Today marks the 300th day of what was supposed to be a “three day” operation. As this calendar year draws to a close, I want to update the House on the illegal, unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the brave defence of the Ukrainian people.

Since it began its offensive on 24 February, Russia has failed to achieve its strategic objectives. Not one single operational commander then in place on 24 February is in charge now. Russia has lost significant numbers of generals and commanding officers. Rumours of General Gerasimov’s dismissal persist as Putin deflects responsibility for continued military failure in Ukraine, high fatality rates and increasing public dissatisfaction with mobilisation is growing. More than 100,000 Russians are dead, injured or have deserted. And Russian capability has been severely hampered by the destruction of more than 4,500 armoured and protected vehicles, as well as more than 140 helicopters and fixed wing aircraft, and hundreds of other artillery pieces.

The Russian Battalion Tactical Group concept, for a decade the pride of their military doctrine has not stood up to Ukrainian resistance. Russia’s deployed land forces’ combat effectiveness has dropped by more than 50%. The Russian Air Force is conducting tens of missions per day as opposed to 300 per day back in March. And Russia’s much vaunted Black Sea Fleet is little more than a coastal defence flotilla. Kremlin paid mercenaries are faring no better. Hundreds were killed by a recent strike on a headquarters used by the paramilitary Wagner group in the Luhansk region.

Behind the scenes international sanctions, including independently applied UK sanctions, have handicapped the Kremlin’s defence industry. Russia is running out of stockpiles and has expended a large proportion of its SS-26 Iskander short range ballistic missiles. It is now resorting to stripping jetliners for spare parts. Its inability to operate independently is underscored by its reliance on Iran’s Shahed drones.

President Putin’s failure to marshal recruits and machinery is translating to battlefield defeat. At the maximum point of its advances in March, Russia occupied around 27 percent of Ukrainian land. Ukraine has since liberated around 54 per cent of the territory taken since February. Russia now controls around 18 per cent of internationally recognised areas of Ukraine. Last Monday the Kremlin cancelled its annual press conference for the first time in a decade.

Almost a year on and the conflict now resembles the attritional battles of World War I. The Russian army is largely fixed in place not just by Ukrainian fire power but by its own creaking logistics system and barely trained troops. Soldiers occupy networks of waterlogged trenches and a vast frontline stretches for 1200 km – the distance from London to Vienna. Despite intense fighting in Donetsk, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions, Russia can barely generate a fighting force capable of retaking lost areas let alone make significant operational advances. Russian public opinion is starting to turn. Data reportedly collected by Russia’s Federal Protective Service indicated that 55 percent of Russians now favour peace talks with Ukraine, with only 25 percent claiming to support continuing the war. In April that latter figure was around 80 percent.

Alongside Russia’s litany of failure is an expanding rap sheet of reported war crimes. According to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, since 24 February, some 6,000 Ukrainian civilians have been killed and nearly 10,000 injured. Every day more allegations emerge of rape, arbitrary detentions, torture, ill treatment, deaths in custody and summary executions. Unrecorded group burial sites have been discovered in former occupied area such as Mariupol, Bucha and Izyum. Industrial facilities such as the Azovstal steelworks and the Azot chemical plant have been targeted – risking the release of toxic industrial chemicals. And the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant – the largest in Europe – has been indiscriminately shelled.

At the start of this invasion Russia planned “kill lists” of civic leaders, show trials and sham referenda but the international community has not been fooled by such tricks.

Russian soldiers have exhumed the bones of Prince Potemkin, the legendary confidant of Catherine the Great. They have looted priceless artefacts from museums. And, according to UNESCO, they have either partially or completely destroyed more than 200 Ukrainian cultural sites. More sinister still they are splitting up families through forced relocation or ‘filtration’ into Temporarily Occupied Territories or Russia itself.

Numerous open-source reports show this morally bankrupt activity is not the work of rogue units or of corrupt individuals.

It is systemic.

Today Russia is weaponizing winter with ongoing and widespread missile strikes targeted at Ukraine’s energy and water infrastructure. More than 40 per cent of Ukraine’s energy infrastructure has been struck. However, Ukraine’s resilience has meant that a significant proportion is back up and running. Such behaviour is a flagrant breach of international humanitarian law and the laws of armed conflict. We are doing everything we can to support the Ukrainian authorities and the International Criminal Court as they investigate.

At the beginning of this year my aim was to help Ukraine resist and give their citizens hope that the Europe they aspire to be part of would support them in their hour of need. And the International Community has not disappointed.

As Russia has changed its tactics throughout this conflict, so we have changed the type and level of our support in the UK. For example, it is Britain’s expertise and advice that is helping Ukraine better coordinate and synchronize its air defence. Our advice helps Ukraine target incoming Russian/Iranian kamikaze drones. We always make sure our support is calibrated to avoid escalation. The House should be under no illusion that it is Russia that is escalating its attacks on Ukraine. And I have made this point clear to my counterpart Minister Shoigu in Moscow.

I wish I could say to the House after 300 days of almost daily defeats Russia would have recognised its folly. Sadly, it has not and there is no let up for the Ukrainians. As we have seen by the weaponization of energy there is no let up for us here in the UK and across Europe from Putin’s war. Therefore, this will require our continued support to Ukraine in 2023 building on our lethal aid, training, humanitarian support and international coordination.

That’s why, as the mercury drops further in Ukraine the UK is doing what we can to help Ukrainians endure the harsh midwinter. The UK has donated over 900 generators to Ukraine and has sent approximately 15,000 sets of extreme cold weather kits to the Ukrainian Armed Forces including cold weather clothing, heavy duty sleeping bags and insulated tents. We anticipate a further 10,000 cold weather kits will be delivered by Christmas. Across the international community, around 1.23 million winter kit items have been donated.

Alongside our global partners, we have implemented the most severe package of sanctions ever imposed on a major economy. Simultaneously, we have galvanised efforts to raise funds to support Ukraine. I chaired my first Ukraine donor conference on 25 Feb and have attended three since then. The UK has been instrumental too in bringing our Northern European neighbours together in solidarity under the auspices of our Joint Expeditionary Force – whose unity was apparent in the meeting in Riga yesterday.

Together this has ensured a steady supply of lethal and non-lethal aid to sustain Ukrainian resistance.

As the threats to European security rise, the UK has also been leading efforts to shore up regional security deploying a number of units across Europe. President Putin wanted to see a weaker NATO. NATO will be even stronger with Finland and Sweden’s decision to accede to the Alliance and I will do all I can to ensure their swift entry into the alliance.

Although our populations continue to struggle with the cost-of-living crisis, the global community must hold its course on Ukraine. The price of Putin’s success is one none of us can afford. We must ensure they maintain their commitment to the Black Sea Initiative which has so far transported 14.3 million tonnes of grain from more than 500 outgoing voyages. We must stop their reckless shelling of nuclear facilities. And we must hold their enablers to account. Iran has become one of Russia’s top military backers. In return for having supplied more than 300 kamikaze drones, Russia intends to provide it with advanced military components, undermining both Middle East and international security. We must expose this deal.

Make no mistake Mr Speaker, the UK’s assistance to Ukraine will remain unwavering and I am grateful to the Prime Minister for his continuing support. We have already committed to match or exceed the £2.3 billion in military aid we will spend this year. We have secured a major deal to keep up the ongoing supply of artillery rounds and will continue refreshing their stocks of air defence and other missiles. Where we have equipment to gift we will replace from our own stocks and where we have no more to gift then we shall purchase alongside our Allies. The UK has been joined by the US in its huge level of support, as well as that of EU members. And, in particular, Poland, Slovakia and the Baltic States.

We are also determined to maintain and sustain the Ukraine equipment pipeline for the longer term. Our International Fund for Ukraine co-chaired by the UK and Denmark has to-date received pledges worth half a billion pounds and it has just concluded its first round of bids for capabilities we plan to rapidly procure in the new year for Ukraine.

Our Armed Forces are doing everything possible to develop the battle skills of Ukrainian men and women. Having put almost 10,000 through their paces in the UK in 2022, my ambition is for our Armed Forces – alongside our allies – to at least double the number trained in 2023. I would like to place on record my thanks to Canada, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, New Zealand, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Australia for their contributions of troops to help train Ukrainians.

Finally, we must help Ukraine rebuild and the reconstruction conference we host next year will accelerate that process.

Mr Speaker, throughout this year I have kept-open communication channels with my opposite number, Defence Minister Shoigu, in order to avoid miscalculations and reduce the risk of escalation. Through written correspondence and a phone call on 23 October, I have repeatedly stressed that Russia must stop targeting civilians, end its invasion, and withdraw its forces from Ukraine.

This year the Ukrainians have been fighting not only for their freedoms but also for ours. We must be clear that three days, or even 300 days, is not the maximum attention span of the West.

The UK and the international community’s dedication to help Ukraine is solid and enduring, and will not let up through 2023 and beyond.

We cannot stand-by while Russia sends these waves of drones to escalate its attack on innocent civilians.

And, just as the UK has evolved our support as the conflict has unfolded; we are doing so again now for this latest phase of Russian brutality, developing options to respond in a calibrated and determined manner should their escalation continue.

Because if the Kremlin persists in its disregard for human rights and the Geneva Conventions, we must insist on Ukraine’s right to self-defence and the protection of civilians.

Mr Speaker, the next year will be critical for all of us who believe in standing-up for freedom, international law, and human rights. I commend this statement to the House.