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**Statement by Ambassador of Iceland, Kristín A. Árnadóttir,  
at the 1416 Meeting of the  
OSCE Permanent Council, 24 March 2023**

*Thank you, Mr. Chair,*

Iceland has aligned herself with the statement made by the European Union but I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Russia's brutal aggression against Ukraine is a blatant violation of international law and a manifestation of the assault on the international rules-based order. Respect for international law, territorial integrity and sovereignty of States and a strong rule-based international order must be the blueprint for relations between States. Not aggression, use of force and violence. Russia's invasion is a stark reminder that international law, human rights and democratic values are not to be taken for granted. We must continue to protect and promote them at all costs, urgently.

Russia can and must stop this war immediately and withdraw all its forces from Ukraine. Ending the war is only the first step. Accountability for international crimes committed within the context of the war, including the crime of aggression, is vital to ensure accountability, a just and lasting peace, and justice and reparations for the Ukrainian nation. There can be no impunity.

As was said in the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine last week, the Russian authorities have committed a wide range of violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, many of which amount to war crimes. This includes use of explosive weapons in populated areas, the wilful killings of civilians, unlawful confinement, torture, rape and sexual violence, as well as attacks on energy-related infrastructure. Of particular concern as well is the deportation and forced transfer of children and young people from Ukraine to Russia, where the objective appears to be to strip them of their Ukrainian identity and roots. These acts were found by the Commission to amount to war crimes.

These horrible crimes and atrocities are not only in violation of our agreed upon commitments and international law. They also go against the most basic principles of morality, respect for human dignity and the rights of the child. Those responsible should be ashamed of themselves.

The decision of the International Criminal Court to issue arrest warrants against Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation, and Maria Lvova-Belova, Commissioner for Children's Rights in the Office of the President, in relation to the alleged crimes of unlawful deportation of children, is in this respect a critical step.

We will continue to support further efforts to ensure full accountability. Iceland expresses its full support to the ongoing efforts working towards this, including the ICC and the Ukrainian courts.

In closing, allow me to reiterate that Iceland remains unwavering in its support and solidarity with Ukraine. We are committed to play our part, including in our role as the Chair of the Council of Europe, and with the Reykjavík Summit in May, to further strengthen our collective resolve.

*I thank you.*