

Emerging evidence of further potential Russian violations and abuses of international law in Ukraine: UK statement at UN Security Council

Thank you President. I thank the previous speakers for their briefings, Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Assistant Secretary-General Kehris and Ms Oleksandra Drik for their briefings.

As we've discussed, today we meet to discuss emerging evidence of further potential Russian violations and abuses of international law.

We are deeply concerned by reporting by the UN, the OSCE and civil society organisations that Russia is systematically detaining, processing and deporting Ukrainian men, women and children, with chilling echoes from European history.

As we have heard, civilians reportedly face interrogation, body searches, stripping, invasive data collection, ill-treatment and torture while passing through 'filtration'.

Those who are deemed most threatening are reportedly held indefinitely in detention centres, while others, including unaccompanied children, are forcibly deported to Russia. Some simply disappear.

So we call on the Russian Federation to allow the UN and other relevant international organisations immediate, full and unhindered access to those held in filtration camps and detention centres. And for these reports to be fully investigated to ensure those responsible can be held to account.

We are concerned, too, that Russia may in fact be using forced deportations and displacement in an attempt, forcibly, to change the demographic makeup of parts of Ukraine.

What does this tell us about Russia's war?

First, it tells us about their method and their disregard for the rules that we agreed and observe here at the UN – the collective rules that bind us together. They act as if the Charter and international humanitarian law do not apply to them.

Second, it confirms this is not just an attempt to destroy Ukraine's democracy, but also Ukrainian identity and culture. Alleged 'Denazification' is a cover for 'de-Ukrainian-isation' and annexation. Mass movements of Ukrainian people give the game away.

Finally, it confirms what has been abundantly clear over the last six months: Russia's army is not being welcomed as it enters Ukrainian territory. This is

a war of conquest, a war of occupation, a war of oppression, and a war to eliminate Ukraine.

So once again we call on the Russian Federation to observe fully its obligations under international law and to bring an end to its illegal invasion of Ukraine.