

**62th session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review  
(Air Convention)**

27-31 May 2024

**Statement by Ukraine**

*After the adoption of the agenda of the meeting*

**Dear Chair,**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

*Thank you for giving me the floor now, as what I would like to highlight is related to each of the agenda items of this meeting and many other international fora in the field of environmental protection.*

Unfortunately, a large-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine continues. Active hostilities not only destroy the cities and take innocent lives, but also have a catastrophic impact on the environment and air quality in Ukraine and abroad. We are here today to find solutions to reduce air pollution, yet, in the third year of the full-scale invasion, we face disappointing figures.

As a result of explosions, toxic gases in the amount of seven hundred and eight thousand (708 000) tons are released into the atmosphere, ultimately having global consequences.

The emissions of pollutants into the air from hostilities in the territory of Ukraine are estimated at 24.33 billion euros, with greenhouse gas emissions alone reaching 180 million tons as a result of the war.

There have been 4,926 cases of environmental damage, preliminary estimated at more than 2.4 trillion euros.

Until now, the world has not witnessed the scale of environmental destruction that Ukraine has suffered as a result of Russian war of aggression. Over the past decades, damage assessments from hostilities focused on infrastructure, human losses, and destroyed military equipment. However, our calculations demonstrate that the environmental damage of the war is no less costly than the infrastructure damage.

Daily shelling and targeting of our critical infrastructure and civilian objects cause massive fires, resulting in extensive destruction of ecosystems and significant air pollution.

Almost 90% of forest fires since the beginning of 2022 have been caused by Russian armed aggression. In addition, access to these areas is restricted due to mines and detonating ammunition at the sites of fires.

Russian aggression challenges not only Ukraine, but also the entire system of international law and global security. The best answer to this challenge is to prove that we are not just declaring our values, but also ready to defend them.

The increased level of air pollution caused by aggression must be properly considered and addressed by the Convention and related UN bodies, that should provide an adequate response to this threat.

We call on all distinguished delegations present at this assembly to unite in actions toward restoring a safe environment for all. As a step toward this goal, your engagement in implementing our Peace Formula, ensuring environmental security and addressing the consequences of Russia's war is crucial. We appreciate the support and cooperation shown by many of the parties in facing these challenges.

**Dear Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues,**

Reaffirming our commitment to working for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace, not only in Ukraine but in the UNECE region, we reiterate our demand for the Russian Federation to cease its aggression and withdraw its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine, thus restoring Ukraine's ability to protect and restore the environment within its internationally recognized borders.

*We would like this statement to be included in the report of the meeting.*

**Thank you.**