



Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

*Provisional***7234**th meeting

Tuesday, 5 August 2014, 5.20 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Sir Mark Lyall Grant	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen
	Jordan	Mr. Naber
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506. Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

14-49657 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



The meeting was called to order at 5.20 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President: As this is the first public meeting of the Security Council for the month of August 2014, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Eugène-Richard Gasana, Permanent Representative of Rwanda, for his service as President of the Council during the month of July. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Gasana and his team for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Ging.

Mr. Ging: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine on behalf of Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos.

Ongoing efforts to find a political solution to the crisis in Ukraine have borne little fruit. Therefore, insecurity and violence prevail in conflict areas, resulting in a steadily worsening humanitarian situation, which will continue to deteriorate for as long as violence persists.

An estimated 3.9 million people live in areas directly affected by violence. Those remaining in

the conflict zone face imminent security threats from the fighting, which is increasingly occurring in more-densely populated urban areas. Fighting has caused significant damage to infrastructure, affecting the power and water supply and access to basic services. In Donetsk and Luhansk, home to a total of 1.5 million people, the water supply is reduced to a few hours per day. Health supplies are running low and an estimated 70 per cent of health personnel have fled the area, leaving access to medical care significantly reduced. Damage to housing has so far affected 1,600 families. Supply routes are increasingly disrupted by conflict, and coping mechanisms among the affected populations are inevitably deteriorating.

The protection of civilians is a key concern. As conflict intensifies, casualties are on the rise. The human rights monitoring mission of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the World Health Organization (WHO) report that at least 1,367 people, both civilians and combatants, have been killed and 4,087 people have been wounded by the fighting in eastern Ukraine since mid-April.

Since the latest humanitarian briefing to the Security Council by Under Secretary General Amos, on 16 June, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has increased significantly. An additional 58,000 people have fled their homes since the start of July. Reportedly, more than 1,000 people are leaving the conflict zone every day. Today there are 117,910 people registered as internally displaced throughout Ukraine, 87 per cent of whom are from the east of the country. Most have left with few belongings and are in need of shelter, food and other essential assistance. That places pressure on host communities in neighbouring regions.

At the same time, many people from areas affected by fighting in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions are fleeing to the Russian Federation. Since the start of the year, 168,677 Ukrainians have registered as having crossed into the Russian Federation, with nearly 60,000 having applied for refugee status and a further 115,952 having applied for other forms of legal stay.

However, that is not the full picture, as many Ukrainians who have fled their homes do not register with Ukrainian authorities or officially apply for assistance. The Russian Federation is reporting that 740,000 people have crossed their borders since the start of the year, availing themselves of the special 270-day visa programme for Ukrainians. UNHCR has also reported that figure.

The majority of the humanitarian response to date has been delivered through local and community-based organizations. The local authorities have been successful in restoring water and power to areas where fighting has subsided. However, as prolonged fighting starts to exhaust the capacity of the local authorities to respond, United Nations partners are scaling up their support to those response efforts.

Over the last weeks, humanitarian organizations have been working with a broad range of partners, including national and local authorities, civil society organizations and community-based organizations, to undertake emergency preparedness measures and address the most urgent needs of affected people. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is reaching hosting areas for internally displaced persons and areas to which people are able to return with food, hygiene kits and essential household items. UNICEF is working with national partners in the provision of health services to displaced persons. A United Nations-led response plan, with detailed planning and planned interventions sector by sector, will be published this week.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has deployed a humanitarian advisory team to Ukraine to assess the needs and support the coordination of the response. Two senior missions from OCHA headquarters have been deployed in recent weeks to further reinforce and strengthen the response capacity. Our priority remains to support the Government-led humanitarian response effort and to ensure that we are ready to complement that response effort with direct support to people as the need arises.

Humanitarian corridors from badly affected areas to areas under Government control are open for several hours each day, but those are regularly blocked by combatants, and the evacuation of people through those channels is regularly impeded. We therefore call upon all sides to the conflict to enable the free and safe movement of the population, while at the same time ensuring full access by humanitarian organizations to the affected population remaining behind.

We call on the Ukrainian Government to address some key challenges in implementing relief activities. A unified registration system for IDPs is crucial to enabling a comprehensive analysis and understanding of the existing needs. Humanitarian assistance should also be exempted from tax, and the signing and ratification

of the United Nations-Government customs agreement facilitating the entry of humanitarian workers and the import of humanitarian goods should be expedited.

Finally, we request the Ukrainian Government to adopt a temporary exemption to facilitate the import of medical supplies certified by the World Health Organization, which are required in response to the immediate health needs of the affected population.

In conclusion, the humanitarian situation is deteriorating, and the worrying increase in violence in urban areas puts a greater number of people at risk. Until the violence has ended we will continue to see an increase in the numbers of people being killed and a deterioration of the overall humanitarian situation. Immediate action is therefore required to prevent that.

The President: I thank Mr. Ging for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

I would like to recall for the Council the provisions of note of the President of the Security Council contained in document S/2010/507, which encourages both members and non-members of the Council to deliver their statements in five minutes or less. As communicated to Council members in advance of the United Kingdom presidency, it is our intention to use the flashing light on the collar and at the base of the speaker's microphone to indicate when five minutes have elapsed. I shall strongly encourage both members and non-members of the Council to conclude their remarks promptly once five minutes have elapsed.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Mr. John Ging, for his briefing on the situation in eastern Ukraine. We think that OCHA and other humanitarian agencies should regularly inform the Security Council of the humanitarian situation in the region and provide objective statistics on the situation of civilians, including data on those wounded or killed, as well as on the destruction of civilian infrastructure.

On a human scale, the situation in the east, particularly in Donetsk and Luhansk, is disastrous. Today there is a definite need to speak about a true war. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has officially recognized that there is an internal armed conflict in the east of Ukraine.

In spite of international agreements, including the 17 April Geneva agreement and the 2 July Berlin agreement, both of which were signed onto by the Ukrainian Government, Kyiv continues to step up its military operations, taking hundreds and thousands of lives with it. According to information we have received, the punitive militia are playing a leading role. They are subordinate to no armed forces in Ukraine. They are carrying the orders of certain leaders of the Security Council of the country and are financed by local oligarchs.

Overflights of cities have become a daily reality. Artillery, tanks and Grad rockets are used. Locals are continuously reporting that phosphorous bombs and cluster bombs are being used. There is indiscriminate shelling of housing blocks and critical civilian infrastructure. In many small towns, about 80 per cent of the houses have been destroyed. According to most conservative estimates, more than 600 buildings have been reduced to rubble. Today there was a rocket attack in Shakhtyorsk. On 2 August, Ukrainian artillery shelled the city of Pervomaisk, where homes, two electrical power plants and hospitals were destroyed.

As a result of shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces, shells have been falling into Russia. There have been about 20 such incidents. On 3 August, a Ukrainian army mine exploded at the Gukovo crossing, Rostov oblast, where monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) were working.

According to the most conservative estimates by international humanitarian agencies, more than 1,367 people have been killed and thousands have been wounded, including children. Those are worrisome numbers. In one day alone, 40 people were killed in the city of Golov. More than 4 million people live in the areas where military operations are taking place. Of them, more than 200,000 have been left without drinking water. There is a critical health and epidemiological situation in Luhansk. Houses are without electricity and, because of shelling, there is no clean water. Telephone communications are impaired and there are no garbage removal services. Ukrainians have begun to leave the country en masse.

Almost 800,000 Ukrainians have come to Russia since the beginning of the crisis. Some — about 170,000 of them — have come to Russian migration services to legalize their situation. Centres have been opened for

refugees. Our country stands ready to undertake that great burden. We do not need material assistance from outside. We stand ready to provide human assistance to Ukrainians on our own.

The most dramatic situation in the east of Ukraine is on the health front. The majority of doctors have been evacuated. It must be understood that in the areas where military clashes are taking place the most vulnerable have been left behind, and they have no way of leaving.

It seems that the Kyiv authorities are not interested at all. We have made multiple appeals to them to create humanitarian corridors to evacuate children and the vulnerable, including orphans. We have also appealed to them to allow humanitarian assistance from Russia to be let in. But Kyiv has rejected all of those proposals.

Russia calls upon the international community to take emergency measures to improve the humanitarian situation in the east of Ukraine. Because of that, on 4 August, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sergey Lavrov, once again sent an official appeal to humanitarian agencies associated with the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the ICRC to create a humanitarian mission. We would like to send a convoy with Russian humanitarian assistance under the aegis and with the support of the ICRC to Donetsk and Luhansk and other areas of Ukraine where internally displaced persons from the east are concentrated.

We stand ready to act with full transparency. We will allow the International Committee of the Red Cross monitor the convoys, their transport routes and the distribution of aid. We think that, first and foremost, there is a need to provide food, medicine and medical equipment, as well as water purification systems and generators.

There are many cases in which providing assistance to civilians suffering from an armed conflict is very difficult. That applies, for example, to the situations in the areas controlled by terrorist organizations in South Sudan, Iraq and Syria. The situation in eastern Ukraine demands that an end be put to the political posturing and that international humanitarian principles be genuinely respected.

Finally, Kyiv's approach of violently repressing the eastern regions will have very difficult consequences for the entire Ukrainian population, and that is simply regrettable.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, we thank the Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for his briefing on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

We regret the worsening humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine as a result of the escalation in the fighting, particularly in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Chile is very concerned about the security of those who are trapped in the conflict zone and the increase in deliberate attacks on civilian facilities, including basic infrastructure such as electricity and water, as well as housing and public buildings. It is worrying that access to drinking water in those zones has decreased, with an impact on the population.

The worsening situation is also reflected in the increase in the numbers of internally displaced persons and people who have crossed borders. We are particularly concerned that this group of individuals are mainly made up of women, boys and girls. We reiterate that any response strategy must address the special needs of girls and adolescents, as they are doubly vulnerable.

In that regard, we support the recommendations made by the United Nations in connection with the need for the Ukrainian Government to establish a unified and centralized registration system to document the movement of internally displaced persons and to assess in the best way possible how to meet their needs.

We reiterate that there is also a need for the United Nations to be present on the ground in support of national authorities. In that connection, we welcome the development by OCHA and other members of the humanitarian community of a preliminary response plan that will lay the foundations for the future humanitarian response in Ukraine. We hope that the donor community will support that appeal.

In conclusion, we urge the parties to find a peaceful solution to the crisis through direct political dialogue, to act with moderation and refrain from taking unilateral measures, which could increase the tension, and to participate in international mediation efforts.

We would like to reiterate our appreciation for the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General and the United Nations, through its various agencies to put an end to the situation being experienced by Ukraine. We also trust that the various independent international mechanisms

will be able to continue to contribute towards the search for a solution to the crisis.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Mr. Ging of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for his briefing.

Recently, the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine has continued to escalate, causing increasing civilian casualties and a dire humanitarian situation, which continues to deteriorate. China is deeply worried about the situation. We hope that the international community will play a constructive role in easing the humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine and that United Nations humanitarian agencies will strictly abide by the principle of neutrality and objectivity.

We now face the urgent task of engaging in political consultations with a view to achieving a ceasefire as soon as possible and engaging in comprehensive dialogue, which is the only way out of the Ukrainian crisis. The parties concerned should remain calm and maintain restraint, respect the Charter of the United Nations, work on the basis of the various initiatives, including the Geneva agreement, step up dialogue and consultation, meet each other half way, respect the role of current dialogue and liaison mechanisms and seek a comprehensive settlement through peaceful means.

A political settlement to the Ukrainian crisis should include the legitimate claims of various areas and ethnic groups and realize a balance of interests. The international community should do more to promote peace and dialogue and should create favourable conditions for the parties concerned to maintain dialogue and engagement and make a constructive effort to achieve political progress in the Ukrainian crisis.

China supports all efforts aimed at easing the tension, resolving the crisis and achieving the proposed political settlement, and will continue to play a constructive role.

Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. John Ging from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for his briefing. He has told us that the humanitarian situation is worsening and he has described how the Ukrainian authorities are dealing with that situation with the support of the international community.

The number of internally displaced persons is increasing, as pointed out by the Office of the United

Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Why is that the case? It is because people are fleeing the fighting precipitated by the separatists, who have refused to accept the hand extended by President Poroshenko. It is because people are fleeing separatist attacks in the areas they control — attacks that are becoming deadlier every day.

The report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights that the Security Council will consider in the near future is very eloquent in that regard. In fact, no report mentions instances of people fleeing cities in which Ukrainian armed forces have restored public order and the rule of law. Wherever Kyiv has re-established its authority, public services and basic services have been restored to the population. According to statements by UNHCR, the return of the internally displaced persons to areas now controlled by the Government serves to clearly indicate that the separatists were the main cause of the displacement.

The worsening humanitarian situation is also a result of the presence of armed combatants coming from outside of Ukraine. The question of external support with regard to recruitment, the provision of equipment and training is increasingly urgent and requires the attention of the international community. Those who arm the criminals who are terrorizing the population are responsible for the worsening humanitarian situation.

All those events demonstrate the pressing need for international cooperation in order to stabilize the situation in Ukraine and ensure its sovereignty and territorial integrity. We call for a sincere commitment by the Russian Federation, which has so far been lacking. Despite the number of appeals made to President Putin, we regret the fact that the Russian Federation has not put pressure on the separatists in order to bring them to the negotiating table and has not taken the expected concrete measures in order to ensure control of the Russian/Ukrainian border.

We are also extremely vigilant with regard to any direct military support that the Russian Federation could give to the separatists in the fighting. In that context, new measures against the Russian Federation were taken by the European Union, but also by a number of its partners — including the United States and, later, Japan and Switzerland. That step shows that there is unanimity in the international community in condemning the lack of coordination by the Russian Federation. The message is clear: the fleeing must end.

The Russian Federation can choose to de-escalate the situation.

The tightening of sanctions has only one goal, that is, to facilitate the emergence of a political solution. Our priority continues to be, first of all, to put an end to the escalation and to establish a lasting ceasefire among all parties. We call upon the Russian Federation to involve itself in a constructive way in that endeavour and to use its influence with the armed groups to convince them to put down their arms and engage in dialogue.

Mrs. DiCarlo (United States of America): I thank Mr. Ging for his briefing.

As a result of the ongoing violence in eastern Ukraine, thousands of Ukrainians have had to flee their homes. Many have been subjected to harassment, arbitrary detention and killing at the hands of Russian-supported separatists. The general environment of insecurity and instability has contributed to a growing number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) inside Ukraine and in those seeking refuge outside of Ukraine.

To address the serious situation, the Government and the people of Ukraine have undertaken important steps to provide humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons throughout the country. We commend the quick response of the Ukrainian Government in the areas recently liberated from separatists' control. Electricity and water services are coming back on, pensions are being paid again and rebuilding has already begun.

For those who have not yet been able to return home, a rapid, coordinated effort by Ukraine and the international humanitarian community is essential to identify and respond to the urgent needs of the most vulnerable. To that end, we encourage Ukraine to coordinate quickly a comprehensive IDP registration system, ensure the harmonization of assistance efforts and assist in disseminating information on registration procedures and services.

Doing so will allow for the targeted delivery of assistance, to which international donors can more effectively respond. It will also pave the way for a calibrated response to the unique needs of IDPs. We commend the United Nations for mobilizing so quickly to support the Government of Ukraine's efforts.

Regarding Russia's call for a humanitarian mission in Ukraine, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations are already on

the ground carrying out assessment missions and providing assistance to vulnerable, conflict-affected persons, particularly those in liberated areas. Those organizations are standing by and are ready to provide more assistance to conflict areas if permitted greater access and security guarantees by Russia-backed separatists.

When addressing the humanitarian situation, we cannot lose sight of one underlying fact: Russia can stop all of this. The surest way to end the violence is for Russia to stop the flow of fighters, weapons and money from Russia into eastern Ukraine. Russia has the ability to get the separatists it supports to lay down their arms, sit at the negotiating table and work to implement President Poroshenko's peace plan. Russia must also respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and end its occupation of Crimea.

Yet instead of positive steps, Russia has nearly doubled the number of its battalions near the Ukrainian border. Equally troubling is Russia's plan to conduct a large military exercise near the Ukrainian border, which will only serve to escalate tensions. We again demand that Russia halt any and all destabilizing actions.

We understand that Russia has expressed its concern over the plight of displaced persons and refugees. Therefore, we call on Russia to allow an independent assessment of humanitarian needs within Russia and along the Ukrainian border so that the international community can better understand the scale of the issue and so that assistance can be made available. Otherwise, there is no way to verify the scale of the outflow to Russia.

I want to note that nearly a month has passed since the Council agreed to support in every way a full, thorough and independent investigation into the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17. We commend the Government of Ukraine for its cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Netherlands, Australia and Malaysia in coordinating the investigation and allowing Dutch, Australian and Malaysian police to secure the crash site. We also hold all sides accountable for the commitment they made on 31 July to protect the integrity of the site and secure safe access for international investigators. Bodies remain unaccounted for and there are personal effects that still need to be retrieved.

Finally, we appreciate the ability of the Secretariat to arrange emergency briefings on short notice. There are times when such urgency is merited. We question whether the situation we are discussing today meets the standard of urgency, especially as we will be discussing the overall situation in Ukraine on Friday.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): I thank Mr. John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for his briefing.

Perhaps no other crisis has given rise to as many meetings this year as the situation in Ukraine. The number has, if I am correct, surpassed 20 and counting. Reports on the situation on the ground provided by the monitoring mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other institutions have been essential in understanding the real situation on the ground. Earlier today, my delegation requested a briefing on the fourth report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights later this week.

As the fourth report — which, as previous speakers have mentioned, we will have another occasion to discuss very soon — makes clear, the rule of law has collapsed in the areas controlled by the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic and has been replaced by the rule of lawlessness.

Illegal armed groups are increasingly well equipped, with heavy weaponry, tanks and armoured vehicles capable of inflicting major damage and losses to the Ukrainian troops.

Abductions and detentions of civilians, torture and ill-treatment continue in the parts controlled by pro-Russian militant separatist groups. Local administration buildings are still occupied, illegal parallel institutions are being put into place, and separatist leaders announce summary executions to maintain order in their ranks. Fighters take selfies with the remains of killed Ukrainian soldiers. Last Friday, the self-proclaimed defence minister, Igor Girkin, declared a state of siege and the introduction of martial law in Donetsk. Warnings were issued that all troublemakers would be sent directly to courts martial.

Pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine have threatened medical staff, stolen and destroyed medical equipment and hospital furniture, compromised the

ability of civilian patients to receive treatment and expropriated ambulances and used them to transport active fighters, as documented by non-governmental organizations. Attacks on hospitals with explosive weapons have also been reported. Such acts are strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law, which provides for special protections to medical units and personnel and to the wounded and sick.

In Crimea, in contravention of General Assembly resolution 68/262, the laws and regulations of the Russian Federation are being applied, causing confusion and jeopardizing the rights of all those who are reluctant to take Russian citizenship. Harassment of and discrimination against the indigenous population of the Crimean Tatars and religious and other minorities continue to take place.

No wonder the humanitarian situation is deteriorating in areas under the illegal rule of armed separatist groups. According to figures recently released by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, some 117,000 people are displaced inside Ukraine and, as of 1 August, an estimated 168,000 people had left the country for Russia. In just the past seven days, more than 6,000 people have been forced from their homes. Deliberate targeting by armed groups of critical utilities and illegal seizures of public and private property continue to take place.

Armed separatist groups do not shy away from installing themselves among civilian populations, in the midst of towns, as they retreat under the pressure of Ukrainian forces. One recent example involved Ukrainian attempts to recapture the town of Yasinovataya, north of Donetsk. A few days ago, Ukrainian forces entered Yasinovataya, but due to the threat to the lives of civilians, a commander took the decision to return to their original positions on the outskirts of the town to avoid harming the local population. Sources on the ground note that the tendency over the recent days has been that when Ukrainian troops deploy sufficient manpower and firepower to pose a threat to the militants, the illegal armed groups redeploy to a nearby town, forcing the local population to flee as they install their armed vehicles, artillery and Grad rockets in residential areas.

As fighting continues, Ukrainian authorities have been doing what they can to issue advance warnings to the civilian populations and establish unilateral humanitarian corridors in Donetsk, Luhansk and

Horlivka in order to enable the population to leave combat areas. Ukraine, like any other country, has the right and duty to restore law and order within its borders and to protect its unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity. We reiterate the need for the Ukrainian forces to take all the necessary measures to prevent damage to civilian infrastructure and civilian casualties. At the same time, the efforts of the Ukrainian Government to continue the overall reform process of addressing the ills inherited from the previous regime must continue.

On many occasions in the Council, we have called for de-escalation. De-escalation, however, can never be interpreted as Ukraine's unilateral surrender and acceptance of the dismemberment of the State. Russia, which has from the very beginning stoked the illegal war carried out by militant separatists against Ukraine, could have prevented the current humanitarian situation from developing long ago by disassociating itself from the militant separatism in eastern Ukraine, by cutting off all support for the insurgents, by securing its borders and by stopping the flow of Russian-made weaponry. As the Ukrainian forces do what they can to free the terrain from illegal armed groups and to ensure the unity of the State, we may have to wait a long time for any of that to happen.

Mr. Naber (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank Mr. Ging for his briefing.

The increasing hostilities in eastern Ukraine are a cause of concern for the Government of Jordan, in particular in the light of the reports of the worsening humanitarian situation and the growing number of people killed and injured. We call on all parties to show restraint, to calm all actors and to refrain from engaging in any hostile or provocative act.

Jordan would like to emphasize the right of States under international law to extend their authority throughout their territory and to protect their citizens from threats. In that regard, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine must be fully respected. We call on the Government of Ukraine to ensure that international norms are upheld with regard to respect for human rights in applying the law. We reiterate the need to ensure the protection of civilians and to avoid using civilians as targets or undertaking any reprisals against them.

A political solution is the only way to re-establish stability in eastern Ukraine. We therefore reiterate our appeal to all the relevant parties in Ukraine to do their

utmost to find a political solution to the crisis, to stop the escalation of violence and to call on combatants to put down their weapons in order to re-establish stability in the eastern part of the country. We also call for the return of internally displaced persons as soon as possible.

We urge the parties to respect the provisions of the Geneva declaration and to facilitate access for the United Nations human rights monitoring mission, as well as to ensure the rights of journalists, in particular in the eastern part of the country.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank Mr. John Ging for his briefing today.

The Republic of Korea remains deeply concerned about the continuing escalation of tensions in eastern Ukraine. Despite the ongoing diplomatic efforts of the international community, the situation on the ground shows no sign of abating. The continuing violence has led to a growing loss of life and a further deterioration in the humanitarian situation. We are especially concerned about the report that the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine has reached 117,000, having risen sharply since June. At the same time, the lack of adequate shelter and basic services, such as water and electricity for the IDPs, also remains a major source of concern. Given the gravity of the situation, further and broader humanitarian measures, such as more humanitarian corridors, are urgently needed.

The volatile situation in eastern Ukraine clearly demonstrates that a solution to the ongoing crisis can be found only through an immediate cessation of hostilities and through meaningful dialogue among all the parties concerned. In that regard, we welcome the recent meeting of the trilateral contact group held in Minsk on 31 July with representatives of separatist groups from eastern Ukraine. We call on all parties to engage in constructive dialogue so that they can agree on an immediate ceasefire on the basis of the Berlin declaration of 2 July. In that connection, all illegal armed groups must halt all violence and lay down their arms. That is the key for any sustainable solution to the crisis.

Finally, turning to the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17, we reiterate our support for a full, thorough and independent international investigation. All the parties concerned must comply with their obligations under resolution 2166 (2014) and fully cooperate with the international investigation.

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Mr. John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for his briefing on the worrying humanitarian situation in southern and eastern Ukraine.

Argentina once again expresses its deep concern about the situation in southern and eastern Ukraine and its increasing deterioration. The fears that we have already expressed about the impact of the re-escalation in violence on the civilian population unfortunately seem to be justified, with the threat that the humanitarian crisis will become increasingly severe. We are concerned about the growing number of displaced persons as a result of the violent clashes in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. There is no need to reiterate the information provided to us by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Rather, we must understand that the international community cannot remain indifferent towards the number of people in Ukraine, most of whom are women and children, seeking refuge in Russia.

The reports of the increasing number of civilians who have lost their lives as a result of artillery fire in areas controlled by armed groups are alarming. In addition, the attacks by armed groups on water facilities, power plants and other key infrastructure — it has been said, and we agree — subject the population to an extremely vulnerable situation, which increases the threats directly generated by the violence. We find ourselves in a situation where it is difficult to access health services, sanitation is worsening and there could be outbreaks of infectious or non-infectious diseases associated with those difficulties and the lack of access to health services.

We launch an urgent appeal for strict respect of obligations with regard to the protection of civilians in the areas affected by the violence. We must also ensure that there are the conditions for civilians to leave the areas affected by the clashes between the Ukrainian forces and the armed groups, in particular in the Donetsk region. All measures must be taken so that the urgent needs of the displaced can be addressed. We must underscore that if the hostilities continue, the low temperatures that will come with the arrival of winter will put the displaced persons, in particular women and children, in an even more fragile situation.

We would also like to acknowledge the work done by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

Affairs in coordination with other United Nations agencies, particularly in developing the basis for a future humanitarian response in Ukraine. There can be no question that we support the call to the international community to lend all its support to the efforts under way to help the displaced and provide the necessary assistance.

Lastly, we believe it is vital to emphasize the importance of ensuring that an investigation be made of all the incidents in which civilians have lost their lives or been injured, because we must determine who is responsible and guarantee accountability, a condition that Argentina believes is necessary if security, peace and the required social dialogue that Ukraine needs are to be achieved. We therefore emphasize the urgent need for an inclusive and constructive political dialogue, which is the only way this crisis can be resolved.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I would also like to thank the Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for his briefing.

Luxembourg shares OCHA's concern about the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and the increase in violence in the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk controlled by separatists. While illegal armed groups and their outside support continue to destabilize the country and undermine its territorial sovereignty and integrity, the first victims are, once again, civilians. The numbers that Mr. Ging just mentioned speak for themselves. We are also deeply concerned about the number of cases of intimidation, torture, abduction and murder that have been reported for a little more than the past four months in areas controlled by the separatists. Such human-rights violations must stop, and international humanitarian law must be respected.

Given the situation, we must intensify our efforts to help the population affected, in particular the 110,000 people who have been displaced. We call on the Ukrainian Government to continue and to step up its efforts in this area, in close cooperation and coordination with the United Nations and international humanitarian agencies. We believe that establishing a centralized registry, as promised by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, is essential. We would also encourage humanitarian actors to cooperate closely with other international players present in Ukraine, including the human rights observation mission of the Office of the United Nations

High Commissioner for Human Rights and the special observation mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which has been deployed in Ukraine since March.

But beyond such humanitarian work, we must above all step up our efforts to create the conditions for realizing President Poroshenko's peace plan and to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in Ukraine. The talks that have begun under the auspices of the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE are crucial in that regard, as is the deployment of civilian monitors to the two border checkpoints of Donetsk and Gukovo on the Russian-Ukrainian border, decided by the OSCE Permanent Council on 24 July. It is crucial that the borders be made secure and that the separatist armed groups do not continue to receive equipment. In order to support and enhance the efforts under way, it is also important that the Secretary-General continue to use his good offices.

On 18 July, we condemned the tragic deaths of the 298 passengers on Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 (see S/PV.7219), brought down from the skies above Ukraine. We hoped then that 17 July would not simply remain in our memories as the day of that tragedy, but would also be remembered as a day that was a turning point in the search for a solution to the crisis in Ukraine. The time has come to honour the memory of the victims of the Ukrainian crisis and finally make a commitment in good faith to seeking a peaceful solution.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): I thank Mr. John Ging for his briefing this afternoon. I would also like to thank the United Nations agencies that are already working on the ground in Ukraine for their efforts.

The continuing conflict in eastern Ukraine has inevitably produced a humanitarian situation that is worsening. There has been further displacement of civilians and disruption of the provision of essential services. Advice from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs that the conflict has resulted in displacing 117,000 persons and that a further 163,000 have fled Ukraine is troubling. Reports of armed groups deliberately targeting civilian facilities such as electricity and water plants, roads and bridges are alarming. Such attacks on facilities that are necessary in order to sustain the well-being — indeed, the lives — of civilians must cease. Civilian infrastructure must be protected and respected. All parties to the conflict must comply with international humanitarian law.

We commend the United Nations and other humanitarian actors for their efforts to respond to the needs of displaced people and host communities. We welcome the determination of the Ukrainian authorities to ensure that the needs of the Ukrainian people who have been displaced or affected by violence are met. We endorse calls for a systematic registration system to facilitate that. Continued cooperation between the United Nations and the Ukrainian authorities is essential in planning and implementing the humanitarian response. In that regard, we look forward to the preliminary response plan developed by the humanitarian community, which we understand is to be released this week. Obviously, to restore essential services and protect civilians caught up in the conflict, it is necessary that all violence cease and that all parties commit to and embark on genuine dialogue. We commend the efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to promote dialogue, including through the trilateral contact group. We welcome the start of the Minsk talks, but they must deliver. In order for them to do so, it is essential that all support for armed groups operating in eastern Ukraine stop.

As we know only too well, it is just slightly less than three weeks ago that Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was downed over separatist-held territory in eastern Ukraine, with the terrible loss of 298 lives. Their deaths were a direct consequence of this needless violence in eastern Ukraine. The Council, through resolution 2166 (2014), rightly demanded a full, thorough and independent international investigation into the MH-17 incident. It also demanded immediate and unrestricted access to the site to allow for the investigation and recovery of the bodies, prohibited any actions that could compromise the integrity of the site, most notably by local armed groups, and insisted that those responsible be held accountable. Two weeks later, we still need the full and urgent implementation of that resolution. Although some access to the crash site has been secured, we still do not have the unimpeded and complete access to the whole of the site that is essential.

Last Friday, on 1 August, the Netherlands informed the Council of the establishment of the international mission to protect the investigation, led by the Netherlands, with the participation of Australia and Malaysia. Unarmed Dutch, Australian and Malaysian personnel have been assisting with the investigation and the removal of the remaining bodies and belongings, as well as securing the wreckage and physical evidence.

This is an unarmed operation of limited scope and duration. Personnel have been working closely and meticulously through the OSCE, which is negotiating site access and local ceasefires on their behalf. But that has not always enabled the access required to complete the essential tasks. The area around the site remains contested. Although today we had the cooperation of the Ukrainian authorities, armed separatists restricted access to several areas of the crash site, hampering the investigation and the recovery of remains and personal effects. Urgent, unrestricted access to every area of the site, in accordance with the unambiguous, plain provisions of resolution 2166 (2014), remains imperative. The unarmed personnel on the ground need the Council's own demands to be met in order to undertake their work. The sooner they can achieve full, free access, the sooner they will be able to complete their work.

To conclude, a lasting solution to the humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine self-evidently requires an end to the conflict. The Council has repeatedly urged that, and the information we have received today only reaffirms for us the importance of bringing to an end the impact of the violence and destabilizing activities in the east of Ukraine.

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): First, Mr. President, we share fully your words of commendation directed towards the delegation of Rwanda for its capable leadership of the Council during the past month. I should also like to thank Mr. John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), for his briefing.

Only yesterday, Europe and the rest of the world solemnly commemorated the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War. Today, the people of Ukraine and eastern Europe are experiencing the misery felt by the people of Belgium and France 100 years ago.

Mr. Ging's briefing today is evidently disconcerting. Nearly 4 million people are trapped in the conflict area in southern and eastern Ukraine. According to recent reports, Luhansk in eastern Ukraine is on the verge of a humanitarian disaster, with 230,000 people internally displaced due to the conflict.

The conflict has led to a scarcity of available drinking water, an indispensable and essential factor of life; and the shutdown of the power grid that supplies

electricity to homes, schools and hospitals. Every new day brings new tales of death and destruction. With gas reserves exhausted and the shortfall in medical supplies, the population is understandably eager to evacuate tumultuous cities.

The net result of the crisis is a mass exodus, as innocent civilians flee deprivation and the incessant violence. As the conflict in southern and eastern Ukraine intensifies, support and solidarity from the international community becomes increasingly important. In that connection, we take positive note of the preliminary response plan developed by the humanitarian community, which lays the foundation for the future humanitarian response in Ukraine, based on an overarching structured goal and the four strategy objectives that will guide sector-specific action and response. We commend OCHA for being central to those planning and response strategies.

Once again, the leadership role of the United Nations in addressing humanitarian issues and concerns across the globe has been demonstrated. We urge the relevant agencies to remain engaged with the humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine until it stabilizes.

We also call on the authorities in that country to take steps and measures to ensure the establishment of an effective system to engender the coordination and implementation of relief efforts. There is no doubt that the humanitarian situation is an outcome of the conflict in that country, which has intensified and assumed a perilous scale. The only sustainable solution to the humanitarian situation, and indeed to the overall situation in that country, is the cessation of hostilities and a return to dialogue.

In that regard, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe road map for de-escalating tensions in Ukraine and the 17 April Geneva agreement presents viable avenues to pursue a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine.

Mr. President, if you allow me a few seconds, I should like to just ask two questions of the OCHA Director, to take advantage of his presence. First, is the unified registration system for internally displaced persons (IDPs) that he mentioned being examined positively by the Ukrainian authorities with a view to its adoption? Secondly, we understand that winter conditions in that part of the world can be very severe. Is OCHA and the rest of the international humanitarian community putting in place some measures to cater to

IDPs and refugees in case the conflict is not resolved now and spills over into the winter period?

The President: I shall give Mr. Ging the opportunity to respond to those questions a bit later.

Mr. Nduhugirehe (Rwanda): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this emergency meeting on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine and for your kind words to Mr. Gasana and the delegation of Rwanda concerning the presidency in July.

Let me also thank John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), for his briefing.

The humanitarian crisis in eastern Ukraine, especially in the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk, has fast deteriorated over the past weeks. The violence continues to put the lives of Ukrainians in grave danger, particularly women and children; 3.9 million people live in areas affected by violence, a number of them deprived of basic services, including water, electricity and health services. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations refugee agency, reported that 117,000 people have been displaced inside Ukraine and that a total of 740,000 people have crossed into the Russian Federation since the beginning of the year.

Some are displaced because of fear of persecution for political views, ethnicity and possible recruitment in eastern Ukraine, but the large majority are Ukrainians caught in the crossfire, fearing for their own security and seeking a safe location. We commend United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors for their work on the ground, and we support UNHCR's call for the establishment by the Ukrainian Government of a central registration system for internally displaced persons.

Meanwhile, Rwanda is concerned at the continued fighting around the crash site of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17, preventing international investigators from doing their work. Those continued violations of resolution 2166 (2014) cannot be tolerated, particularly as we know that some family members have not been able to receive the remains of their loved ones. We renew our call on all parties — as they committed themselves to doing on 31 July — to allow unhindered access in and around sites so that the investigators can safely perform their duties in an expedited manner.

Given that context, it is unfortunate that the Council continues to be deeply divided on the crisis in Ukraine. The risk of a full-blown war will remain as long as there is division among Council members. Also, the worsening humanitarian situation in Ukraine, although it has not reached the level of that of Syria or Gaza, should be a wake-up call for the Council and for all stakeholders to redouble their efforts and take meaningful action towards a sustainable solution to the crisis.

It is true that the volatility of the situation on the ground continues to hinder political and diplomatic efforts to find a sustainable solution to the Ukrainian crisis. We thank the Secretary-General for his good offices and continued efforts for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. In that respect, we reiterate our support for President Poroshenko's peace plan, which should be the basis for a long-term solution to the crisis. We also appreciate the initiatives of the trilateral contact group of senior representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as the commitments contained in the joint Berlin declaration of 2 July of the ministers for foreign affairs of Germany, France, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Let me reiterate our call for the respect of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. In that regard, we urge all armed groups in eastern Ukraine to disarm and adhere to a ceasefire in order to de-escalate the situation. We believe that the Government of Ukraine has a right to restore public order on its territory, provided that right is exercised in a proportional manner with a view to preserving the chance for a genuine and inclusive dialogue among all Ukrainians.

In conclusion, Rwanda notes that today the Security Council is considering the humanitarian situation in the Ukraine and that in two days it will hold another meeting focused on the human rights situation in the country. We believe that such a piecemeal approach of considering different aspects of a particular crisis is not helpful, as all of them are interconnected. Consequently, Rwanda suggests holding a monthly meeting on the situation in Ukraine. That would enable us to remain seized of this matter and to consider the Ukrainian crisis in all its aspects.

Mr. Gombo (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would like to start by thanking Mr. John Ging of the the Office

for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for his briefing.

The intense clashes between Ukrainian forces and separatists in eastern Ukraine is occurring in urban centres, with civilians caught in the crossfire. Many civilians have been killed or wounded recently. Certain sources refer to the use of Grad rockets in inhabited areas, which is a serious crime. Civilians continue to flee in large numbers and those who remain have to face various shortages and violations. Health centres and hospitals in Donetsk and Slavyansk have been occupied, preventing civilians from receiving treatment. We call upon both sides to respect the norms of international humanitarian law. Attacks and reprisals risk worsening the situation, which will no doubt have a negative impact on the civilian population.

In conclusion, we are convinced that only an inclusive and constructive dialogue could lead us to an unfreezing of the situation that Ukraine is currently experiencing. Ukrainians have the right to peace just like all the other peoples of the world.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Kingdom.

I thank Mr. Ging for his briefing this afternoon. As we have heard from him, the situation in separatist-held areas of eastern Ukraine continues to deteriorate. The number of casualties is rising, public infrastructure is failing and the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is growing. Thankfully, we do not have in Ukraine a situation that is comparable to humanitarian crises elsewhere. But that is of little comfort to those Ukrainian civilians who are experiencing increasing levels of daily hardship.

Let us be absolutely clear: it is the continuing separatist violence that is responsible for the worsening humanitarian situation in the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk. Where there are no separatists there is no humanitarian distress. In those cities and towns that have been liberated by the Ukrainian Government, life is returning to normal, IDPs are returning to their homes and the Ukrainian Government is working to repair and re-establish public services. There have been no reprisals.

In contrast, in those areas that remain under separatist control, civilians are increasingly vulnerable. The United Nations reports that separatists have deliberately targeted critical public utilities, including

water, electricity and sewage plants. They have replaced the rule of law with what the United Nations describes as the rule of violence, thereby creating an atmosphere of fear, intimidation and harassment. The latest report of the United Nations human rights monitoring mission, released on 15 July, leaves little doubt about the violent and abusive nature of the separatist groups. It describes in detail their abduction of civilians, their looting, their torture, their killings and their executions of civilians. Recent reports indicate that separatist groups have been refusing to allow fighting-aged men to evacuate the areas under its control. These illegal armed separatist groups have no grounds to pursue their campaign of violence. They must lay down their arms, vacate all illegally seized-Government buildings and address their grievances through exclusively peaceful and democratic means.

But we must also address the root causes of the situation, and not just focus on its symptoms. Despite professing concern for Ukrainian citizens in the east, Russia has at no point called upon the separatists to cease their violent and illegal insurgency. Instead, it has fuelled the crisis, sustained the violence and prolonged the humanitarian distress. It has been equipping separatists with sophisticated heavy weaponry, including Grad rocket launchers and artillery, tanks and surface-to-air missiles. It has been recruiting and training fighters and waging a propaganda war on their behalf. There has even been direct shelling of Ukraine from Russian territory. The truth of the matter is that this is not an insurrection born in the Donbass; it is an insurgency manufactured in Moscow. It is led by Russians using Russian-supplied weapons in a deliberate effort to destabilize Ukraine and to exert control over Kyiv. The profile of the separatist leaders makes that abundantly clear.

Last month, Vladimir Antyufeyev joined the ranks of the separatists' military command alongside, Igor Strelkov and Alexander Borodai. Antyufeyev is wanted for his role in suppressing pro-independence demonstrations in Latvia in 1991 and was most recently the KGB chief in Transnistria. All three of those individuals are Russian citizens and all three have worked for Russian intelligence. It is deeply ironic that Russia should call for an emergency meeting for the Security Council to discuss a humanitarian crisis largely of its own creation. We agree that there needs to be an end to the violence. We agree that alleviating humanitarian distress is a matter of priority. But Russia cannot credibly present itself as supporting the people

of eastern Ukraine when it is the architect of the violence that afflicts them.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Mr. Ging to respond to the questions raised.

Mr. Ging: I would like to thank all the members of the Security Council for their support for humanitarian action in Ukraine and for acknowledging the excellent work that is being done by all involved in humanitarian action, starting with the communities themselves that are hosting so many displaced people and extending their generosity to them. We build on that spirit of humanity.

Two particular questions were raised. One was about the issue of a unified registration system for internally displaced persons and how positive the engagement is in that regard. I would say that we are hoping for an early positive outcome on that issue. I raise it here today because it is indeed very urgent and important to our effort.

The second question was on the issue of winterization. I think it is very important that this point be raised because the harshness of the winter in the region is very severe. In that regard, I can assure Council members that winterization is at the core of all the humanitarian plans. We are ensuring that every effort is made to alleviate what we can expect to be a very severe winter for those who are displaced. Once again, I reassure Council members that it is a core component of all of the humanitarian plans.

The President: I thank Mr. Ging for the clarifications he has provided.

I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Pavlichenko (Ukraine): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on the current situation in my country. Let me also thank Mr. Ging for his briefing today.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation to those who are engaged in providing assistance to the Government of Ukraine to address humanitarian issues in the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk affected by the activities of terrorists. We value the efforts of the United Nations and other organizations aimed at addressing humanitarian needs. I want to assure the Council that the Government of Ukraine gives due

consideration to all the recommendations of the United Nations and other international players.

As my delegation has stated previously, there is no humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, as continually portrayed by our Russian colleagues. It is evident, though, that the humanitarian situation in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions remains serious. However, the situation is manageable by the Government of Ukraine, which remains open to cooperation with international partners. Significant humanitarian difficulties currently exist only in those cities that are temporarily under the control of the terrorist groups supported by Russia. Their actions have already led to a disruption of work, water and electricity supply facilities, and other utilities vital to the normal life of the population.

Meanwhile, the Government of Ukraine is ensuring the fulfilment of all of its social obligations regarding retirement payments, social benefits and salaries in the public sector to the population throughout the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, except in certain towns that remain under the control of the terrorists.

The restoration and reconstruction of the territories affected by the terrorists are among the top priorities of the Ukrainian Government. As the Council might be aware, the terrorists have now been pushed out of the city of Slavyansk and many other towns and villages, which are now being restored to normal life. A few days ago, the President of Ukraine announced the establishment of the foundation on international aid to Donbass. We are pleased that many countries have agreed to make significant contributions, which will allow us to ease the burden of the recovery.

What our Russian colleagues continue to say about the situation in Ukraine, as well as their proposal on the so-called international humanitarian mission in Donbass, sounds very cynical. This is Russia, which continues to destabilize the situation in the east of Ukraine. Russia is supporting the activities of the terrorists and bears full responsibility for the humanitarian problems in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

In addition to the deliberate destruction of vital infrastructure and buildings in the region and of water and electricity supply systems, the terrorists from the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic, which include a large number of Russian citizens, are carrying out attacks on medical units and personnel, fire on hospitals with explosive

weapons, compromise the ability of civilian patients to receive treatment, and expropriate ambulances.

Human Rights Watch, in its report, condemned those acts by pro-Russian fighters and called on them to cease immediately. On the other hand, the anti-terrorist forces, which successfully freed the cities of the Donbass region from the terrorists, are restoring peace to its citizens, providing for the gradual restoration of infrastructure and helping them return to normal life.

Since June, the inter-agency coordination unit, which includes representatives of the United Nations system and the International Committee of the Red Cross, has been operating successfully in Ukraine to ensure that the urgent humanitarian needs of the civilian population and internally displaced persons are met.

Upon the instruction of the President of Ukraine, humanitarian corridors have been established for anyone who wishes to leave the anti-terrorist operation area. Unfortunately, the corridors are not able to operate fully today due to the activities of the illegal armed groups.

The State service for emergencies was charged with establishing a multi-task coordination centre in order to transport the persons affected as well as to meet the health-care and social needs of civilians.

The real cause of the current humanitarian difficulties in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions is the activities of the terrorists and illegal armed groups supported by Russia. Those groups are intimidating the local population, disrupting the normal functioning of city infrastructures and normal life, and robbing and kidnapping people. All humanitarian problems will be eliminated as soon as Russia stops supporting the terrorists and illegal armed groups operating in the east of Ukraine.

We demand that Russia take under effective control its part of the border and stop the flow of illegal armed groups, weapons and now heavy military machinery. Unfortunately, our calls on the Russian Federation to fulfil its obligations under the Geneva statement have not been heard. Russia continues to destabilize the situation in the eastern part of Ukraine.

Let me provide you with some recent information that reflects the reality of the situation.

I am now wrapping up.

Russia continues to shell the settlements and positions of the armed forces of Ukraine near the State border from Russian territory. The number of Russian armed forces, heavy armoured vehicles and troops positioned along the Russian-Ukrainian border has been constantly increasing. The shelling has resulted in casualties among civilians and soldiers, and destroyed residential, administrative and commercial buildings.

If the Russian Federation is truly interested in the stabilization of the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, we propose just a few easy steps to be taken by Russia: that it stop sending mercenaries as well as weapons and ammunition to the territory of Ukraine; establish effective control over its part of the border to prevent the infiltration of illegal armed troops and weapons; stop provoking instability; and withdraw all military and paramilitary formations of the Russian armed forces from Ukrainian borders. We are confident that the sooner the aforementioned steps are taken by the Russian Federation, the sooner the situation in my country will stabilize and return to normal.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Unfortunately, a number of members of the Security Council have not heeded our call to reject

any politicizing of this discussion of the humanitarian situation in the eastern part of Ukraine on the provision of humanitarian assistance to the population in need. Someone, as always, has protected the Kyivan authorities by distorting the role of the Russian Federation, others have repeated speeches that they have given previously in Security Council meetings, and some have said that the killing and wounding of individuals as a result of the armed conflict in Ukraine is not worthy of a separate discussion.

Such propaganda was repeated by the representative of Ukraine as well. We are grateful to those members of the Council who shared our concern and our alarm. We would like to once again reaffirm our readiness to closely cooperate with the humanitarian agencies and all relevant organizations and institutions that not only can but must play their role in providing assistance and help to the people of eastern Ukraine.

We cherish the hope that today's Council meeting will serve to promote the coordination of our common efforts with them.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.