

President Zelensky's address to the House of Commons in full

Mr Speaker, Prime Minister, Members of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen, I am addressing all the people of the United Kingdom, a country with a big history. I am addressing you as a citizen and the President of another big country with a dream.

I want to tell you about the 13 days of war—a war that we did not start and did not want. However, we have to conduct this war. We do not want to lose what is ours—our country—just as you once did not want to lose yours to the Nazis and you had to fight for Britain.

On day one, at four o'clock in the morning, we were attacked by cruise missiles. Everybody woke up—people, children, the whole of Ukraine—and we have not slept since. We have all been fighting for our country alongside our army.

On day two, we suffered airstrikes, and our heroic military servicemen on the islands fought when Russian forces demanded that they lay down arms. However, we continued fighting, and they felt the force of our people, who will oppose the occupiers until the end.

The next day, artillery started firing at us. Our army showed us who we are, and we saw who are people and who are beasts.

On day four, we started taking people captive. We did not torture them, remaining humane even on day four of this terrible war.

On day five, the terror against us affected our children and cities, and constant shelling happened around the country, including on hospitals. That did not break us, but gave us a feeling of great certainty.

On day six, Russian rockets fell on Babyn Yar, where the Nazis killed thousands of people during the second world war. Eighty years later, the Russian hit them for the second time. Even churches are getting destroyed by shelling.

On day eight, we saw Russian tanks hitting the nuclear power station, and everybody got to understand that this is a terror against everyone.

On day nine, a meeting of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly ended without the result we were looking for. We learned that, unfortunately, alliances do not always work properly, and the no-fly zone was not enforced.

On day 10, Ukrainians started protesting en masse, stopping armoured vehicles with their own hands.

On day 11, children, cities and hospital were hit with rockets and constant shelling. On that day, we realised that Ukrainians have become heroes—entire cities, children and adults. On day 12, the losses of the Russian army exceeded 10,000 people killed, including a general. We were given hope that there will be some kind of responsibility for these people in court. On day 13, the city of Mariupol was attacked by the Russian forces, and a child was killed. The Russians did not allow any food or water, and people started panicking—they do not have water.

Over those 13 days, over 50 children have been killed. Those children could have lived, but these people have taken them away from us.

Ukraine was not looking for this war. Ukrainians have not been looking to become big, but they have become big over the 13 days of this war. We are saving people despite having to fight one of the biggest armies in the world, with its helicopters and rockets.

The question for us now is, 'To be, or not to be'. This Shakespearean question could have been asked over the past 13 days, but I can now give you a definitive answer: it is definitely, 'To be'. I remind you of the words that the United Kingdom has already heard because they are important again. We will not give up, and we will not lose. We will fight until the end at sea and in the air. We will continue fighting for our land, whatever the cost. We will fight in the forests, in the fields, on the shores and in the streets. We will fight on the banks of our rivers, like the Dnieper.

We are looking for help from civilised countries, and we are thankful for this help. I am very grateful to you, Boris.

Please increase the pressure of sanctions against Russia and please recognise that country as a terrorist state. Please ensure that our Ukrainian skies are safe. Please make sure that you do what needs to be done and what is required by the greatness of your country. I wish my best to Ukraine and to the United Kingdom.