



Statement by Ambassador Kristín A. Árnadóttir, Permanent Representative of Iceland, at the 1379th Permanent Council Meeting, Vienna, 23 June 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

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

Nearly four months have passed since the Russian Federation launched its brutal and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine, a direct attack on our common values and commitments.

Iceland continues to stand with Ukraine, and promote the respect for international law and commitments, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and peace and security. We also attach great importance to the promotion and implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, which is more important than ever during times of war and crises.

The Russian Federation continues to violate international humanitarian and human rights law, by indiscriminate targeting of civilians and civilian objects and infrastructure. While the active hostilities take an unspeakable toll on all civilians in Ukraine, it is evident that armed conflict and crises have a unique impact on women and girls which are faced with increasing threats of rape, exploitation and trafficking.

We remain extremely alarmed by reports of the strategic use of sexual violence by Russian troops against women in Ukraine while acknowledging that other vulnerable groups are also affected.

It is imperative that all international justice efforts address Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and other forms of Gender-Based Violence committed by Russian troops. This is essential for women's rights in Ukraine, the whole OSCE region and the world.

The UN Security Council Resolution nr. 1820 calls upon measures to protect women in conflict, noting that rape and other forms of sexual violence could constitute a war crime and a crime against humanity. Furthermore, the resolution calls upon Member States to comply with their obligations for prosecuting persons responsible for such acts.

Ensuring accountability and restoring peace and security in Ukraine is critical. We urge Russia to immediately stop its illegal military aggression, end the use of CRSV, unconditionally withdraw its troops from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine and abide by its international commitments.

I thank you.