

**Statement by Slovenia**

**at the**

**50th Session of the Human Rights Council**

**Interactive Dialogue on High Commissioner for Human Rights oral presentation**

**on the situation of human rights in Ukraine**

***Geneva, 5 July 2022***

Mr President,

Slovenia would like to thank the High Commissioner for her update. We align with the EU statement and would like to deliver the following remarks in our national capacity.

Time and again, we express our condemnation of the Russian unprovoked and unjustified attack on Ukraine that constitutes the most severe violation of the UN Charter. We reiterate our call on Russia to cease its use of force against Ukraine immediately.

We express grave concern over reports on growing number of civilian casualties, including women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities. My country is appalled by attacks on civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, residential buildings and shopping malls, indiscriminate killings, torture and the use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war.

Last week, two Russian missiles have hit a [crowded shopping centre](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/27/russia-ukraine-live-news-kyiv-asks-for-modern-air-defence-system-liveblog) in the Ukrainian city of Kremenchuk, killing at least 16 people and wounding 59.

Mr President,

such indiscriminate attacks are war crimes, they are crimes against humanity.

In the immediate aftermath of the horrendous attack, Russia released a statement claiming that the shopping centre was non-functioning. Similar to the false assertions some weeks ago that the attack on a [maternity hospital in Mariupol](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-trending-61412773) and the [killings of civilians in Bucha](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/60981238) were staged, these are carefully crafted disinformation campaigns by the aggressor.

On the contrary, intensive and wide-scale hostilities, use of explosive weapons in populated areas and targeting of the civilian population are the every day reality of hundreds of thousands Ukrainians living in the permanent atmosphere of fear.

Disinformation violate and abuse the right to privacy and the freedom to seek, receive and impart information. It is the our duty to counter disinformation by safeguarding free, independent, plural and diverse media, ensuring the safety of journalists and media workers online and offline, and providing and promoting access to independent and evidence-based information.

Your reporting to the Human Rights Council, Madame High Commissioner, is therefore of indispensible value.

Thank you.