

**Joint statement by H.E. Ms. Yevheniia Filipenko,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine, on behalf of 45 IOM Member States
during the general debate of the 115th session of the IOM Council
(28 November 2024, Geneva)**

I am speaking on behalf of the following 45 IOM Member States – Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, 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.

This war has caused one of the fastest and largest human displacement crises in the world, with almost a third of Ukraine`s population forced to flee their homes.

As Russia`s full-scale aggression against Ukraine reached the grim 1,000-day mark last week, more than 10 million Ukrainians remain displaced, including about 4 million within Ukraine and a further 6.7 million who have sought safety abroad. About 4.3 million people have returned to their homes despite the daily threat of bombardments, mines and other safety risks in their areas of origin.

The displacement and severe humanitarian crises have worsened recently due to the Russian Federation`s intensified attacks throughout Ukraine, which have led to an unprecedented level of civilian casualties and destruction of critical civilian infrastructure not seen since 2022.

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 heinous attacks. Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population and exclusively civilian objects is a serious violation of international humanitarian law, and contravenes the principles enshrined in the IOM Constitution.

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

We condemn in the strongest terms Russia's unlawful transfers and deportations of Ukrainian children and other civilians to Russia and within occupied territories of Ukraine. We reiterate our call on Russia to ensure their safe return to Ukraine and immediately cease forcible transfers and deportations of children and other civilians from Ukraine to Russia.

We also urge Russia to stop transferring its own civilian population as well as migrant workers to the temporarily occupied territories. Instrumentalization of migration for forcible alteration of the demographics, including the ethnic composition in these areas, is unacceptable.

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

We appreciate IOM's continued work to enhance the socio-economic inclusion and access to services of forcibly displaced Ukrainians and third country nationals while also prioritizing GBV response, child protection and counter-trafficking.

We welcome the launch of the IOM Strategic Response Plan for Ukraine and Neighbouring Countries, 2024-2026. With currently over 14 million people in need of humanitarian support, we encourage IOM to continue its emergency response in Ukraine, including through cash transfers, winter-related assistance, as well as mental health and psychosocial support to displaced persons and affected communities.

We also call on IOM to expand 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, reintegration, and advancing durable solutions.

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.