

**Joint statement by H.E. Ms. Yevheniia Filipenko,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine on behalf of 45 countries
during the general debate of the 113th session of the IOM Council
(1 December 2022, Geneva)**

Thank you.

I am speaking on behalf of the following 45 IOM Member States – Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Cabo Verde, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Last week marked nine months since the start of the Russian Federation’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

We condemn in the strongest terms the Russian Federation’s unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine which undermines global security and stability, and constitutes a gross violation of international law, including the United Nations Charter.

Russia’s invasion triggered one of the fastest and largest human displacement crises in the world today, with more than 14 million Ukrainians – or one-third of the population having been displaced. Approximately 6.5 million people are currently displaced inside Ukraine, and a further 7.8 million people have been forced to seek safety abroad.

The displacement and existing severe humanitarian crises around the world have been further exacerbated by the Russian Federation’s repeated unconscionable attacks on Ukraine’s critical infrastructure, which have left over 40 percent of Ukraine’s power system damaged and cut off millions of people from access to electricity, water, heating, and supply lines amid temperatures falling to freezing and below.

We deplore in the strongest possible terms Russia’s attempts to “weaponize” the coming harsh winter by plunging the civilian population into darkness and cold. We demand that Russia immediately stop these heinous attacks. Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population and civilian objects is a serious violation of International Humanitarian Law, and contravenes the principles enshrined in the IOM Constitution.

While the unfolding human catastrophe remains our focus, Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine is also having an outsized impact on the global economy. Its ripple

effects are being felt worldwide. Russia's war is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy – constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains, heightening energy and food insecurity, and elevating financial stability risks. The war has worsened a global cost-of-living crisis unseen in at least a generation, undermining our ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

We would like to express our appreciation to IOM for its strong engagement to help meet the needs of those affected by the war, particularly displaced people, including more than 300,000 third-country nationals who have left Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion.

We commend IOM's continued work to facilitate inclusion of refugees into new communities while also stepping up efforts to address gender-based violence and human trafficking. Particular emphasis should be placed on the return of any unaccompanied children who were forcibly separated from their families and transferred to Russia, including those unlawfully transferred in violation of International Humanitarian Law.

Seventeen million people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. We encourage IOM to continue its humanitarian response, including through ramping up winterization efforts, distribution of generators, as well as mental health and psychosocial support to displaced people and affected communities. We also call on IOM to help the Government of Ukraine to rebuild and recover.

In conclusion, we reiterate our demand that Russia immediately stop its war of aggression against Ukraine, unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respect Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and extending to its territorial waters.

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