

**Joint statement by H.E. Ms. Yevheniia Filipenko,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine, on behalf of 44 IOM Member States
during the general debate of the 114th session of the IOM Council
(29 November 2023, Geneva)**

I am speaking on behalf of the following 44 IOM Member States – Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and Uruguay.

We resolutely condemn the Russian Federation's unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine which undermines global security and stability, and constitutes an egregious violation of international law, including the United Nations Charter.

It has triggered one of the fastest and largest human displacement crises in the world, forcing a third of Ukraine's population to flee their homes.

Twenty-one months into Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine, some 10 million Ukrainians remain displaced, including 3.7 million within Ukraine and a further 6.3 million who have sought safety abroad. About 4.6 million people have returned to their place of habitual residence despite safety and security risks persisting in areas of return.

The displacement and severe humanitarian crises are compounded by the Russian Federation's attacks on civilians and critical civilian infrastructure throughout Ukraine.

We deplore the destruction of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant, which has had catastrophic long-term humanitarian, economic, agricultural, and environmental consequences in the region, and severely impacts civilians' enjoyment of their human rights.

We deplore in the strongest possible terms Russia's attempts to "weaponize" again the harsh winter by purposefully destroying electricity, heating, and water supply systems essential for life. We demand that Russia immediately stop these attacks as well as those impacting humanitarian workers and facilities. These actions represent a serious breach of international humanitarian law, and undermine the principles enshrined in the IOM Constitution.

We condemn Russia's attempts to instrumentalize food by blocking food exports and attacking Ukraine's grain storage and shipment facilities, thus fueling global food insecurity.

We also urge Russia to stop the practices of transferring its own citizens as well as migrant workers to the temporarily occupied territories.

We condemn in the strongest terms Russia's unlawful deportation and transfer to Russia of Ukrainian children and other civilians. We are also following the movement of Ukrainian children to Belarus. We stand with Ukraine and its future generations, underline that Ukraine's children are wanted back home, and call for them to be returned to Ukraine.

We commend IOM's protection of, assistance to and support to affected Ukrainians, particularly displaced people, and hundreds of thousands of third-country nationals who left Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion.

We appreciate IOM's continued work to promote the socio-economic inclusion of forcibly displaced Ukrainians and third country nationals into host communities while also intensifying efforts to counter gender-based violence and human trafficking.

Over 17 million people in Ukraine require humanitarian support. We encourage IOM to continue its emergency response, including through cash transfers, scaled-up winterization efforts, as well as mental health and psychosocial support to displaced people and affected communities.

We also call on IOM to increase its valuable support to the Government of Ukraine on recovery, and reconstruction, thus fostering an enabling socio-economic environment for safe, voluntary, and dignified return and sustainable reintegration.

To conclude, 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.

Thank you.