

Speech by the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the Folketing

Mr. Speaker!

Madam Prime Minister!

Members of the Government and the Folketing!

People of Denmark!

40 missiles.

This is the daily number of different but equally deadly missiles Russian troops use against our state, against Ukraine.

This is the average daily number. 40. More than 1,370 missiles have been used in just over a month of Russia's full-scale invasion of our land.

This morning Russian missiles hit one of our southern cities – Mykolaiv. The city of shipbuilders.

An absolutely peaceful city, which dreamed of only one thing – to restore its glory of the centre of shipbuilding on the Black Sea.

As a result of the strike, the building of the Regional Administration was destroyed. At this time it is known that seven people were killed and 22 were wounded. The search through the rubble continues.

Residents of the Mykolaiv region did not have any military ambitions. They posed no threat to Russia. But they, like all other Ukrainians, believe me, have become a target for Russian troops. For missiles, aerial bombs, rocket artillery, mortars.

The total number of means of destruction that Russian troops have already used against our people on our land simply cannot be counted.

But what can be said is that the intensity and brutality of hostilities against us have reached a level even higher than that of World War II. The most ruinous war for Europe.

One month of hostilities – and we already have not one or two, but a whole black list of cities that were turned to rubble by Russian bombing.

In dozens more cities, towns and villages residential areas were partially burned, infrastructure was destroyed and enterprises where people worked were blown up. Living, ordinary people.

773 educational institutions – universities, schools, kindergartens – were destroyed. 773. Imagine! And dozens of hospitals, churches, even a Holocaust memorial have become targets...

The goal of Russian troops in this war is to completely destroy any basis for normal life for the Ukrainian people. The occupiers are deliberately making sure that nothing is left of Ukraine. Only ruins. Only refugees.

More than 10 million Ukrainians have already fled from their homes because of the hostilities. Almost 4 million Ukrainians have left our country, most of them women and children.

The stories of these people are full of horror.

In those areas where the Russian military have entered, there are still many cars on the curbside that were burned and shot at. Hundreds and hundreds of these cars or what's left of them. The occupiers were killing civilians even as they were trying to escape!

Along with our immigrants in Europe and the western regions of Ukraine, there are children who were simply picked up on the roadside near the bodies of their parents.

In our city of Mariupol which has been under blockade by Russian troops for over three weeks there are still up to 100,000 people. While there was snow people melted it for water. All this time we have

not been able to deliver humanitarian goods to the city – they are simply blocked. Water, food, medicines. Everything is blocked by the Russian military.

More than 90 percent of all buildings in Mariupol were completely destroyed by shelling and bombing. But Russian aircraft strike without a pause. They purposefully blow up even shelters, even though they know for sure that civilians are hiding there – women, children and old people.

What Russian troops are doing to Mariupol is a crime against humanity that is literally being broadcast live in front of the entire planet.

Why is this even possible? Why can't the world stop this flow of Russia's war crimes that have continued since 24 February his year?

The answer is very simple and cynical.

People who make decisions in Russia hope that they will get away with it. Sanctions? They think they can bypass them. An embargo on Russian oil? They see that this is nothing more than just talking about this important topic. And concern, constant concern. An international tribunal? They know that it takes years to bring the perpetrators to account.

This is why we appeal to you and to the entire democratic community of the world: sanctions against Russia must be strengthened! Constantly. We need to give up Russian oil, we need to block trade with the Russian Federation, we need to close ports to Russian ships. And this needs to be a policy of solidarity of the European Union, of all the member states. Everyone.

It is you, in Denmark, the home of the basic principles of the European Union - the Copenhagen criteria - who can feel more than anybody how important it is for a European-wide policy of solidarity to work for pressure on Russia.

This pressure is to ensure that Russia seeks peace. This pressure is to ensure the necessary protection for all the basic values that life in Europe is built on and that have now been completely trampled by Russia in Ukraine.

What can be said about the protection of human rights or freedom on the European continent, when there is no crime against persons and against humanity in general that has not been committed by the occupiers?

They deport our people to Russia by force, rape women and underage girls, they engage in looting.

They have already taken more than two thousand children to Russia, and we do not know where they are, we do not even have a complete list of these children. Do they have families? How will they find their relatives later?

It would be simply impossible for any normal person to imagine the level of evil that was brought to our land!

That is why I call on you to raise - at the level of the European Union - the issue of solidarity in the defence of freedom, in the defence of humanity.

There can be no branch offices of Russia in Europe that split the EU from within, that are trying to help Russia make as much money as possible even now.

Everyone knows very well who in the European Union opposes humanity and common sense. Who does precisely nothing to help establish peace in Ukraine. This must stop and Europe must stop listening to any excuses coming from official Budapest.

I am grateful to Denmark for its principled position. I am grateful to each and every one of you.

I am grateful to your people who help Ukraine and help Ukrainians. To your companies that have decided to leave the Russian market. Mærsk, Jysk, Lego, Vestas, DSV, Arla Foods, Carlsberg and many other companies who have made this important decision.

But I ask you not to stop, to be a leader in Europe in promoting the decisions we really need.

Long before this war, it was clear that humanity should reduce its consumption of fossil fuels. The age of coal and oil has caused grave damage to the environment, to our planet as a whole. Green technologies and green energy are a logical and just answer to this challenge.

European policy is already aimed at reducing the consumption of environmentally damaging resources. But Russia's aggression against Ukraine and against everything that life in Europe is built on is another argument to accelerate green transformation on the continent. Europe must give up Russian oil, give it up as soon as possible!

Because it is exactly the windfall profits from energy resources that allow the Russian leadership to be arrogant. To violate universally recognised rules. To promote hatred against other nations, against us and ruin the lives of neighbouring countries.

If you had to find a total opposite of what is called the "Law of Jante" in your country, it would be the "Law of Russian Oil".

I am confident that together – only together with all Europeans, with all responsible states on the planet – we will be able to overcome this catastrophe.

We will be able to return to peace.

We will be able to live together in the European family.

I hope this will happen very soon. But it depends on how consistent and principled we remain at this time.

At a time when the war continues.

However, we have no right now to think only of war. We know there will be peace. We know that we will be able to return to a normal, peaceful life.

That is why I want to invite you to join our initiative to rebuild Ukraine after the war, after our victory. We invite your companies, your specialists, your state.

Knowing your potential, your creative economic power, I invite your country to take under your patronage one of our beautiful regions – after the war. Of course, after the war.

Mykolaiv, the city of shipbuilders, can be the city, the region that will unite you and us even more. That Denmark can help rebuild.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

People of Denmark!

This is a dark time in Ukraine.

Thousands of candles are lit in our churches in memory of the people whose lives were claimed by this war.

I know that for you the warmth of candle light is a synonym of home comfort and ordinary good life.

The kind of life that today has become an unattainable dream for many in Ukraine. The Russian invasion continues.

But I believe, I know, that we can go back to peace.

And I ask that tonight in your homes you light a candle in memory of all the Ukrainians whose lives were claimed by the Russian aggression.

May the memory of all who gave their lives for our freedom, the world's freedom, live forever!

Glory to Ukraine!