

Prime Minister's speech in Estonia on the Russian invasion of Ukraine: 1 March 2022

Thank you very much, thank you kindly for your welcome great to see you and great to be here again in Tapa, this very important mission.

NATO is perhaps unique in the history of defence alliances because it has stood for over 70 years, not for aggression but for peace and stability.

During those years the alliance has been tested many times – in the Cold War, in the Balkans, in Afghanistan.

This matters because the world has become a more dangerous and a more contested place.

A few short days ago we first stood witness to scenes we hoped we would never see again on the continent of Europe.

A sovereign democratic people fighting for their lives against a foe who wishes to subjugate them by force.

As we realised the terrible extent of President Putin's ambitions.

The world has been rightly united in praise for the valour and bravery of the Ukrainian people, led by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

And I expect, like colleagues here, I have had the privilege of speaking to President Zelenskyy virtually every day since the Russian invasion and have heard first-hand his sheer determination that the freedom his people have experienced must not be snatched away.

And, indeed, it is clearer day by day from the way the Ukrainians are responding, President Putin has made a disastrous miscalculation.

His troops have not been welcomed into Ukraine, as he prophesied, and instead the Ukrainians have mounted an astonishing and tenacious resistance.

We as the international community have a responsibility to do everything we can to help the Ukrainians in their efforts.

And that is why the UK has trained 22,000 members of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and why we have provided further defensive military support to Ukraine.

And we have a responsibility to all Ukrainians, that is why the UK has provided £140 million in humanitarian aid to Ukraine and to the region.

It's why we have deployed both humanitarian experts and hundreds of military

logistics experts to Ukraine's neighbours to help them shelter those seeking sanctuary on their shores.

And it's why we have announced the first phase of a bespoke humanitarian route for the people of Ukraine to come to the UK.

It is also why, alongside allies across the world, the UK has swiftly executed the biggest package of sanctions ever imposed against a G20 nation.

And we've seen organisations from banks to oil companies, to football leagues, to singing competitions make it clear that Putin and his regime must be isolated from the international community for his actions.

As we support the people of Ukraine, we must also shore up our shared resilience – both to protect our people and our values.

These are nothing more than defensive measures – which have been the essence of the NATO for more than 70 years.

I want to be crystal clear finally on that point. We will not fight Russian forces in Ukraine, and our reinforcements – like these reinforcements here in Tapa – are firmly within the borders of NATO members and they are profoundly the right thing to do.