

Mr Morten Wold, Vice President of the Norwegian Storting
Speech in the General Debate on the occasion of the 6th World Conference of Speakers
of Parliaments, Geneva July 2025

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

A world in turmoil. That is the reality we face today. Across continents, we are witnessing the erosion of international norms, the rise of authoritarianism, and horrific wars.

In Europe, a sovereign nation—Ukraine—has been subjected to an unprovoked, brutal, and illegal war of aggression by the Russian Federation. This war is not only a blatant violation of international law and the UN Charter, but a direct assault on the principles that underpin our international system: the rule of law, the sanctity of borders, and the right of every nation to choose its own path.

The images of destroyed cities, displaced families, and lives lost are not just tragic—they are a call to action. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is not a regional conflict. It is a global crisis. It challenges the very foundations of peace and security far beyond the borders of Europe. And it demands a united, unwavering response from the international community.

Norway has stood firmly with Ukraine since the beginning of this war. But our support goes beyond humanitarian aid and military assistance. It is also rooted in democratic solidarity—parliament to parliament, people to people.

In May 2023, the Norwegian Storting and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine signed a historic **partnership agreement**. This agreement is more than a symbol. It is a commitment to long-term cooperation, mutual learning, and shared democratic development.

Through this partnership, we are strengthening parliamentary ties, exchanging knowledge, and supporting Ukraine's democratic institutions as they continue to function under the most difficult of circumstances. The Ukrainian parliament has shown extraordinary resilience. Even in wartime, it has upheld democratic processes, passed critical legislation, and remained a voice for the Ukrainian people. In this spirit, it is important to make sure that every Ukrainian MP can travel abroad to represent their country.

The Storting is proud to stand alongside our Ukrainian colleagues. We are working together on issues such as transparency, rule of law, and parliamentary oversight—pillars of any healthy democracy. And we are doing so with the understanding that Ukraine's fight is not only for its own survival, but for the future of democracy.

Let us be clear: peace cannot be built on the terms of the aggressor. It must be based on justice, accountability, and respect for sovereignty. That is why our support for Ukraine must remain steadfast—not just today, but for as long as it takes.

In a world in turmoil, we must choose the side of freedom. We must choose the side of democracy. And we must choose the side of Ukraine.

Thank you.