

UN Human Rights Council 50: UK statement on Ukraine and Crimea

Thank you, Mr President.

Let us not beat around the bush. It's 131 days since President Putin unleashed his brutal aggression against the independent sovereign state of Ukraine. 131 days of Russian violations of the Charter, human rights, and international humanitarian law, of a scale and a ferocity that we thought we would never see again on this continent.

Over 14 million displaced. At a conservative estimate, almost 5000 civilians killed. Tens of millions around the world facing hunger as a result of the Russian blockade and attacks on Ukraine's ports. The names of Bucha, Mariupol, Kremenchuk forever etched into our memories.

Let me thank you, High Commissioner, for the work of your monitoring mission, in seeking to bring the facts to light. The truth must be told. Accountability is essential.

For the people of Crimea this story of war began eight years ago. Since 2014 Russia has conducted a brutal and systematic campaign of human rights violations against them. And it is getting worse – persecution of Crimean Tatars is intensifying and last year saw a ten-fold rise in arbitrary detentions.

Mr President,

We will not rest until Russia ceases its illegal war, and withdraws its forces and military equipment from the entirety of Ukraine.

High Commissioner,

How best can we uphold the truth in the face of Russian systematic disinformation?