



Statement by Ambassador Kristín A. Árnadóttir, Permanent Representative of Iceland, at the 1366th (Special) Permanent Council Meeting, Vienna, 5 April 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

While Iceland aligns with the statement of the European Union I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chair, dear colleagues,

Iceland condemns in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's war on Ukraine and the atrocities that Russian soldiers have committed against Ukraine and its people. In particular, the unspeakable killings in the town of Bucha as well as other Ukrainian towns.

The wide-ranging consequences of this brutal war by Russia, which continue to unfold and come to light, are tragic for Ukraine, but also the Russian population, the whole of the OSCE region and the entire world. Russia is waging war on the international community's most important principles of peace, human dignity and human rights, truth, the rule of law and democracy.

Furthermore, civilians are being killed in indiscriminate attacks by Russian troops, including by the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects and cluster munitions. Such indiscriminate attacks are a violation of international humanitarian law.

The humanitarian crisis caused by Russia's military aggression towards Ukraine is horrifying. Over 4.2 million people have already fled Ukraine, most of which women and children, exposing them to the horrors of trafficking and gender-based and sexual violence. Notwithstanding increased reports of patterns of sexual and

gender-based violence against Ukrainian women, including those internally displaced, by Russian troops.

Conflict-related sexual violence constitutes a war crime and is an unacceptable violation of human rights and must never be used as a weapon of war.

As we know and have heard yesterday during the Alliance Conference, violent conflict increases vulnerabilities of trafficking. risk of trafficking. We must respond adequately to this reality.

Dear colleagues,

We are extremely grateful for how individual countries demonstrate their solidarity and for the hospitality shown to Ukrainian refugees and we also express our deep gratitude to the efforts of the Polish Chairpersonship in our organization.

Let us be clear. Respect for international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, is not optional.

We call on Russia to withdraw its troops immediately, and to cease the attacks and deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure. We urge Russia to abide to global commitments.

The only way to end this brutal war is through diplomatic efforts, carried out honestly and in good faith.

We express our full and unwavering support for Ukraine and its people.

I thank you Mr. Chair.

And I ask that my statement be attached to the journal of the day.