



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

**Statement by H.E. Dr Anže Logar,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia**

1358th (Reinforced) Meeting of the Permanent Council of the OSCE

24 February 2022

Slovenia on Russian Federation's military operation against Ukraine

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the EU, but please allow me to underline some remarks in my national capacity.

This is already third special Permanent Council meeting this week, as we see the events around and in Ukraine unfolding with blistering speed.

We join the whole OSCE community in condemning in strongest possible terms unprovoked and unprecedented military aggression by Russia and Belarus against Ukraine.

This comes after weeks of intense diplomatic efforts to stop the threats and escalations. Today, they say that diplomacy has failed. But was it really ever in Moscow's genuine interest for it to succeed? Or was it a just a method of buying time?

To illustrate - for weeks, the highest Russian representatives claimed that the troops on the Ukrainian border are just a part of regular drills and that those, who suggest that Russia is preparing an invasion, are the ones who escalate tensions. They were even giving personal assurances that Russia will not be the one to worsen the crisis.

Responsibility for the highly disturbing images that come from Ukrainian cities today does not lie in lack of diplomatic efforts. It lies with two OSCE Participating States, who blatantly violate international law, show utter disregard for our shared principles, and demonstrate that their commitments and assurances are not to be trusted at all.

Aggression against Ukraine, including cyber and hybrid warfare, is a direct threat to European security and global stability. At this very moment, it is putting the

lives of civilian population at grave risk, at the same time threatening the security of the members of the OSCE Special Monitoring mission in Ukraine.

In this regard, we find it particularly cynical that earlier this week, in this very hall, Russia explained that the decision to recognise certain regions of Ukraine is based on humanitarian grounds. There is never anything humanitarian to be found in any aggression.

We call on Russia to stop with this madness and to uphold its commitments, abide by international law and return to the diplomatic discussions. We call on Belarussian regime to stop being an accomplice in this despicable act.

Slovenia reiterates its unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders and will never accept territorial or political change as a consequence of the use of force. We will support all measures that will be adopted as a response to this invasion.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask to add this statement to the journal of the meeting.

Thank you.