

OSCE calls a Special Council meeting on Russian atrocities in Irpin and Bucha: UK statement, 5 April 2022

Thank you Mr Chair. Each occasion we have met in Special Permanent Council has marked a further appalling development as President Putin pursues his brutal war of choice in Ukraine. But today we reflect on a new and deeply disturbing low – apparent executions in cold blood on a shocking scale.

As Russian troops have been forced into retreat, we are seeing increasing evidence of appalling acts perpetrated by those invading forces in towns such as Irpin and Bucha. Hundreds of bodies have been discovered as towns have been liberated.

We have watched in horror as reports have emerged of men, women and children – and children – killed and mutilated. Of mass graves. And of footage showing people shot at close range, with their hands and feet bound and their bodies left to lie in the street. What further horrors await discovery? This is a great moral stain upon the Russian army, and one which will never be forgotten.

The perpetrators of these appalling acts must be held to account. Deliberate killings of civilians during Russia's illegal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine must be investigated as war crimes. We will not allow Russia to cover up their involvement in these atrocities through cynical disinformation, and we will ensure that the reality of Russia's actions are brought to light. We will not rest until those responsible for atrocities, including military commanders and individuals in the Russian Government have faced justice. [The United Kingdom has been at the forefront of supporting the International Criminal Court's investigation into the situation in Ukraine](#). We led the largest State referral to the ICC in its history. [The OSCE's Moscow Mechanism has an important role to play in contributing to this process](#), and it will continue to have the United Kingdom's full support. Nothing is forgotten, and nobody will be forgotten.

Mr Chair, in this room Russian colleagues have told us they had no intention of invading Ukraine – a lie. They told us Ukraine was bombing their own schools and hospitals – a lie. Now they tell us Ukraine is executing their own civilian population. Have they no shame? There is no flag large enough to cover the shame of killing innocent people.

Mr Chair, the Russian government still has the chance to stop this senseless war. But while Russia continues instead with its senseless barbarity, it is essential that the international community continues to provide Ukraine with the humanitarian and military support it so dearly needs, and that we step up sanctions to cut off funding for President Putin's war machine at source. The world is watching, and we will not forget.

I kindly ask that you attach this statement to the journal of the day. Thank you Mr Chair.