

Russia's actions in Ukraine fall far short of the standard set by the Human Rights Council: UK at UN General Assembly

Mr President,

When establishing the Human Rights Council, this General Assembly unanimously agreed that "members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and the protection of human rights." Russia's actions in Ukraine fall far short of that standard.

We have all now seen the horrific images from Bucha and Irpin of civilians deliberately killed in areas from which Russian forces have recently withdrawn. As President Zelenskyy said to the Security Council on Tuesday, it was difficult to find a war crime that Russia did not commit in Bucha.

Reports of executions, rape and mass graves leave no doubt that Russia has committed gross and systematic violations of human rights: the threshold for suspension from the Human Rights Council. I strongly welcome the General Assembly's decision to send a clear message: Russia has no place on the Human Rights Council.

This vote today delivers another message to Putin, that those who stand by him or speak in his name, must stop killing innocent civilians and end this war now.

Mr. President,

We take note of the fact that following their suspension, Russia has subsequently declared its withdrawal from the Human Rights Council. We understand this will trigger a by-election, and we welcome the opportunity this presents for a Member State from the region, who will genuinely promote and protect human rights, to take that seat.

Mr. President,

Today's vote is a victory for human rights, upholding the credibility of the Human Rights Council and the principles of the UN Charter.

Thank you.