian Constitution.

The international community refused to recognise the result in Crimea in 2014. We must continue to condemn any referenda Russia attempts to illegitimately conduct on Ukrainian soil. The people of Kherson have bravely demonstrated their sovereign will to resist and remain part of Ukraine. We remain fully committed to the Ukrainian people's right to determine their future.

[As my Foreign Secretary set out in her Mansion House Speech last week](#), we need a new approach, one that melds hard security and economic security, one that builds stronger global alliances and where free nations are more assertive and self-confident. As such, we must double down on our support for Ukraine.

As part of this, the UK will carry on supplying Ukraine, alongside our partners, with weapons, funding and humanitarian aid. We will continue to provide these in response to requests from the Ukrainian Government. [We have provided £220 million in humanitarian aid](#). To date we have also sent over 90,000 ration packs, over 10 pallets of medical equipment, more than 3,000 pieces of body armour, over 80,000 helmets and much more including communications equipment. We have also provided anti-tank missiles, Air Defence systems, and anti-structure munitions.

On 3 May, [the UK announced that we will be providing a new package of](#)

[military aid worth £300 million](#), to support Ukraine's ongoing defence against Russia's illegal invasion. The package includes electronic warfare equipment, a counter battery radar system, GPS jamming equipment and thousands of night vision devices.

[We are also sending a fleet of protective armoured vehicles to Ukraine](#), to safely evacuate civilians from shelled areas in eastern Ukraine. The vehicles will also be used to transport officials from Ukrainian ministries to temporary command posts set up for government work and the rebuilding of key infrastructure, such as energy supplies, in besieged areas. The Ukrainian police and the National Guard will also utilise the fleet to rebuild vital railway lines in the east of Ukraine.

Mr Chair, We provide this support because Ukraine's victory is a strategic imperative for all of us. Our collective security is under threat by Russia's actions. And we will continue to support Ukraine until we have achieved our long-term goal: to ensure that no-one will ever dare to attack it again.

[In the words my Prime Minister used when speaking to Ukraine's Parliament earlier this week](#), this is about Ukrainian democracy against President Putin's tyranny. It is about freedom versus oppression. It is also about right versus wrong. And that is why Ukraine must win.

Thank you. I kindly request that you attach this statement to the journal of the day.