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Chris Stevenson

Zelensky says world has ‘historic responsibility’ to prosecute putin for war crimes

Зеленський заявив, що світ несе «історичну відповідальність» за переслідування путіна за військові злочини

Редактор The Independent К. Стівенсон присвятив свою статтю аналізу промови Президента України В. Зеленського у Міжнародному кримінальному суді в Гаазі, яку зал зустрів овацією. Автор підкреслив, що український лідер сподівається на притягнення до відповідальності путіна, ордер на арешт якого раніше видав МКС. В. Зеленський, закликав створити повноцінний міжнародний трибунал за скоєними росією злочинами агресії та розкритикував один із запропонованих форматів, так званий "гібридний" трибунал і наголосив, що тривалий мир після перемоги потребує повноцінного правосуддя, а не його гібридних форм.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraine-war-russia-putin-crimes-b2332722.html>

Ukrainian president uses trip to The Hague to call for international tribunal so Russian leader faces justice

Vladimir Putin has to face justice for war crimes in Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky has declared during a visit to The Hague – the home of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

“We all want to see a different Vladimir here in The Hague, the one who deserves to be sanctioned for his criminal actions here, in the capital of international law,” the Ukrainian president said, referring to the Russian leader. “The aggressor must feel the full power of justice. This is our historical responsibility.” Mr Zelensky added that he was sure “we will see that happen when we win... and we will win”.

In March, the ICC issued an arrest warrant for Mr Putin over the suspected deportation of children from Ukraine, which is a war crime. Russia, not a member of the ICC, has called the charges meaningless but the warrant does make Mr Putin’s foreign trips more difficult – with nations signed up to the court obliged to obey.

However, The ICC does not have jurisdiction to try any crime of aggression, with Mr Zelensky using his speech to strengthen calls for an international tribunal to try Mr Putin over the invasion. A tribunal is the only institution capable of responding “to the original crime, the crime of aggression”, Mr Zelensky said, adding: “If we want true justice, we should not look for excuses and should not refer to the shortcomings of the current international law but make bold decisions.”

Mr Zelensky said that 6,139 war crimes were committed by Russia in the month of April alone, resulting in 207 civilian deaths. Eleven of these were children, he added.

Major legal and practical questions remain as to how a legitimate aggression tribunal could be established, either by a group of countries supporting it or with approval from the UN General Assembly. The European Commission supports the creation of a separate international centre for the prosecution of the crime of aggression in Ukraine, and the US has said it would like to see such a tribunal. However, Ukraine’s Western allies differ on the exact form the tribunal should take.

Mr Zelensky's speech – and visit to the Netherlands – came as Russia doubled down on its claim that Ukraine had made an attempt to assassinate Mr Putin with a drone strike aimed at the Kremlin. Mr Putin was not at the Kremlin at the time. Having faced denials from Mr Zelensky and comments from both the UK and US that such pronouncements from Russia should be taken with a heavy pinch of salt, Kremlin's spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, claimed on Thursday the US "dictated" the drone attack plan to Kyiv. An accusation labelled "ludicrous" by Washington

Mr Peskov said: "We are well aware that decisions on such actions, on such terrorist attacks, are not made in Kyiv. But in Washington. And Kyiv is doing what it is told to do. It is very important that in Washington they understand that we know this, and understand how dangerous such direct participation in the conflict is."

In response, the US National Security Council spokesperson, John Kirby, told MSNBC: "I can assure you that there was no involvement by the United States. Whatever it was, it didn't involve us. We had nothing to do with it. Peskov is just lying there, pure and simple."

An adviser to Mr Zelensky, Mykhailo Podolyak, suggested that Russia had "staged" the alleged drone attack. He cited the delay in Russian state media reporting it and "simultaneous video from different angles" that appeared to show the aftermath of the alleged 2.30am attack.

On the battlefield, Ukraine's military claimed three Russian drones that hit the southern city of Odesa early on Thursday had "for Moscow" and "for the Kremlin" written on them. Kyiv was also the target of an air attack for the third time in four days. In total, Ukraine's air forces intercepted 18 out of 24 Iranian-made drones launched by Russian forces in various regions. No casualties were reported. Air raid sirens also sounded in Kyiv later in the day, as darkness fell.

Russia has stepped up attacks as Ukraine makes final preparations for a counteroffensive to try to retake Russian-occupied land in the south and east. Russian shelling in the frontline southern region of Kherson killed at least 23 civilians on Wednesday. In Russia, drones hit two oil facilities in southern regions of the country near Ukraine in what appeared to be a series of attacks on fuel depots.

Mr Zelensky has called on Western allies to send more weapons to Ukraine and used his trip to the Netherlands to press the Dutch prime minister, Mark Rutte, and the prime minister of Belgium, Alexander De Croo, to send advanced warplanes so his country can achieve "justice on the battlefield".

Pledging "unwavering support", Mr Rutte said there were "no taboos" on sending F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, and that discussions were under way with other countries on the matter. However, he added: "We are not there yet."