

Scotland marks the third anniversary of invasion of Ukraine

In a series of events being held on Monday to commemorate three years since the start of Russia's war against Ukraine, First Minister John Swinney will attend a commemoration service at Edinburgh Castle.

The First Minister will be joined by dignitaries representing political, military and civil society to lay a wreath at the Scottish National War Memorial.

The First Minister said: "Today marks three years since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. During this commemoration service, we will remember those who have lost their lives, those who have lost loved ones, lost their homes – and all those who have had their worlds torn apart as a result of the conflict.

"The Scottish Government resolutely condemns Russia's illegal war against Ukraine – as we have done since the invasion. Thousands of Ukrainians have since made Scotland their home and I am proud of the warm Scots welcome that we have been able to extend and I want to reaffirm our commitment to supporting them.

"I know many will be deeply concerned by recent developments,

and I want to offer my assurance on our continuing commitment to securing a fair, durable peace. I stand with European leaders as part of a united front that supports the independence of Ukraine, secures a just peace and deters any future Russian aggression.

“But today, we must remember those we have sadly lost as a result of this illegal invasion and needless violence. The commemoration service is an opportunity to come together to honour the strength and resilience that Ukrainians at home and abroad have shown – and a powerful demonstration of our shared hope that peace will be restored for Ukraine. I hope that this time next year, we will not be reflecting on another year of war – but rather, celebrating the return of a just peace.

“Before that day comes – Scotland stands with Ukraine and is proud to provide sanctuary for Ukrainians who have been displaced from their homeland.

“Slava Ukraini.”

Scotland Office Minister Kirsty McNeill will also attend the event. She said: “It’s an honour to stand shoulder to shoulder with members of the local Ukrainian community at Edinburgh Castle today. Our thoughts are with them and their families as we mark three years since the start of Putin’s illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Even after enduring horrendous loss, the Ukrainian people continue to show such immense strength.

“Securing a just and lasting peace that safeguards Ukraine’s sovereignty for the long term is essential if we are to deter further Russian aggression. The Prime Minister visited Kyiv last month and agreed the 100 Year Partnership – formalising the unbreakable bond between our countries and how we can work together into the next century, helping forge the bright and ambitious future that all Ukrainians deserve.”