

**LaIGL'25 | INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE &
INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION LEARNING**

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Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Ukraine

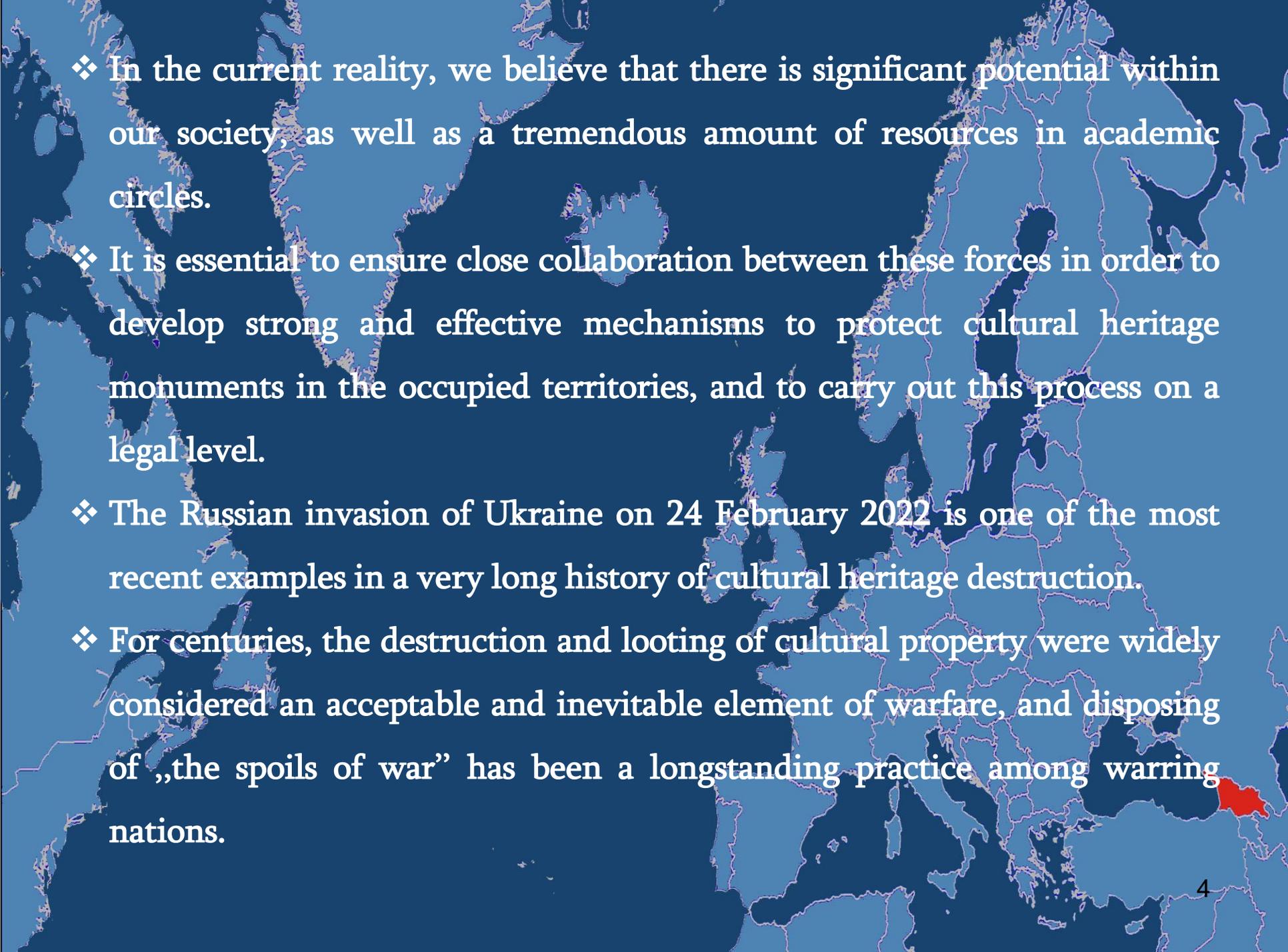
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- ❖ This presentation regarding the state of cultural heritage monuments in the territories of Ukraine occupied by Russia. It also describes the actions undertaken by the occupation regime to erase Ukrainian historical heritage and remove traces of identity. This occurs in a context where international missions are denied access to the area, preventing them from monitoring the real situation on the ground.
 - ❖ The analysis has determined that conflict-affected areas have suffered damage to both movable and immovable, as well as intangible, cultural heritage. Article 1 of the 1954 Hague Convention provides a broad definition of cultural property protected under the Convention.
 - ❖ In the examined region, the following cultural assets have been identified: reliefs, inscriptions, wall paintings, interior elements; historic buildings; ruins and archaeological sites; museums and their preserved collections.



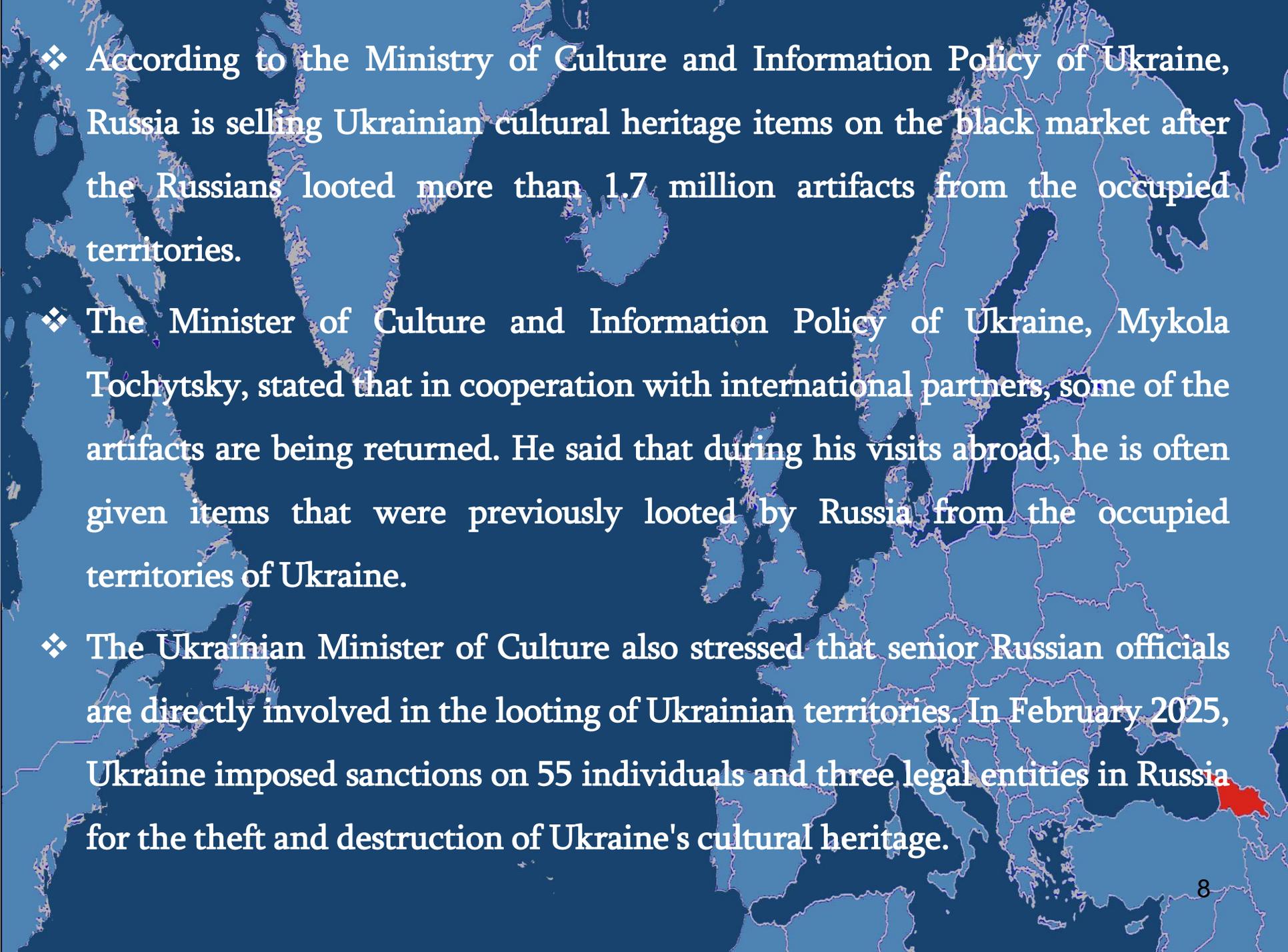
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- ❖ In the current reality, we believe that there is significant potential within our society, as well as a tremendous amount of resources in academic circles.
 - ❖ It is essential to ensure close collaboration between these forces in order to develop strong and effective mechanisms to protect cultural heritage monuments in the occupied territories, and to carry out this process on a legal level.
 - ❖ The Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 is one of the most recent examples in a very long history of cultural heritage destruction.
 - ❖ For centuries, the destruction and looting of cultural property were widely considered an acceptable and inevitable element of warfare, and disposing of „the spoils of war” has been a longstanding practice among warring nations.



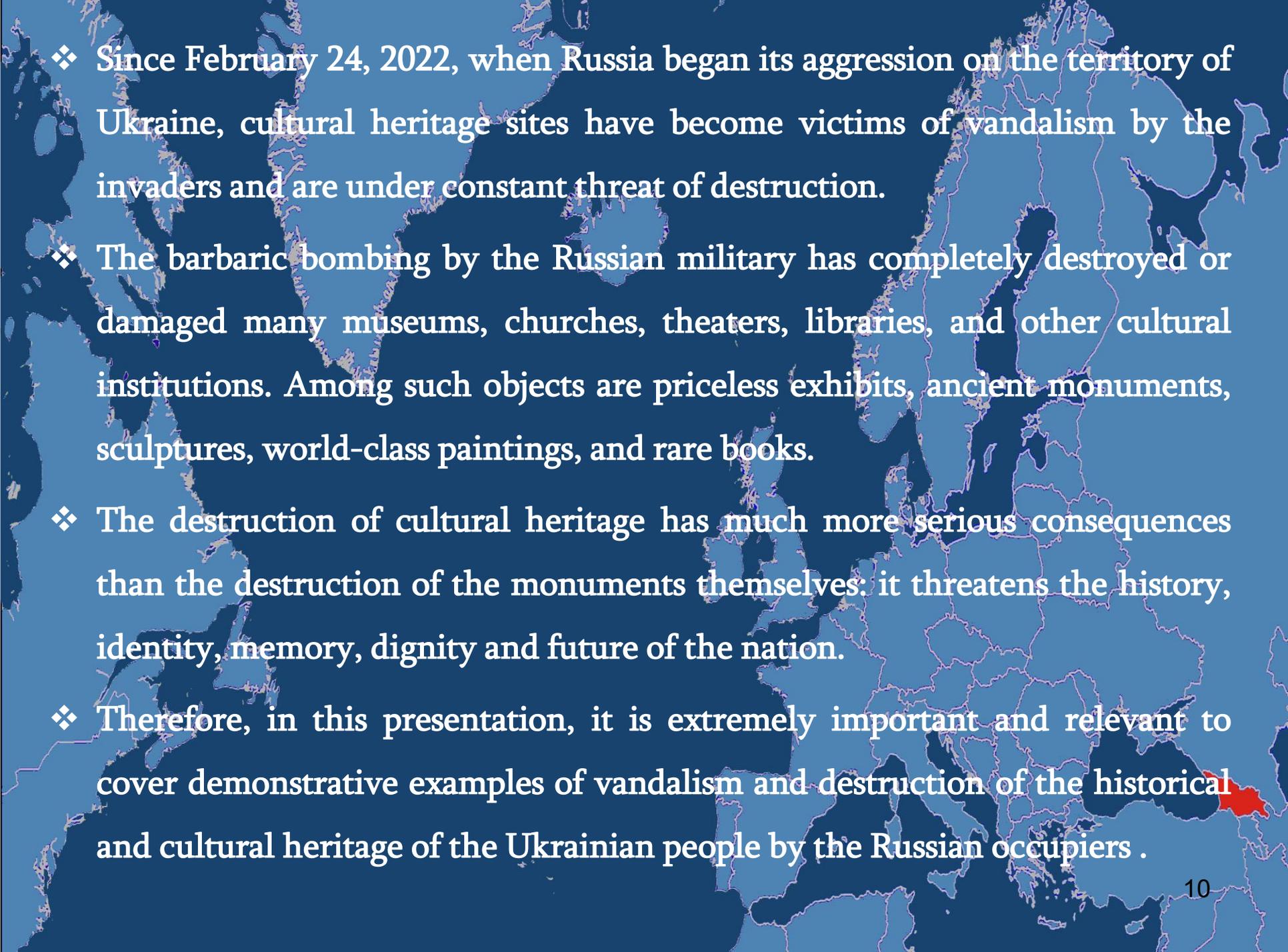
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- A map of Europe with Ukraine highlighted in red. The rest of the map is in shades of blue. The text is overlaid on the map.
- ❖ The war in Ukraine clearly highlights the susceptibility of cultural heritage sites during armed conflicts. To prevent the destruction of these sites, Ukraine is following the norms of international law and actively cooperating with international organizations.
 - ❖ The Russian Federation is recognized by a number of international organizations as the occupying power of Ukraine's regions. According to the Hague Convention, the occupying power is responsible for the protection of cultural property in the occupied territory.
 - ❖ The Russian Federation, as an occupying power, should be responsible for the protection of cultural heritage in the occupied territories of Ukraine.
 - ❖ In Ukraine's occupied regions, damage to cultural heritage sites has not been confined solely to periods of armed conflict but has persisted ever since and continues to this day.



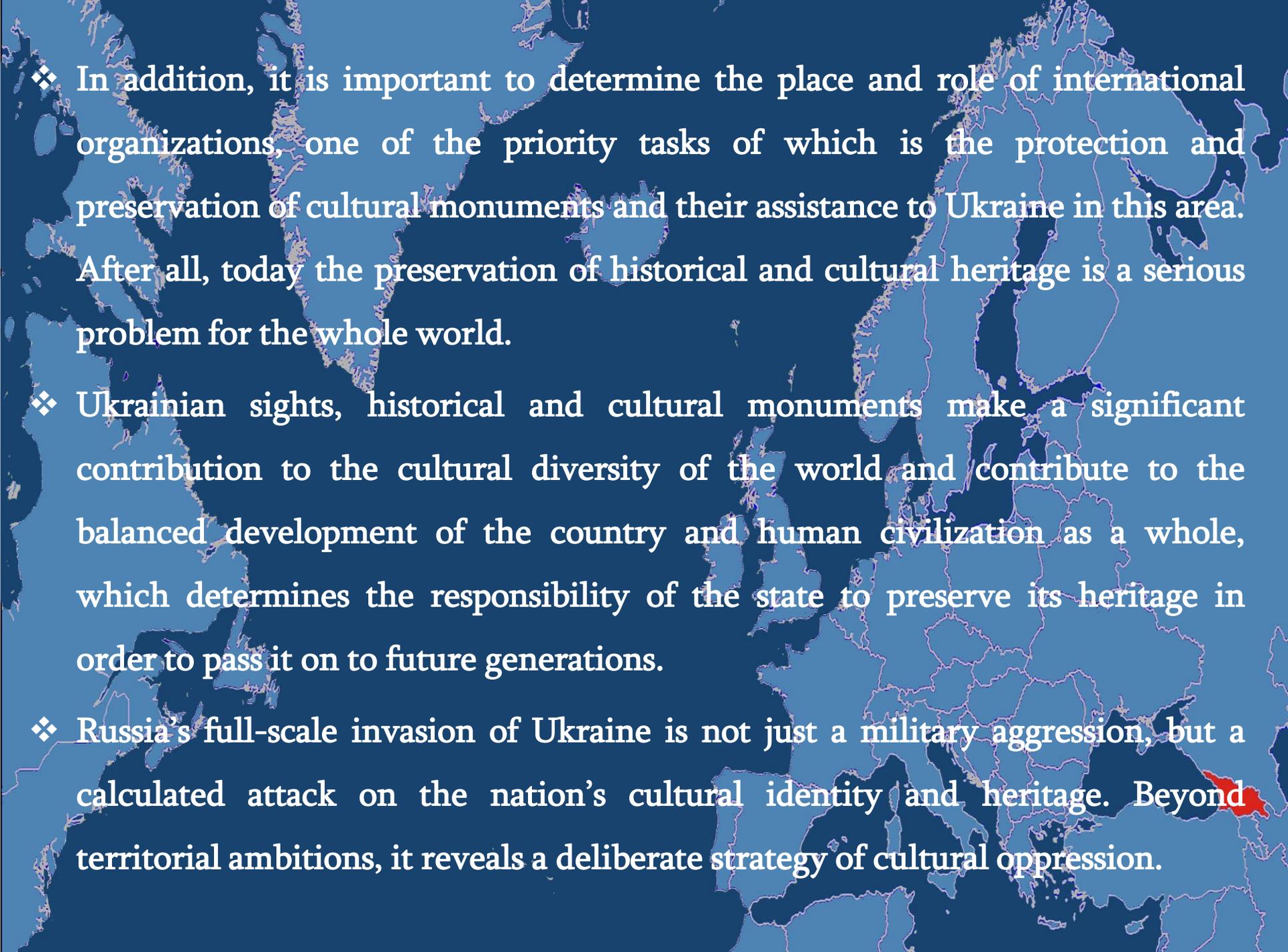
Dmitry Yagodkin/Profilmedia (TASS)

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- A map of Europe with Ukraine highlighted in red. The rest of the map is in shades of blue and purple.
- ❖ According to the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, Russia is selling Ukrainian cultural heritage items on the black market after the Russians looted more than 1.7 million artifacts from the occupied territories.
 - ❖ The Minister of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, Mykola Tochytsky, stated that in cooperation with international partners, some of the artifacts are being returned. He said that during his visits abroad, he is often given items that were previously looted by Russia from the occupied territories of Ukraine.
 - ❖ The Ukrainian Minister of Culture also stressed that senior Russian officials are directly involved in the looting of Ukrainian territories. In February 2025, Ukraine imposed sanctions on 55 individuals and three legal entities in Russia for the theft and destruction of Ukraine's cultural heritage.

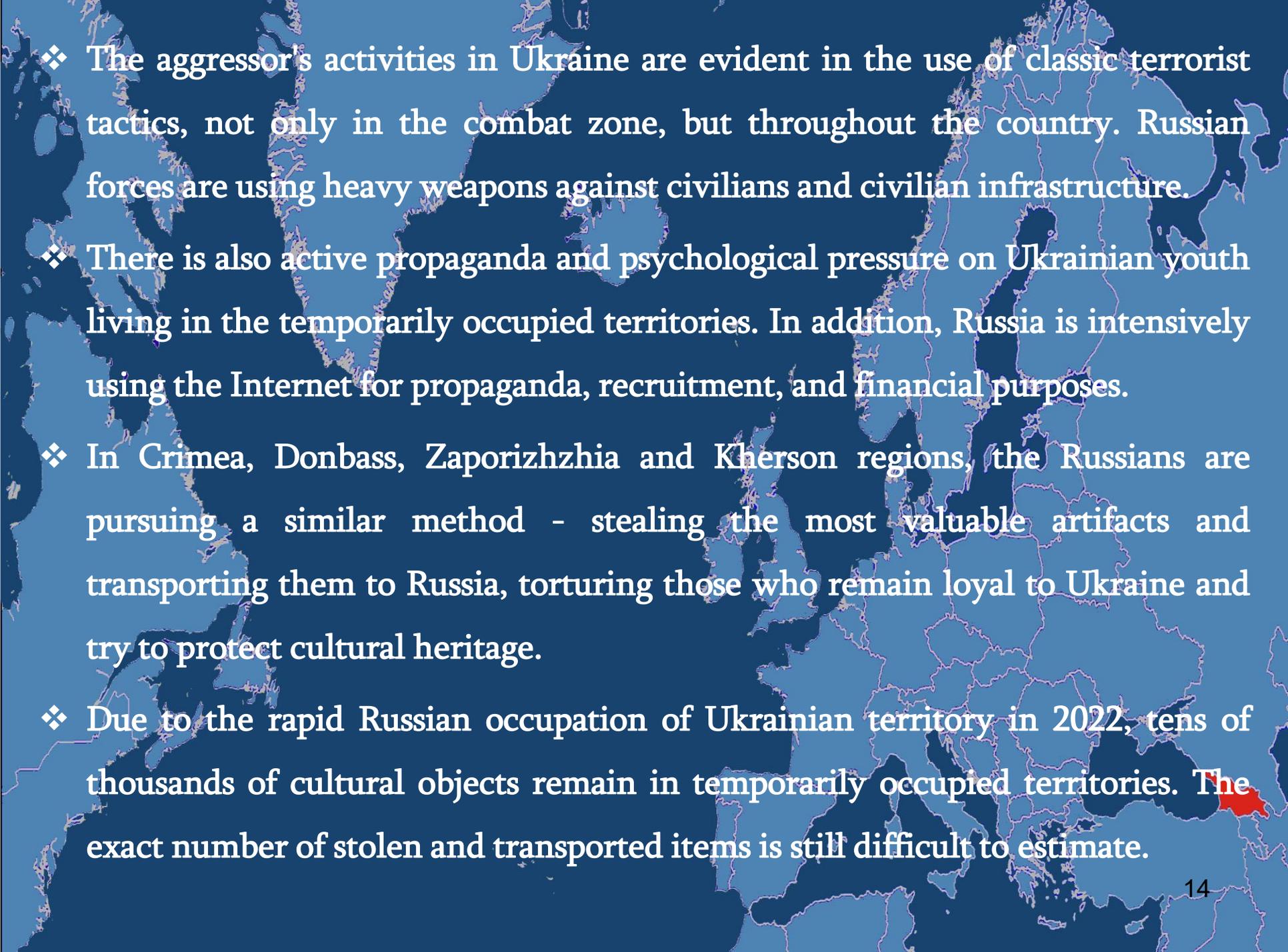


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- ❖ Since February 24, 2022, when Russia began its aggression on the territory of Ukraine, cultural heritage sites have become victims of vandalism by the invaders and are under constant threat of destruction.
 - ❖ The barbaric bombing by the Russian military has completely destroyed or damaged many museums, churches, theaters, libraries, and other cultural institutions. Among such objects are priceless exhibits, ancient monuments, sculptures, world-class paintings, and rare books.
 - ❖ The destruction of cultural heritage has much more serious consequences than the destruction of the monuments themselves: it threatens the history, identity, memory, dignity and future of the nation.
 - ❖ Therefore, in this presentation, it is extremely important and relevant to cover demonstrative examples of vandalism and destruction of the historical and cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people by the Russian occupiers .

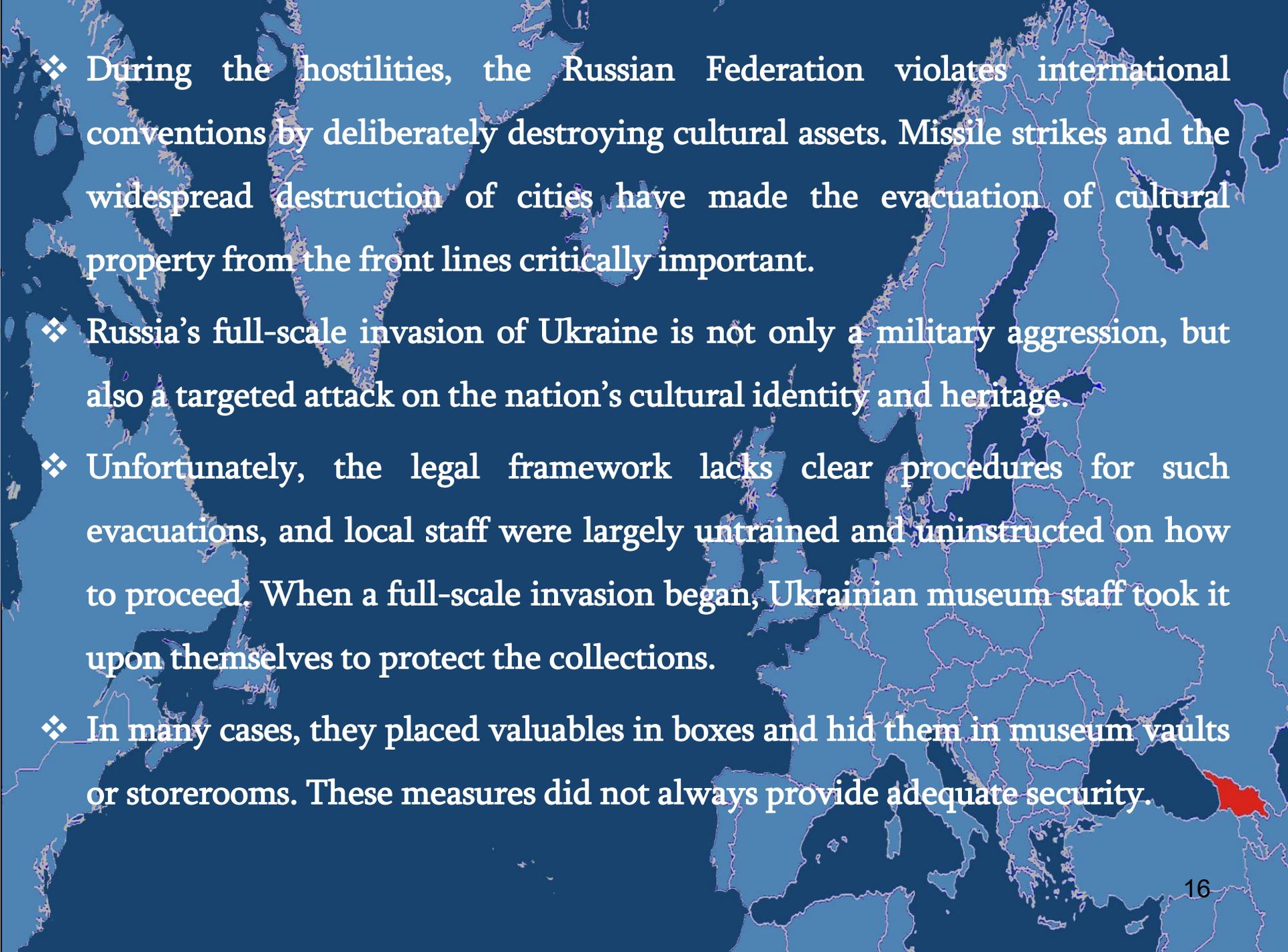


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- ❖ In addition, it is important to determine the place and role of international organizations, one of the priority tasks of which is the protection and preservation of cultural monuments and their assistance to Ukraine in this area. After all, today the preservation of historical and cultural heritage is a serious problem for the whole world.
 - ❖ Ukrainian sights, historical and cultural monuments make a significant contribution to the cultural diversity of the world and contribute to the balanced development of the country and human civilization as a whole, which determines the responsibility of the state to preserve its heritage in order to pass it on to future generations.
 - ❖ Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine is not just a military aggression, but a calculated attack on the nation's cultural identity and heritage. Beyond territorial ambitions, it reveals a deliberate strategy of cultural oppression.

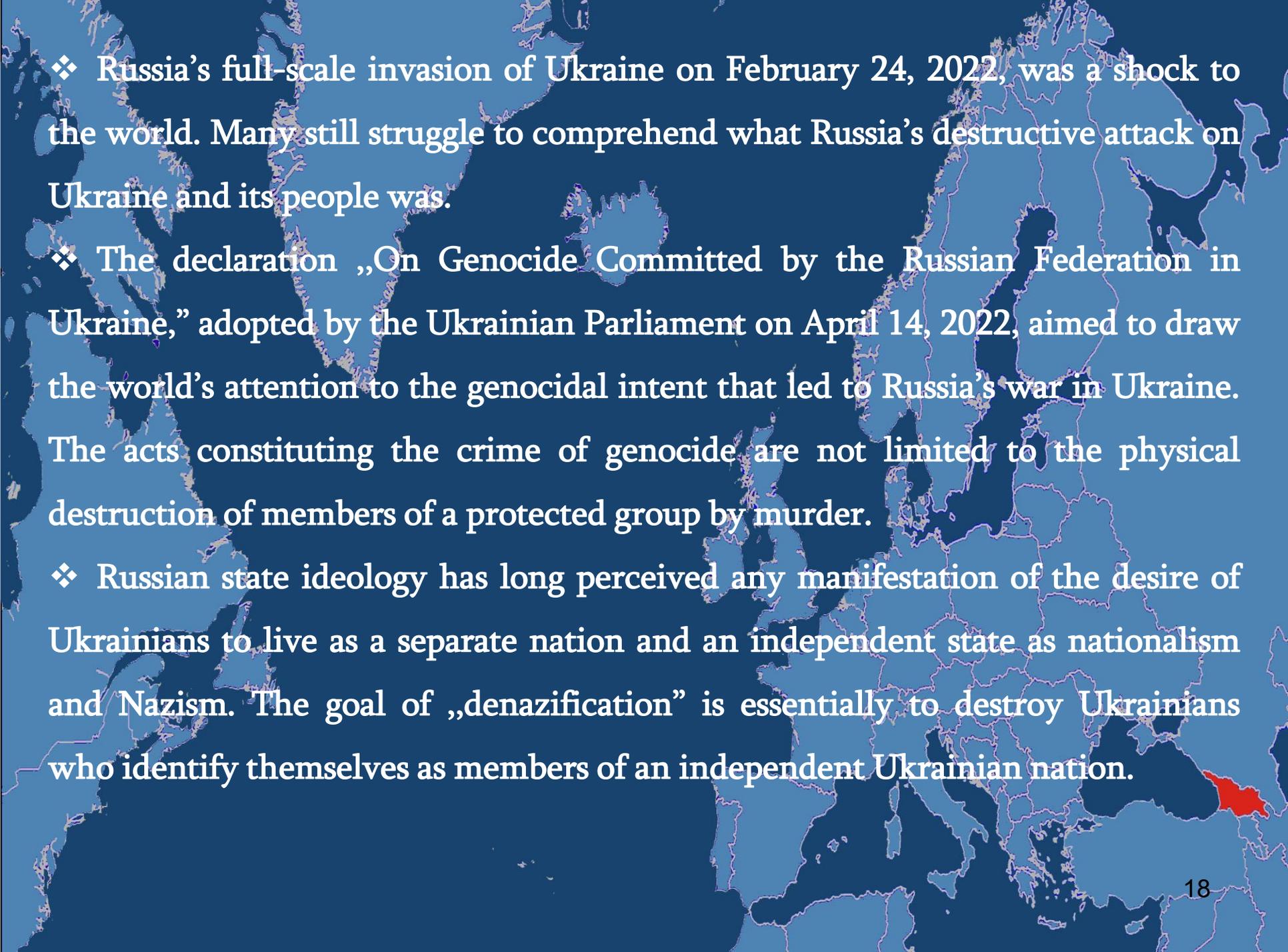


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- ❖ The aggressor's activities in Ukraine are evident in the use of classic terrorist tactics, not only in the combat zone, but throughout the country. Russian forces are using heavy weapons against civilians and civilian infrastructure.
 - ❖ There is also active propaganda and psychological pressure on Ukrainian youth living in the temporarily occupied territories. In addition, Russia is intensively using the Internet for propaganda, recruitment, and financial purposes.
 - ❖ In Crimea, Donbass, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, the Russians are pursuing a similar method - stealing the most valuable artifacts and transporting them to Russia, torturing those who remain loyal to Ukraine and try to protect cultural heritage.
 - ❖ Due to the rapid Russian occupation of Ukrainian territory in 2022, tens of thousands of cultural objects remain in temporarily occupied territories. The exact number of stolen and transported items is still difficult to estimate.



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- A map of Europe with Ukraine highlighted in red. The rest of the map is in shades of blue and purple.
- ❖ During the hostilities, the Russian Federation violates international conventions by deliberately destroying cultural assets. Missile strikes and the widespread destruction of cities have made the evacuation of cultural property from the front lines critically important.
 - ❖ Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine is not only a military aggression, but also a targeted attack on the nation's cultural identity and heritage.
 - ❖ Unfortunately, the legal framework lacks clear procedures for such evacuations, and local staff were largely untrained and uninstructed on how to proceed. When a full-scale invasion began, Ukrainian museum staff took it upon themselves to protect the collections.
 - ❖ In many cases, they placed valuables in boxes and hid them in museum vaults or storerooms. These measures did not always provide adequate security.



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- ❖ Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, was a shock to the world. Many still struggle to comprehend what Russia's destructive attack on Ukraine and its people was.
 - ❖ The declaration „On Genocide Committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine,” adopted by the Ukrainian Parliament on April 14, 2022, aimed to draw the world's attention to the genocidal intent that led to Russia's war in Ukraine. The acts constituting the crime of genocide are not limited to the physical destruction of members of a protected group by murder.
 - ❖ Russian state ideology has long perceived any manifestation of the desire of Ukrainians to live as a separate nation and an independent state as nationalism and Nazism. The goal of „denazification” is essentially to destroy Ukrainians who identify themselves as members of an independent Ukrainian nation.





Thank you for your Attention !