

Holding Russia accountable for its lies and aggression in Ukraine: UK statement at UN Security Council Arria-formula meeting

It has often been said about propaganda that a lie told often enough becomes the truth.

We have a duty to stop that from happening.

The Russian Federation systematically attempts to spread false narratives about neo-Nazis and imaginary NATO threats against Russia to justify its illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

But it won't succeed because the facts tell a different story.

The truth is:

- Russia was responsible for the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014
- Russia instigated and fuelled a secessionist conflict in Eastern Ukraine, which dragged on for almost 8 years, and led to the deaths of over 13,000 people
- Russian-backed separatists, with a Russian BUK missile, shot down Malaysian flight MH17 over Ukraine, killing 298 innocent civilians; and then
- Russia amassed over 100,000 troops on Ukraine's border, under the false pretence of exercises, and launched a full-scale, unprovoked, premeditated attack against a sovereign democratic state

This invasion has been overwhelmingly condemned by the international community and the Ukrainian people have resisted it heroically.

The Kremlin uses disinformation operations to undermine Ukrainian sovereignty, to create false pretexts, to obscure the truth, and to hide the brutality of its assault on Ukraine's people.

Today's meeting is a further example.

All credible allegations of crimes on the territory of Ukraine should be investigated. We are supporting the Ukrainian Prosecutor General with her investigations into war crimes, as well as the work of the ICC.

We welcome President Zelenskyy's commitment that the perpetrators of all war crimes in Ukraine should face justice. There is no such commitment from the Russian regime.

This is because Russian forces are perpetrating heinous crimes in their desperation to claim military victory. In Irpin, Bucha, Mariupol and

elsewhere, Russians have murdered civilians and buried them in mass graves. Russia has attacked schools sheltering civilians, and abducted and forcibly removed Ukrainians to Russia. These are acts of desperation as Putin fails to achieve his objectives in Ukraine.

In the face of Russian aggression, we must remain resolute in our support for a free, sovereign and independent Ukraine, in our defense of the UN Charter, and in our determination to counter Russian attempts to debase the United Nations as a forum for disinformation.

We must never allow Russian lies to become the truth.

Thank you.