

# Invocation of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism to address Russia's invasion of Ukraine: joint statement

Thank you very much Mr Chair, I am delivering this statement on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Union Member States, and Canada.

Today, our delegations will send the following letter to Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Director Matteo Mecacci, invoking the Moscow Mechanism, with the support of Ukraine, in light of our grave concerns regarding the humanitarian impacts of Russia's invasion and potential for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Director Mecacci,

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation, with the support of Belarus, launched an invasion to wage war against Ukraine. This further invasion took place against the backdrop of ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine that has, since 2014, violated Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters.

The delegations of Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, following bilateral consultations with Ukraine under the Vienna (Human Dimension) Mechanism, are invoking [the Moscow \(Human Dimension\) Mechanism](#) under Paragraph 8 of that document. We request that the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) inquire of Ukraine whether it would invite a mission of experts to address the human rights and humanitarian impacts of the Russian Federation's invasion and acts of war, supported by Belarus, on the people of Ukraine, within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders and territorial waters.

The mission of experts, if Ukraine agrees, could be tasked, inter alia, to undertake the following:

- establish the facts and circumstances surrounding possible contraventions of OSCE commitments, and violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law

- establish the facts and circumstances of possible cases of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including due to deliberate and indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure; and to collect, consolidate, and analyze this information with a view to presenting it to relevant accountability mechanisms, as well as national, regional, or international courts or tribunals that have, or may in future have, jurisdiction

We also request that, should Ukraine agree to a mission of experts, ODIHR provide any relevant information or documentation derived from that mission to other appropriate accountability mechanisms, as well as national, regional, or international courts or tribunals that have, or may in future have, jurisdiction.

Thank you Mr Chair, and I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

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## [Speech UN Human Rights Council 49: UK statement during the Urgent Debate on Ukraine](#)

Mr President, High Commissioner Bachelet, Colleagues,

We, the peoples of the United Nations, meet at a moment of unprecedented threat to the very principles upon which this Organisation was forged: to save ourselves from the scourge of war and protect human rights around the globe. It is essential that we do not turn away.

We have condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine, an unprovoked and premeditated attack against innocent people, and a clear violation of international law.

President Putin lied to the world, staging absurd pretexts and provocations to justify his aggression. Now, civilians all over Ukraine – women, children – are sheltering as missiles hit their homes. Many have already lost their lives. Hundreds of thousands more have been forced to leave their homes, their families, and their livelihoods, to escape Russia's onslaught.

There are multiple allegations of human rights violations and war crimes as a result of Russia's military action.

It is unconscionable to think that a fellow member of the Human Rights Council, a nation that fought courageously with us to defeat fascism, would commit these egregious violations. But President Putin has proved that he has

no respect for human rights, the UN Charter, or international law.

That is why it is essential that this Council establishes a Commission of Inquiry, to investigate alleged abuses and violations of human rights, and violations of international humanitarian law, preserve evidence and prevent impunity. Russia must be held to account for its campaign of destruction.

And we must condemn Russia's actions in the strongest possible terms today – as 141 of us did in the General Assembly yesterday. We call on our fellow Council members to stand by our shared values and support Ukraine's draft resolution, and we encourage all Member States to join us in cosponsoring.

The UK stands with the people of Ukraine in this moment of agony. We salute their bravery and determination as they defend their country and their freedom. We will always support their right to choose their own destiny.

Slava Ukraini.

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## [Foreign Secretary's opening statement at a press conference with Baltic Foreign Ministers, 3 March 2022](#)

Thank you, Minister Landsbergis, for bringing us together here together in Vilnius.

The United Kingdom stands with our allies in doing all we can to support Ukraine against President Putin's war of choice. We must ensure Putin fails in this horrific enterprise and his ambitions go no further.

We were pleased to support Lithuania's leadership referring war crimes to the ICC.

I'm here today in Vilnius with our Baltic friends, because I want to say that the UK's commitment to Baltics and to Article 5 are unyielding.

Our Baltic friends know what's at stake, having long lived in the shadow of Russian aggression, and I admire your courage. We are working together to deliver two clear objectives.

First, Putin must lose in Ukraine. We are helping Ukraine to defend itself. Our defensive weapons from the United Kingdom are now being used to stop Russian tanks. But we need to do more.

Secondly, we must contain this aggression. We are reinforcing NATO's Eastern flank and supporting European security through the UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force.

We are here in the Baltic Region – we lead and have doubled our enhanced forward presence in Estonia. Our allies are leading troops across the Baltics. British military intelligence are working with Lithuania’s military to enhance border defences, including in the Suwalki Gap. 200 troops are doing joint military exercises right now, and we are working together on maritime security.

At the NATO Foreign Ministers’ meeting tomorrow, we will be working together to strengthen our collective defence in the light of the changed security situation across Europe. In terms of supporting Ukraine with defensive weaponry, the United Kingdom was the first European country to give defensive military support to Ukraine – and we are now also supporting with humanitarian aid. We pledged £220 million in aid support to Ukraine – and we are the top European donor. And we will do more.

We have also been on the forefront in tightening the vice on the Kremlin through sanctions, and it is vital at this juncture that we keep the foot on gas.

We have worked with the EU, the US and the G7 to cut off funding for Putin’s war machine, kicking Russian banks out of the financial system.

We have also shut our airspace to Russian planes, and we are fast-forwarding sanctions against Russian oligarchs, but we need to go further.

We need to make sure no Russian bank has access to SWIFT, and we need to go further on reducing dependency on hydrocarbons from Russia, including oil, gas and coal. We have also launched sanctions against Belarus for aiding and abetting aggression.

I will be raising these issues at the G7 tomorrow and also at the European Union Foreign Affairs Council, alongside the US, Canada and Ukraine, who have also been invited in these extraordinary circumstances.

This is a struggle not just for Ukraine’s freedom and self-determination, but for all of our freedom and security. By continuing to respond with strength, we will together ensure that Putin loses.

And we stand with our brave allies here in the Baltics to do just that.

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## [Civil news: updates to electronic handbooks to help with claims](#)

News story

Changes have been made to our electronic handbooks to reflect the latest

guidance.



We have made changes to our electronic handbooks which are available to help you when preparing claims for civil finance and escape cases.

These handbooks are used by our caseworkers when processing your claims.

They were created from real caseworker and provider enquiries. They are designed to help you with your everyday questions on claims in civil legal aid and escape cases.

### **What has changed?**

A full list of the changes is available in:

The updated versions were published on 3 March 2022.

### **How to use the handbooks**

The electronic handbooks contain our operational requirements and guidance.

They should be used together with the cost assessment guidance and relevant contracts.

### **Further information**

[Legal aid guidance](#) – to download civil finance electronic handbook

[Escape cases electronic handbook](#)

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**[First UK-Bangladesh Defence Dialogue](#)**



“Delighted to have been able to initiate our UK-Bangladesh Defence Dialogue. The Dialogue provides an important opportunity for us to reflect on how our strong bilateral defence relationship, established at the time of Bangladesh’s independence over 50 years ago, can be developed in preparation for the next 50. With much in common, including importantly our shared commitment to peace and security, I am pleased that our talks identified so many areas for further cooperation. This effort should make an important and much needed contribution to global peace and security, including towards the free, open, peaceful, secure and inclusive Indo-Pacific that the UK and Bangladesh both want.”

## Further information

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