



**Statement by Ambassador Kristín A. Árnadóttir, Permanent Representative of Iceland, at the 1370<sup>th</sup> Permanent Council Meeting, Vienna, 22 April 2022**

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Iceland aligns with the statement of the European Union yet I wish to add a few remarks in my national capacity. I also ask at the outset that my statement be attached to the journal of the day.

The unprovoked, unjustified, and unlawful war by the Russian authorities against Ukraine has entered a new phase of destruction, atrocities and human suffering.

Last week we were presented with an assessment of our expert team, led by Professor Benedek, Professor Bilkova and Professor Sassoli, on the situation in Ukraine, confirming serious breaches and violations of international law and clear patterns of IHL violations by the Russian forces in their conduct of hostilities.

Russia under the leadership of President Putin, needs to know that not only will the international community 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. Evidence can and will be used to hold Russia and Belarus, the co-aggressor, accountable.

The humanitarian situation keeps deteriorating and needs are dire. The devastating reports of human rights violations, about sexual and gender based violence

against women and girls, extrajudicial killings, arrests, abductions, enforced disappearances, as well as deportations, are bringing echoes of the century past.

Mr. Chair, colleagues,

This war remains a war of choice. The decision was premeditated by President Putin in full knowledge of its violation of international law and commitments, and what the catastrophic impact on Ukraine and its people would be.

Putin and Russian authorities have also chosen to sacrifice the lives of thousands of young Russian men and to harm, and bring sufferings and defame to his own people.

The global impact of the war and Russia's military action is and will continue to undermine the food security, driving up the cost of energy, fertilizers and staple foods in countless nations around the world, the most vulnerable being hit the hardest. The safety of nuclear power plants is being jeopardized and at the same time the security and stability of our region as well as the world.

We reiterate the call on Russia to withdraw its troops and to end this unprovoked war against Ukraine. Save lives. Stop the bloodshed and destruction. Open a window for a diplomatic dialogue and for peace.

Let me also express our deep, unwavering, and full support to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

I thank you Mr. Chair.