



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

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New York

Provisional

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| <i>President:</i> | Mr. Biang | (Gabon) |
| <i>Members:</i> | Albania | Mr. Hoxha |
| | Brazil | Mr. De Almedia Filho |
| | China | Mr. Geng Shuang |
| | France | Mr. De Rivière |
| | Ghana | Mrs. Hackman |
| | India | Mr. Raguttahalli |
| | Ireland | Mr. Mythen |
| | Kenya | Mr. Kiboino |
| | Mexico | Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez |
| | Norway | Ms. Juul |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Nebenzia |
| | United Arab Emirates | Mr. Abushahab |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . | Mr. Kariuki |
| | United States of America | Mr. DeLaurentis |

Agenda

Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Germany, Greece, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Ms. Denise Brown, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

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

I give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

Ms. DiCarlo: The situation for civilians in Ukraine remains dire. As of 18 October, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has recorded 15,956 civilian casualties, with 6,322 killed, including at least 397 children, and 9,634 injured since 24 February. The actual figures are likely considerably higher. In a recent and concerning development, the Russian Federation launched a series of attacks on cities and towns across the country. On the morning of 10 October, Russian armed forces reportedly launched missiles and drones, killing at least 20 civilians and injuring more than 100, including in Kyiv, Dnipro and Zaporizhzhya. Many civilian objects, including dozens of residential buildings and critical infrastructure, were damaged. In total, between 10 and 18 October, at least 38 Ukrainian civilians were reportedly killed and at least 117 injured by missile and drone attacks.

In addition to the immediate loss of life, the United Nations is gravely concerned about the destruction of critical energy infrastructure, such as power plants.

According to the Ukrainian Government, 30 per cent of energy facilities have been hit since 10 October. Combined with soaring gas and coal prices, the deprivation caused by those attacks threatens to expose millions of civilians to extreme hardship and even life-endangering conditions this winter. To be clear, under international humanitarian law, attacks targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure are prohibited, as are attacks on military objectives that may be expected to cause harm to civilians that would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.

The United Nations continues to support all efforts aimed at accountability. It is essential that OHCHR be given complete and unimpeded access to all areas of Ukraine to continue its crucial work.

For its part, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine submitted its report to the General Assembly this week. The document states that there are grounds to conclude that war crimes and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law have been committed in Ukraine since 24 February 2022. The Commission stated that Russian troops were responsible for the vast majority of the violations identified. It also stated that Ukrainian armed forces have also committed international humanitarian law violations in some cases, including two incidents that qualify as war crimes.

According to the Commission, relentless use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas has killed and injured scores of civilians and devastated entire neighbourhoods. Additionally, the Commission documented patterns of summary executions, unlawful confinement, torture, ill treatment, rape and other sexual violence committed in areas occupied by Russian forces.

The impact of these violations on the people in Ukraine is immense, and so is the need for accountability. In this regard, the Commission called for a sound coordination of the multiple national and international accountability initiatives in Ukraine. Accountability remains crucial as new allegations of atrocities have emerged in areas that have recently returned to Ukrainian Government control. We must not let impunity prevail.

We welcomed the announcement on Monday of another exchange of prisoners of war between Ukraine and the Russian Federation: 110 Russian captives

were exchanged for 108 Ukrainians. This was the first prisoner exchange in which all freed Ukrainians were women, among them civilians, military personnel and national and border guards. Building on the constructive spirit of the prisoner exchanges, I want to reiterate the Secretary-General's appeal to the Russian Federation to grant full access to the International Committee of the Red Cross to all prisoners of war, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

The impact of the war in Ukraine is substantial and growing. The United Nations has detailed its impact on food security, energy and finance. The Black Sea Grain Initiative has helped to bring food prices down and stabilize and subsequently lower global food prices and move grain from one of the world's breadbaskets to those in need. As of 19 October, the total tonnage of grain and other foodstuffs exported through the Initiative had reached almost 8 million metric tons.

To maintain food security worldwide, it is critical that the Initiative be extended beyond November. It is equally critical that there be unimpeded access to Russian food and fertilizers. The United Nations will spare no effort to achieve food security for all populations.

We are on a path of further escalation, which can only cause more suffering for the people of Ukraine, Russia and the rest of the world. This trajectory must be reversed. Any suggestion of the possibility of nuclear or other non-conventional weapons only serves to further heighten tensions and could lead to a dangerous spiral. Any damage to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, whether intentional or by accident, could have catastrophic consequences. Any military action against, from or near the site must cease immediately.

The General Assembly has been clear. Last week, it declared that the referendums held in the regions of Ukraine that

“are or have been under the temporary military control of the Russian Federation, and the subsequent attempted illegal annexations of these regions, have no validity under international law and do not form the basis for any alteration of the status of these regions of Ukraine” (General Assembly resolution ES-11/4, para. 3).

This week, the Russian Federation announced the introduction of martial law in the regions of Ukraine under its temporary military control that it has attempted

to illegally annex. This decision, combined with the announced evacuation in Kherson amid intensified fighting on the ground, raises serious concerns.

The General Assembly also expressed strong support for

“the de-escalation of the current situation and a peaceful solution of the conflict through political dialogue, negotiation, mediation and other powerful peaceful means, with respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and in accordance with the principles of the [United Nations] Charter” (Ibid., para. 7).

Indeed, an end to the war founded on international law and the Charter is the surest way to ensure that the tremendous suffering of the civilians in Ukraine will cease.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. DiCarlo for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Brown.

Ms. Brown: I will speak briefly about the human toll of this war, the new dimensions of the humanitarian crisis and the challenge of access to non-Government-controlled areas.

Deaths and suffering of civilians, ravaged urban and rural areas and the total loss of livelihoods for millions are the impacts of the war on the civilian population of Ukraine — now in its 239th day. The people of Ukraine are under tremendous stress. Mental-health issues are emerging, which will be one of the most devastating and long-lasting legacies of this war.

I was recently in Mykolaiv oblast, where the mayor told me that, since 24 February, they have had only 33 days of silence — 33 days without explosions or air-raid sirens. Let us do the math. That comes to only one day a week of reprieve from the sounds and the terror — let alone the physical toll — of the war.

The sheer depth of the humanitarian catastrophe is staggering. Almost 18 million people — more than 40 per cent of the entire Ukrainian population — need humanitarian assistance. Some 14 million have been forced to flee their homes, including 6.2 million internally displaced and nearly 7.7 million refugees. According to UNICEF, some 5.7 million children of school age have been affected since the start of the war, including 3.6 million as a result of the closure of

educational institutions. The World Health Organization says there have been over 630 verified attacks on health-care facilities, preventing the sick from having access to medicine and treatment. The gender and protection dimensions of this crisis, while extremely sensitive, are great and need to be addressed through strengthened programming and monitoring.

With each passing day, we face new dimensions to the humanitarian crisis. First, temperatures are plummeting in Ukraine as winter approaches. The destruction of civilian infrastructure has recently become more widespread. In some areas, energy-supply, telecommunications and transport infrastructure have, been devastated, affecting people's access to water, electricity and heat and their ability to communicate. The damage to power and thermal plants means that life will be even harder for the already vulnerable, including elderly people and those with disabilities. There is an increased risk of death in the months ahead because civilians may not have access to the essential services to survive.

International humanitarian law is very clear: attacks must never be directed against civilians or civilian objects, and constant care must be taken to spare them. To address essential needs, we, the United Nations and the humanitarian community, have developed a specific plan for the winter months, built at the oblast level in coordination with the authorities and in close collaboration with the Government. The focus is on repairs to collective centres and homes and the provision of blankets, mattresses, clothes, food, generators for schools and much-needed thermal heating for hospitals. Work is under way. The aim is for civilians to have a safe, dignified and warm place to be over the winter months.

Despite the challenges, we are helping people. Already this year, more than 590 humanitarian partners have been delivering critical assistance and protection countrywide. Many of those at the forefront of these efforts come from national and local aid organizations, women-led organizations or are individual volunteers. We must commend their leadership, bravery and commitment. Together, we have reached more than 13 million people across the country, and we continue to explore options for reaching others where the need is greatest.

Secondly, newly accessible areas mean that we can reach entirely new communities with humanitarian

assistance and essential services. Aid workers are acting quickly to reach those in need, taking into consideration the security risks while upholding our commitment to stay and deliver. However, in accessible areas of Kharkiv, Kherson and Donetsk, the threat of landmines and unexploded-ordnance contamination hinders humanitarian operations. The immediate priority for the humanitarian mine action sector must be to prevent civilian casualties from explosive ordnance and help enable the safe delivery of humanitarian relief.

Thirdly, with regard to psychosocial trauma, the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization estimate that almost 10 million people will need some kind of psychosocial support, owing to the trauma caused by the war. That includes women and girls suffering sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence, children hearing warning sirens daily, families that have been separated and people just trying to survive every day.

In areas in which the Government of Ukraine has regained control, particularly in rural areas, civilians who have witnessed or experienced terrible violations and ongoing hostilities are among the most at risk. Just a few weeks ago, I visited the community of Balakliya, in the newly accessible district of Izyum in the Kharkiv oblast. The majority of those who remain there are very old people and those who stayed behind to care for them and are unable to flee the area.

The United Nations and our partners are working to strengthen our capacity to address the growing psychosocial needs of Ukraine. Humanitarian access to those most in need has been a consistent challenge in the conflict. Right now, one of the most significant challenges remains access to parts of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhya. We are extremely concerned about the people in those territories whom we cannot reach. Regular requests continue to be made to cross the front line. Yet we are not receiving the necessary agreement from all parties.

Operationally, we are ready to move with inter-agency convoys and aid personnel into non-Government controlled areas. The consequences of not delivering assistance to the estimated millions of people in those areas are dire, particularly with the winter months already upon us.

We must be able to alleviate the human suffering caused by the war. International humanitarian law, which already embodies a balancing act between

humanity and military necessity, clearly requires parties to allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for all civilians in need and through all possible routes. Obstructions that leave the civilian population without the essentials to survive run contrary to that obligation.

Finally, the flash appeal has seen unprecedented donor support. More than \$2.9 billion has been received against requirements of \$4.3 billion for this year. That is the second most-funded country-level appeal in United Nations history, only second to the support provided to Yemen in 2019 in the amount of \$3.6 billion. The Ukraine humanitarian fund has also received significant new funding, with more than \$230 million in contributions and pledges. Of that, \$117 million has already been disbursed, and we have now included \$20 million for local volunteer organizations. I thank the donors for their generous support.

In conclusion, the people of Ukraine have shown incredible resilience in this past year. Our urgent humanitarian task is to continue to help them survive and be safe.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Brown for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, Ms. Denise Brown, for their briefings.

As we have heard, the war in Ukraine has had a devastating impact on the civilian population. The number of civilian deaths and injuries continues to rise, and everything suggests that the number will continue to increase if more urgent and effective measures are not taken. The more than 17 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, the more than 7 million refugees in Europe and the more than 6 million internally displaced persons, as well as the approach of winter, have made the situation an extremely complex one that requires an immediate response.

The indiscriminate attacks against civilian infrastructure in recent days, including by unmanned aerial vehicles, are in violation of international humanitarian law. The dimensions of the humanitarian crisis continue to grow alarmingly in scope. That is

why, together with France, Mexico requested this meeting to consider recent developments and seek to provide solutions and alternatives.

Respect for the norms of international humanitarian law, including the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Protocols Additional, is an obligation that does not allow for any exception. The provisions of those instruments are categorical: the parties must make a clear distinction between civilians and combatants. The use of weapons or methods of warfare likely to cause unnecessary loss or excessive suffering is prohibited, and the principles of necessity and proportionality must always be upheld.

As we have heard, the impact of the conflict on health services has been severe. According to the World Health Organization, more than 630 attacks on Ukraine's health system have been recorded. Deliberate attacks on hospitals constitute war crimes, are unacceptable and cannot go unpunished. The conflict has also had a serious impact on the population's mental health, which will directly and indirectly leave a deep mark on large segments of the affected population. As a result, psychosocial support must be an integral component of humanitarian assistance.

The reports of sexual and gender-based violence are also alarming. All of them must be investigated to ensure accountability and effective reparations for violations, with a gender perspective.

In the face of challenges of such magnitude, the fighting under way is affecting the ability of humanitarian actors to operate on the ground. It is imperative to guarantee unrestricted humanitarian access for the provision of essential services to those in need, in line with the basic principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

We of course welcome the significant commitment of donors that has helped fund the humanitarian response in Ukraine. However, as always, funding can never keep up with needs. It can be expected that the vulnerability of the civilian population will increase in the coming months, with the onset of winter and the severe damage that has been wrought on energy infrastructure. For that reason, it is urgent that attacks on civilian infrastructure cease.

Moreover, the presence of mines in Ukraine is a matter of deep concern. In addition to their impact on the civilian population, particularly children,

their presence affects the ability of the humanitarian community to operate safely, and they clearly pose a major threat in the medium and long terms. In the absence of demining efforts, Ukraine's agricultural sector will also face serious challenges during the next planting season. In that regard, we encourage the parties to reach an agreement to renew the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which has been critical to alleviating the impact of the war on global food security.

My country condemns in the strongest terms any threat of the use of nuclear weapons, and we recall January's communiqué, in which the nuclear-weapon States affirmed that "a nuclear war should never be waged".

In the same vein, it is regrettable that a secure and demilitarized perimeter has not been established around the nuclear plant in Zaporizhzhya, despite the recommendations issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency as well as the calls of the Secretary-General and the international community. We urge the parties to heed that call.

I conclude by recalling that the most effective way to protect the civilian population and ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance is the cessation of hostilities. We will continue to insist on seeking avenues for dialogue and diplomacy in order to end this war.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. DiCarlo and Ms. Brown for their briefings.

Eight months after launching its war of aggression, Russia has crossed a new threshold. It has been indiscriminately shelling Ukrainian cities for the past 10 days, deliberately choosing to strike civilian infrastructure, especially energy infrastructure, in Kyiv, Sumy and Dnipro. Russia is no longer even trying to conceal its crimes.

Russia is violating the founding principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms derived from it — the prohibition of aggression, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the sovereignty of States and respect for territorial integrity. The General Assembly has unequivocally and overwhelmingly condemned those violations of our Charter. By targeting civilians, Russia is blatantly violating international humanitarian law. It seeks in vain to break the morale of the Ukrainian nation. By indiscriminately striking Ukrainian cities, Russia seeks to terrorize. By destroying essential civilian infrastructure, especially in the energy sector,

Russia intends to cause electricity and heating shortages with the arrival of winter. It is counting on the suffering of civilians, including women, children and the elderly. All of Ukraine's partners stand in solidarity with Ukraine. France has already mobilized resources to help Ukraine get through the winter.

We urge Russia to comply with international humanitarian law and to allow humanitarian actors access to civilian populations in the territories it claims to occupy, as well as to prisoners of war, including those held in captivity in Russia. We are particularly concerned about their fate.

The abuses and destruction resulting from Russia's aggression may constitute war crimes, and the perpetrators will be held accountable. On 22 September, Minister for Foreign Affairs Catherine Colonna reiterated to the Council (see S/PV.9135) that there would be no impunity for criminals. The International Criminal Court must move forward quickly in its work by tracing the chain of responsibility as far back as it can. Along with many partners, France supports the collection of evidence by the investigative mechanisms and national and international jurisdictions.

It is now well documented that the Russian armed forces are using Iranian drones in Ukraine, in particular to indiscriminately bomb civilian infrastructure. Iran's provision of that equipment to Russia is a violation of resolution 2231 (2015), as we and our German and British partners stated in a letter to Council members today. The European Union yesterday adopted new sanctions against Iranian entities and individuals involved in the production and transfer of those drones. France supports Ukraine's call for the Secretariat to investigate and report back to Council members, in accordance with its mandate. France calls on Iran to immediately cease all forms of support for the war of aggression launched by Russia against Ukraine. It calls on Russia and Iran to stop violating resolution 2231 (2015).

France also condemns the complicity of Belarus, whose territory continues to be used for missile and drone strikes against Ukraine.

Finally, the General Assembly's vote last week (see A/ES-11/PV.14) was conclusive: Russia is alone and overwhelmingly condemned by the international community. Ukraine, on the other hand, has the strength of international solidarity. We will continue, as long as necessary, to provide the Ukrainian people with all the

humanitarian, economic and military support they need to exercise their right to self-defence and preserve their freedom.

Mr. Kiboino (Kenya): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Ms. Denise Brown for their briefings.

It is regrettable that, rather than turning to dialogue and diplomacy to end this conflict, we are seeing an escalation of military activity. The sustained targeting of civilians and objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, including residential homes, health facilities, shelters, as well as power and water infrastructure, is a violation of international law and international humanitarian law. Civilians continue to bear the brunt of the conflict in urban areas, as witnessed in Kyiv and cities in the east and south of Ukraine. We convey our condolences to the bereaved families and wish a quick recovery to all the victims.

Also alarming are the persistent threats being made of the use of weapons of mass destruction. We continue to urge for the protection of all nuclear installations, including the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant.

The continued intensification of conflict will only further undermine the prospects of a longer-term negotiated peace settlement. It could also give way to the strengthening of armed alliances in preparation for a protracted war that could cause State fragility among currently stable economies in Europe and beyond.

Kenya therefore continues to call for an immediate cessation of hostilities in order to allow for dialogue for a long-term solution. In the meantime, Kenya especially thanks United Nations entities and agencies, as well as other institutions and Governments, for their steadfast efforts to alleviate suffering in every possible way. We continue to call for those United Nations agencies to be granted unhindered humanitarian access to those in need.

In already food insecure regions, especially in Africa, due to extreme weather conditions and conflict, the war in Ukraine has worsened the situation. It has disrupted global food supply chains, creating shortages and sharp price increases. The Black Sea Grain Initiative and the agreement to ensure unimpeded exports of Russian food and fertilizer to world markets were a promising start, and we continue to advocate for their maintenance.

We also urge that any efforts to deploy emergency food and energy security mechanisms in industrialized countries be accompanied by efforts to transform food systems in food-insecure regions. A major part of that endeavour would be making the necessary investments to ensure that Africa is food self-sufficient.

The last two World Wars came as a surprise. We do not want the war in Ukraine to be remembered as the beginning of a third world war or for it to lead to the fracturing of the global governance system. It is high time that all States involved in the conflict, directly or indirectly, opened channels of communication and used them to explore the conditions that can lead to a cessation of hostilities, followed by negotiations that address the war in Ukraine and stabilize the European security order. It is also time for States with influence, reach and vision for a stable global order to begin a conversation on the next steps to advance a worldwide demand for a dialogue on Ukraine and other major security flashpoints. It is also time to accelerate the efforts to reform the Security Council. Without reform of the permanent membership the current format will lose its relevance and will be overtaken by competing multilateral arrangements.

Kenya once again reiterates its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): In recent months we have seen a continuing intensification of the conflict on the ground in Ukraine, an ongoing deterioration of the humanitarian situation and ever bleaker prospects for peace, which China finds extremely worrisome. The nearly eight-month crisis has taken a heavy toll on ordinary people, put the world, especially developing countries, under tremendous strain and exposed global economic development to severe shocks. We must prevent the conflict from becoming more protracted and complicated, make every effort to mitigate its humanitarian consequences, contain its spillover effects and work together tirelessly to promote de-escalation, a swift ceasefire and the cessation of hostilities. Today I want to emphasize three key points.

First, we must comply effectively with international humanitarian law. International humanitarian law is a code of conduct by which all parties to a conflict must abide. Civilians and civilian facilities should be fully protected, and all the parties should facilitate the

evacuation of people and the provision of humanitarian relief. Nuclear power plants, energy pipelines, bridges and other critical infrastructure are vital to public safety and social stability and should not be the target of malicious attacks. All the parties involved should exercise maximum restraint, avoid words and actions that exacerbate confrontation and result in miscalculations and work to prevent the conflict from escalating and becoming more dangerous.

Secondly, we must make constant efforts to step up humanitarian assistance. The nearly eight months of intense conflict have led to a severe shortage of supplies in many places. The delivery of basic public services, such as water, electricity, heating and medical care, is now challenging. As winter approaches, millions of people, especially women, children and other vulnerable groups, must rely on humanitarian aid to survive. China appreciates the efforts of international humanitarian agencies and Ukraine's neighbours to mitigate the humanitarian crisis. We call on the international community to continue to assist Ukraine based on the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and to help its neighbours share the burden of resettling everyone affected by the conflict.

Thirdly, we must make every effort to contain the spillover effects of the conflict. In the era of globalization, the implementation of all-round, indiscriminate sanctions will serve only to accelerate the spread of the crisis, raise the prices of commodities on international markets, destabilize the global industrial supply chain and leave every country in the world, not least developing countries, exposed to its deleterious effects. The international community should unite and work together to ensure the uninterrupted operation of the global food, energy and financial markets and remove political obstacles to international economic and trade cooperation. Maintaining and expanding the return of Ukrainian and Russian food and fertilizers to the international market is important in stabilizing global food prices and ensuring the supply of agricultural products. China supports the continued effective implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the memorandum of understanding on the export of Russian food and fertilizer.

Peace is the fundamental solution to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and the only way to achieve long-term peace and stability in Ukraine and the region at large. No matter how great the difficulties and challenges, the door to a political settlement must

not be closed. The process of diplomatic negotiations cannot be stalled, and the efforts to stop the war and promote talks must not slow down. The events of the past eight months have proved that sanctions and pressure, bloc confrontation and political isolation are not effective ways to resolve the crisis. The international community should focus on encouraging peace talks and seeking a political solution by persuading the parties to resume peace talks and end the fighting as soon as possible in order to achieve a peaceful solution to the crisis without delay.

China's position on the Ukraine issue is clear and consistent. We empathize with the Ukrainian people and their plight. We have put forward a six-point initiative on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine and an international food-security cooperation initiative. We have sent a number of batches of emergency humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. As a responsible country, China will continue to play a constructive role in promoting peace talks and to make positive contributions to alleviating the humanitarian crisis.

Mr. Raguttahalli (India): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, Ms. Denise Brown, for their respective briefings on the situation in Ukraine, particularly the protection of civilians and the humanitarian situation.

India continues to be concerned about the conflict in Ukraine, which has resulted in loss of life and countless miseries for its people, particularly women, children and the elderly, with millions becoming homeless and forced to seek shelter in neighbouring countries. The reports of attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in recent weeks are deeply worrisome, and we reiterate our grave concern in that regard. International principles and jurisprudence vest responsibility in the parties to the conflict to ensure that civilians and civilian infrastructure are not targeted in situations of armed conflict. Civilians in conflict-affected areas need safe, unhindered and rapid access to basic services, often provided by humanitarian workers. As we have reiterated in the Council, all humanitarian aid and assistance must be primarily guided by the universal principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and such measures must not be politicized.

Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, India has consistently called for an immediate cessation

of hostilities and an end to the violence. We have called on both sides to return to the path of diplomacy and dialogue and have expressed our support for all diplomatic efforts to end the conflict. We believe that no solution should be reached at the cost of innocent lives. Our Prime Minister has spoken to the Presidents of Ukraine and Russia on multiple occasions and has reiterated India's position. India stands ready to support all such efforts aimed at de-escalation.

The impact of the Ukraine conflict is not limited just to Europe. The conflict is exacerbating concerns over food, fertilizer and fuel security, particularly in developing countries. It is necessary for all of us to adequately appreciate the importance of equity, affordability and accessibility regarding those critical issues for the global South. Open markets must not become an argument to perpetuate inequity and promote discrimination.

In that context, we hope that the grain deal agreed in July will be implemented earnestly by all parties. However, we believe that that alone may not be sufficient to address the food insecurity concerns.

India's approach to the Ukraine conflict will continue to be people-centric. For our part, we provide both humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and economic support to some of our neighbours in the global South under economic distress, even as they stare at the escalating cost of food, fuel and fertilizers, which has been a consequential fallout of the ongoing conflict.

We hope that the international community will continue to respond positively to the calls for humanitarian assistance. We support calls urging for guarantees of safe passage in order to deliver essential humanitarian and medical supplies. So far, India has dispatched 12 consignments of humanitarian aid to Ukraine, and we stand ready to do more.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the global order is anchored in the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates): I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Resident Coordinator Denise Brown for their briefings.

As we heard today, a significant percentage of critical civilian infrastructure, including power stations and water supply infrastructure, has been

either damaged or destroyed. In just a week, a third of Ukraine's power stations are reported to have been knocked off the electricity grid at a critical time, leaving people without gas for cooking and heating, with winter approaching. As the war continues, the Ukrainians' needs for humanitarian aid are further compounded.

The international community must step up its support to alleviate the suffering of civilians and ensure that their basic needs are met. To that end, the United Arab Emirates announced \$100 million in humanitarian aid to Ukraine earlier this week. However, other parts of the world cannot be neglected. We must ensure that those most in need globally do not become an afterthought.

Access remains a major hurdle for humanitarian organizations, particularly in the areas witnessing the most intense fighting in eastern Ukraine. Those unable to escape the fighting, such as people with disabilities, the elderly and the sick, have become vulnerable to shifting battle lines. In that context, we commend the efforts of humanitarian organizations, and we urge cooperation by the parties to resolve all impediments to access.

We once again reiterate our call on the parties to abide by their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, so as to ensure the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, including energy infrastructure. Civilian objects must never be a target of attack.

Despite the deeply concerning developments in the conflict, we have seen some movement between the parties, which has led to tangible, positive outcomes on concrete issues. While the momentum towards broader negotiations is still lacking, prisoner exchanges, including the exchange announced earlier this week, show the potential for positive outcomes.

The agreements to facilitate the export of food and fertilizers were significant and positive steps, which contributed to a decline in the index for global food prices. Nevertheless, the full implementation, expansion and extension of the agreements remain critical to addressing global food insecurity.

Compromise, diplomacy and dialogue remain the only way forward to prevent further suffering. We commend the United Nations and others that have worked to facilitate constructive engagement between the parties.

The world wants peace in Ukraine — a peace that is sustainable and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. There is no alternative to a cessation of hostilities throughout Ukraine and a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Mr. De Almeida Filho (Brazil): Let me start by thanking both our briefers for their informative briefings. I will make two comments on the subject.

First, Brazil regrets that, after nearly eight months of conflict in Ukraine, the civilian population continues to suffer. There is no justification for attacks perpetrated against civilian targets, such as those recorded in Kyiv and other major Ukrainian cities in the past few days.

The damage to the energy sector, which, according to reports by our Embassy in Kyiv, reached 30 per cent of its generating capacity, is particularly worrisome. The rigours of the coming winter will add to the humanitarian crisis. The continuing reports of civilian casualties and attacks against civilian infrastructure attest to the urgency of opening channels of humanitarian dialogue between the parties.

Brazil recalls the obligations of all States under international law and those of all parties under international humanitarian law. Missile launches and drone strikes must be halted. Unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance to those in need should be guaranteed by all parties.

Secondly, we believe that it is important to discuss our collective response to the conflict. In our discussions with other delegations, we note increased frustration at what is perceived as insufficient efforts by the Security Council to facilitate a peaceful solution. Many are disappointed by the fact that divisions have prevailed over what is expected from us: the willingness to engage in dialogue.

The Charter of the United Nations outlaws war as a legitimate means of resolving conflicts. Reaffirming that principle is essential, but is not sufficient in the light of our collective responsibilities. The Council should actively contribute to all possible efforts towards a ceasefire and to negotiations between the parties.

Various ideas have been circulated by other delegations to facilitate direct talks between the parties. The Security Council should explore them. Brazil is willing to engage in such efforts, and we call on other members to consider new paths in order to alleviate the suffering of the Ukrainian people.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Humanitarian Coordinator Brown for their briefings.

Russia has shown again and again that it disregards the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We are in this Chamber today because of the mounting consequences and human toll of Russia's unprovoked and unlawful invasion of its neighbour and fellow State Member of the United Nations.

As we just heard, there are 7.7 million Ukrainians living as refugees and more than 6 million more displaced in Ukraine. That is nearly one third of the population that cannot go home. Nearly half of the population needs humanitarian assistance. As Ms. Brown explained, needs will intensify in the winter. As needs increase, Russia's forces hit civilian infrastructure and humanitarian convoys with renewed relentlessness, undermining the civilian population's ability to survive cold winter temperatures. That includes a massive barrage against Ukraine's cities on 10 October, which the Secretary-General called "another unacceptable escalation" of the war.

As insecurity, broken supply chains and mass displacement hamper health care across Ukraine, a United Nations partner reports some 500 attacks by Russia's forces on health-care personnel, facilities and transportation between 24 February and 7 September. As humanitarian organizations scale up efforts to reach recently retaken areas, Russia's retaliatory strikes and the prevalence of landmines pose safety risks to humanitarian personnel and other civilians.

The United Nations estimates that \$4.3 billion will be needed to provide Ukrainians with humanitarian aid. Since February, the United States has provided more than \$1.5 billion in assistance to that end. We urge countries to help the United Nations meet those goals as we continue to stand firmly behind the Ukrainian people.

From the beginning of its full-scale invasion, Russia has shown contempt for the Security Council. That continues with evidence that — since August and in violation of resolution 2231 (2015) — Iran has transferred Mohajer-6 and Shahed-series unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to Russia. Those Iranian-origin UAVs have been subsequently used in multiple attacks against Ukraine, including the massive barrage on 10 October, which hit civilians and civilian infrastructure. In addition to the easily identifiable

remnants of those UAVs recovered in Ukraine, there is significant publicly available documentation, including photographs and video, of those UAVs being used against Ukraine.

The United Nations must investigate any violations of Security Council resolutions. We must not allow Russia or others to impede or threaten the United Nations from carrying out its mandated responsibilities.

We take this opportunity to refute resolutely Russia's false assertion that the Geneva Conventions do not apply to captured foreign volunteers. Russia's obligations as a party to the Geneva Conventions and their Protocol Additional I apply to its detention and treatment of any individuals in the armed conflict. Members of Ukraine's armed forces, including third-country national volunteers, must be treated as prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions and afforded the treatment and protections commensurate with that status.

Finally, we cannot forget the spillover effects of this war, which have exacerbated global food insecurity. We must continue to champion the efforts of and work to renew the Black Sea Grain Initiative, under which more than 300 ships with more than 7 million metric tons of grain and other food have left Ukraine's ports. As the United Nations has pointed out, the initiative helps calm markets and limit food-price inflation. In fact, the Food Price Index of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has fallen since its spike at the start of the war, and wheat prices are back at pre-war levels. We cannot tolerate any backsliding at the expense of the world's hungry.

In conclusion, to the countries on the Council that have never mentioned Russia throughout the many months since the escalation of the conflict, I would say — if women matter, urge Russia to silence its guns. If children matter, ask Russia to withdraw its forces. If the Charter of the United Nations matters, call on Russia to respect Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. Vague calls for diplomacy only enable Russia as it commits further abuses. We in this Chamber, charged with the protection of global peace and security, must continue to call for accountability and Russia's immediate cessation of its illegal war of aggression against Ukraine.

Mr. Mythen (Ireland): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Ms. Brown for their briefings.

We meet at the end of another critical week for Ukraine and its people. They struggle daily with massive disruption to vital power and water supplies — the result of continued attacks by the Russian Federation on Ukraine's critical civilian infrastructure. There are direct attacks on hospitals and health-care facilities — places of care and refuge — many of which are now only partially functional or reliant on limited back-up power. Russian attacks have also been hitting residential buildings, killing civilians as they sleep.

The people of Ukraine are paying the ultimate price for a senseless war that is not of their choosing. While the world has called for peace, the Russian Federation has instead chosen the path of escalation in this war. Across Ukraine, we have seen explosive weapons, including prohibited cluster munitions, being used in populated areas and against civilian infrastructure. Landmines jeopardize civilians, agricultural production, food security and safe humanitarian access.

Ireland is concerned about the use of Iranian-supplied unmanned aerial vehicles that bring death, destruction and horror to the streets of Kyiv and elsewhere. Their acquisition by Russia would contravene resolution 2231 (2015). Those attacks on civilian targets appear to have just one goal in mind: to intimidate and terrorize the civilian population. They represent a blatant disregard for human life, constitute a serious violation of international law and are simply unconscionable.

We once again call on the Russian Federation to comply with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. We urge the Russian Federation to refrain from further escalation, take all feasible measures to prevent civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure and facilitate life-saving humanitarian access without delay. We have just heard how critical that is as winter approaches, with the most vulnerable in Ukrainian society — internally displaced persons, women, children and the elderly — facing a particularly precarious future.

The people of Ukraine have shown remarkable resolve and determination in the face of such brutal adversity. Ireland stands with them today, as always. For our part, we are determined to ensure that the Russian Federation be held to account for its heinous actions. There are rules, even in war, and when those rules are broken there must be accountability for the targeting of civilians, arbitrary detention, human trafficking and

conflict-related sexual violence. In all situations in which international crimes may have been committed, we must ensure that timely, credible investigations are undertaken, evidence is rigorously documented and witnesses, victims and survivors are supported.

Last week, the General Assembly delivered a clear message of support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity (see A/ES-11/PV.12). It was not only about Ukraine but also about protecting the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the very basis of our rules-based international order. It was through that very Charter that we, the members of the United Nations, conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. For exactly eight months now, the Russian Federation has acted with utter disregard for that responsibility. It continues to bring wanton death and destruction to Ukraine through its illegal war of aggression.

Today I appeal to my fellow members of the Council to assert our responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, stand united in calling on the Russian Federation to end the war and withdraw from the entire territory of Ukraine, and support all efforts at dialogue and diplomacy to bring about a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Mrs. Hackman (Ghana): I would like to begin my statement by thanking Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Ms. Denise Brown, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, for their important and sobering briefings on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

Now in its eighth month, the unjustified aggression against Ukraine has been marked by overwhelming suffering, death and destruction. Too many people, especially women, children and the elderly, continue to suffer needlessly from the fighting that has engulfed many cities across Ukraine. The humanitarian statistics, as reported, are indeed concerning but can only be expected to rise should the fighting continue in the way that we are witnessing. It is also important to note the impact of the war on pre-existing humanitarian situations in other parts of the world, where food aid is largely supplied from Ukraine.

The growing threats of the use of unconventional weapons and possible nuclear engagements have been a source of global uncertainty. Ghana calls for a de-escalation of tensions, an immediate cessation

of hostilities and intensified diplomatic efforts to end the war now rather than later, when the cost of reconciliation and reconstruction will be unbearable. It is vital that the Security Council and the wider international community forge a consensus on concrete measures and pathways to halt the rising tensions and begin a political dialogue for settlement. In that regard, we welcome the continuing leadership and pacific role of the Secretary-General and hope that further gains can be made in the endeavours for a peaceful settlement.

We are grateful to the United Nations humanitarian agencies and their partners, which are working under extremely difficult and dangerous operational circumstances. We pay our respects to all humanitarian workers who have fallen while in service to humankind in Ukraine. Their commitment and sacrifice in bringing relief to the suffering people must be matched by the international community's efforts in helping to end the war. We welcome the humanitarian aid, support and contributions by some States and international agencies aimed at seeing Ukrainians through the winter. Food, water, shelter, warm clothing and medicines will be critical to the survival of some 6.5 million people internally displaced by the war. We call on both parties to grant humanitarian access to all areas where people require assistance and urge the Russian authorities, in particular, to grant unhindered humanitarian access to the occupied territories. As the fighting intensifies, we believe it will be essential to create new humanitarian corridors to ensure civilians' passage to areas of relative safety. We want to point to the success of the Mariupol evacuations and call for similar arrangements to be made as a matter of urgency.

We condemn all human rights violations and reiterate our support for independent, transparent and thorough investigations of such violations, including conflict-related sexual violence. The happenings in Bucha and Irpin must strengthen our resolve to hold the perpetrators of such acts to account and avoid impunity. The parties must refrain from targeted attacks on civilian infrastructure and other critical infrastructure. Apart from imposing severe hardships on the people, the deliberate destruction of critical energy infrastructure, residential facilities, water stations, health-care facilities, schools and transport infrastructure constitute gross violations of international law and the principles of international humanitarian law relating to armed conflict.

In conclusion, we reiterate our complete commitment to the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine and remain supportive of international efforts to alleviate the humanitarian suffering of the Ukrainian people.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I once again thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing. And I thank Resident Coordinator Brown for her invaluable update on the situation on the ground and the work the United Nations team is doing in the toughest of circumstances.

So far, this war has killed, maimed and psychologically damaged thousands of people. Millions have been forced to flee. Ukrainian towns and cities have been reduced to rubble, with evidence of atrocities left behind in the ruins. We have heard unbearable stories of sexual violence. And the real objectives of the invasion have been exposed by Russia's attempts to suppress Ukrainian national identity and culture and illegally annex Ukrainian land, an act widely condemned by the United Nations membership last week (see A/ES-11/PV.14).

Unfortunately, an already appalling situation appears to be getting worse. Under the command of General Sergey Surovikin, a man infamous for brutalities against civilians in Syria, we have seen a renewed campaign of drone and missile strikes across Ukraine. Heavily populated areas have been hit, as well as playgrounds, rush-hour traffic and apartment buildings nowhere near front lines or military installations. A new wave of bombardment has deliberately targeted critical national infrastructure, leaving some 30 per cent of Ukraine's power stations damaged or destroyed. These are attacks on Ukrainian civilians' way of life, and they are a clear breach of international humanitarian law. They are egregious in their own right, but even worse as winter approaches. Russia's attacks mean that Ukrainians are losing the ability to heat their homes and cook their food. The intent behind them is clear. Russia is seeking to subjugate Ukraine by terrorizing civilians. And it is doing so using weaponry obtained from Iran in violation of resolution 2231 (2015). Russia has been trying to distract us with attacks on the United Nations integrity and its mandate to investigate. But resolution 2231 (2015) is clear. It asks the Secretary-General to report to the Council on its implementation. And there are extensive precedents for site visits to consider evidence. Of course, the key issue is that

wherever those drones come from, their use against civilians is barbaric.

Russia's actions are illegal and immoral and must come to an end. So we once again call on Russia to stop its disinformation and misdirection and its accusations that the West is somehow responsible for Russia's own atrocities. We call on Russia to heed the calls of the international community, respect its obligations under international law and stop its attacks on civilians, energy infrastructure, hospitals and health facilities. And we call on it yet again to end the war and return to the path of dialogue it abandoned in February.

Finally, as others have, we recognize the wider negative impact of Russia's war. The positive impact of the Black Sea Grain Initiative on global grain crises is clear, and we have heard more about that today. So we welcome and encourage the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure the continuation of the agreement. He has the United Kingdom's full support.

Ms. Juul (Norway): Let me first thank the briefers for their candid words to the Council today. Their accounts leave no doubt about the devastation that this war has brought upon the people of Ukraine. Norway will continue to stand with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people against Russia's aggression, which is a gross violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

We are alarmed by the escalation and brutality of the recent Russian attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure with missiles and drones. Those attacks, which seem deliberate, have killed civilians and hit several power facilities across Ukraine. Damage to energy infrastructure brings great humanitarian harm and will certainly cause illness and death when the cold winter arrives. Those attacks have no military purpose. The aim seems to be to terrorize the population. They are illegal and may constitute war crimes. Those responsible must be personally held to account. Russia's devastating attacks on cities and urban areas over the past eight months have killed and maimed civilians, including children, and have led to massive displacement, both internally and across borders. We are concerned about sexual and gender-based violence and human trafficking, which women and unaccompanied children are particularly exposed to. We must facilitate the return of the displaced and the delivery of essential services, and mitigate the long-term effects that Russia's war has imposed on them.

The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine has concluded that violations of human rights and international humanitarian law amounting to war crimes have been committed by Russian armed forces. The killing of civilians, the discovery of mass graves, incidents of rape and other forms of sexual violence, forced disappearance and torture have all been recorded, along with reports of deportations to Russia and adjustments to procedures in order to allow Russians to adopt Ukrainian children without the consent of their parents, among other things.

The victims deserve justice, survivors must be cared for and those responsible must be held accountable. But to stop those grotesque violations in the first place, the war must come to an end. Russia must withdraw its troops from within the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine and stop the war.

Norway also remains concerned by the many prisoners of war who are unaccounted for and others who are missing because of the conflict. We call on the parties, at all levels, to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, including to provide support for the International Committee of the Red Cross in fulfilling its unique mandate as laid out in the Geneva Conventions, including to visit prisoners of war.

We commend international and national humanitarian responders for their bravery in delivering humanitarian protection and assistance to those in need. It is critical that humanitarian actors have full, safe and unhindered access to all those in need. We are particularly concerned about the situation of the elderly, persons with disabilities and children in conflict-affected areas.

While the war rages, the world faces a food crisis. The continuation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative is vital. We appreciate the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General in that regard. In times of war, we need that beacon of hope.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would like to express my bewilderment. We do not entirely understand the value added — other than extending the length of today's meeting — by including the delegations of Germany, Greece, Poland and Slovakia on the list of speakers. Today's meeting is not a debate but a briefing, while the position of those countries is already well known to us and, in any case, could be summarized by the

European Union. We perceive this only as a desire on the part of those representatives to make an appearance on national television, and nothing more than that. In future, we would ask you, Sir, to be more circumspect when compiling the list of speakers for our meetings on this topic.

We note the briefings given by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, and the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, Ms. Denise Brown.

We note that the Secretariat has finally decided to concern itself with the issue of the destruction of civilian infrastructure. Unfortunately, the picture has once again been only half painted: we have not heard a word about the destruction that Kyiv has inflicted for more than eight years on Donbas or about the civilian victims of attacks by the Armed Forces of Ukraine. There was no reaction by the Secretariat to the horrific terrorist attacks by Kyiv against civilian infrastructure such as the Crimean bridge or the shelling by the Armed Forces of Ukraine of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant.

Our Western colleagues justified the convening of today's meeting based on the intensification of strikes against Ukrainian infrastructure and civilian facilities from the Russian side. Let us examine what is actually happening on the ground.

Over the past two months, the Ukrainian regime and its Western patrons — apparently in a state of euphoria thanks to some tactical advances by Ukrainian troops in a number of areas, achieved at the cost of astronomical losses in manpower and equipment — have been propelling in every possible way the idea that Russia has allegedly exhausted its material and human resources and is about to start losing on the battlefield. Meanwhile, so-called Ukrainian strategists, under the supervision of their Western puppeteers, have long been using terrorist sabotage methods on Russian territory.

While there are many examples, the culmination of those efforts was the terrorist attack committed by Ukrainian special forces against the Crimean bridge on 8 October. Four people died and the road, through which the peninsula's population is supplied with food, medicines and other vital goods, was partially destroyed. Ukrainian officials, including the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Digital Transformation of Ukraine, Mr. Mykhailo Fedorov, and the Adviser to

the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, Mr. Anton Gerashchenko, openly relished that crime. Ecstatic announcements about the attack were also published on the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence's official Twitter account.

Although Kyiv, most likely after being reined in by its Western masters, quickly attempted to follow its usual *modus operandi* of shifting the blame to Russia, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Mr. Dmytro Kuleba, confirmed in a video circulated online that Kyiv was indeed behind the attacks on the Crimean bridge and Belgorod oblast. Here are his words, which have become available to millions of Internet users:

“Well, if you were to ask me who is blowing things up in Crimea and Belgorod, then speaking privately ... I would tell you yes, that was us”.

We are well aware of what the Kyiv regime is capable of, based on the eight years of bitter experience of the people of Donbas, and so it was decided to dampen the militant fervour of the brazen Kyiv terrorists. Russian-made high-precision missile strikes and unmanned aerial vehicles hit a large number of military targets, as well as infrastructure facilities, in order to undermine the military capabilities and potential of Zelenskyy's anti-people regime.

Of course, that did not sit well with the West and caused real hysteria among our Western colleagues, which we are witnessing in all its glory at today's meeting. Of course, as has been the case previously, they do not want to face the facts and admit that civilian objects were damaged only in instances in which drones were shot by Ukrainian territorial defence units, and therefore had to be diverted from their original course, or in which civilian objects were hit by Ukrainian air defence missiles that failed to intercept their targets. There are plenty of such cases recorded, including in video footage that anyone can access on the Internet.

Ukraine and its Western backers are now trying to spin more fake news about alleged deliveries of Iranian unmanned aerial vehicles to Russia in violation of resolution 2231 (2015). We reject any attempts to involve the Secretariat in that unscrupulous undertaking, including through the note verbale by Germany, France and the United Kingdom circulated in the Security Council today. The note makes a *de facto* appeal to the Secretariat to violate Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations and the mandate conferred upon it in presidential note S/2016/44, of 16 January 2016.

The United States went even further and, in its own letter, demanded that the Secretariat conduct an investigation into the matter, which it does have the authority to do. That is an egregious situation. We also presented our legal assessments in a response letter that was disseminated prior to today's meeting. We expect a definitive confirmation from the Secretariat that it does not intend to follow the instructions of Western countries in violation of the Charter and will not conduct any such investigation.

However, if United Nations experts do engage in some kind of pseudo-investigation, baselessly referring to the provisions of resolution 2231 (2015) in order to pander to Western capitals, we will reconsider the entire package of our relations with the Secretariat, whose impartiality in that case will no longer be deemed legitimate.

Today's show in the Security Council is also a kind of smokescreen for the Kyiv regime and its backers. The West diligently portrays the Kyiv regime as an innocent victim of Russian aggression that needs constant military assistance. Last week, additional deliveries of military goods to Kyiv were announced. The United States and the European Union have precisely chosen those systems that have to date demonstrated the greatest lethality against the populations of Donbas and the liberated territories.

The United States will provide Kyiv with another batch of M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System multiple rocket launchers and M31 Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System high-precision missiles, as well as AGM-88 high-speed anti-radiation missiles. From Paris, Kyiv will receive more CAESAR 155-millimetre self-propelled artillery systems. Germany also announced deliveries to Kyiv of 155-millimetre calibre ammunition.

The leadership of those countries explain to their populations that such weapons are supposed to help the Zelenskyy regime in protecting Ukraine, but let us examine what they are actually being used for. According to the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, from February to October, Ukrainian shelling using heavy weaponry resulted in damage to more than 10,000 buildings and more than 2,000 civilian-infrastructure objects, including 424 educational facilities and 109 medical facilities. American HIMARS were actively used in this shelling.

The French CAESARs also showed how powerful they are when they were used to attack residential buildings, schools and other civilian objects. As a result of French armaments supplies to Donetsk since June, no less than five people died. Ten more were injured, and 64 buildings were destroyed.

Ukrainian armed forces have been striking Russian territory as well as targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure. On 10 October, Belgorod oblast was shelled by more than a hundred missiles, including the infamous Tochka-U with a cluster warhead. A woman died, and four residential buildings were damaged. In the village of Tyotkino in Kursk, which has been subject to shelling since the spring despite the fact that there are no military objects there, two people were injured. On 13 October, the Ukrainians shelled a large residential building in Belgorod. The village of Krasnoye was shelled, as were a customs post near Shebekino and other civilian objects. Just now, on the eve of today's meeting, the Ukrainian armed forces destroyed industrial plants in Belgorod oblast.

I would like to recall that in this region, as well as in Donetsk, Ukrainian armed forces had previously actively and indiscriminately used remote mine systems, including anti-personnel "petal" mines, against civilians. On 16 October, residential buildings in Nikolskoye were shelled. At the international airport in Belgorod, two civilians were injured. On 18 October, the Ukrainian military once again shelled the village of Belaya Beryozka, in Bryansk oblast. On the same day, Ukrainian forces attacked six towns in the Kursk oblast. One woman was hurt, and a number of residential buildings and electricity supply lines were damaged. Previously, Ukrainian saboteurs had tried on several occasions to sabotage the Kursk nuclear power plant. Since the beginning of October, through indiscriminate artillery shelling using American HARM missiles, more than 30 peaceful townships in Belgorod were shelled, as was the city of Belgorod itself. All the while, Kyiv, encouraged by its Western patrons, has openly bragged about these attacks. Is it really possible that Kyiv and those who are backing it think that we will put up with this?

With the permission of its Western backers to commit any crime, the Zelenskyy regime is constantly striking civilian infrastructure on its own former territories. For five months, the Ukrainian armed forces have been shelling the town of Nova Kakhovka, in Kherson oblast, with up to 120 missile strikes per

day, most of them with American HIMARS, and the Ukrainians are specifically targeting the Kakhovka Dam in order to bring about a breach that will result in a water-level rise that would cause flooding of the adjacent territories and might kill thousands of civilians and damage thousands of buildings. We have circulated a letter today in the Security Council calling upon the United Nations leadership to prevent this horrendous provocation from happening.

Reckless attacks by the Ukrainian armed forces against the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant continue, which creates a danger to nuclear safety. Kyiv does not appear concerned whether there will be a high number of civilian victims in case the nuclear plant is seriously damaged or what could happen if there is a full-fledged man-made accident with the release of radioactive materials. The Kyiv authorities are prepared to accept any human victims so that NATO can continue its proxy war with Russia and continue supplying Ukraine with armaments. We continuously inform the Security Council and the United Nations leadership of these outrageous incidents but have not yet heard anything intelligible by way of reaction from them.

Ukrainian fighters managed to seriously damage the Kakhovka and Antonovka bridges across the Dnieper, which were used by the citizens of Kherson to receive food, medicines and so on. Another attempt to destroy the Antonovka bridge was undertaken by Ukrainian armed forces on 19 October, but Russian air-defence systems managed to protect it. Once again, American HIMARS systems were used for these attacks, and Ukrainian fighters had previously used HIMARS to attack a detention facility in Olenivka where prisoners from the Azov Battalion were held.

Another horrendous illustration of how the Kyiv authorities treat peaceful people is their executions of their own nationals who had decided to opt for Russia. On 29 September, Ukrainian armed forces shot at an automobile convoy near Kupyansk that was leaving Ukraine for Russia. Approximately 30 people died. Furthermore, on 30 September, refugees who were leaving for the liberated territories in Zaporizhzhya were hit. Some 30 people died, and 88 people were injured. Yesterday, on 20 October, Ukrainian armed forces shelled a ferry that was being used to evacuate civilians who were seeking to save themselves from shells and provocation, resulting in many wounded and killed, including journalists and children.

On 4 October, 38 soldiers from the 8th company of the 3rd regiment of the 25th Airborne Assault Brigade of the Ukrainian armed forces published an appeal in which they reported that they had received a criminal order to massacre civilians in Kharkiv oblast. The Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior recently made a statement announcing that they would start searching for “enemies of Ukraine”. Since then, they have detained up to 40 so-called potential collaborators per day in Kharkiv oblast, who are later interrogated by special services. On 9 October, a member of the Azov unit, Maxim Zhorin, appeared in a video published on social media to explain what had happened. The footage shows the bodies of executed civilians being thrown into a ditch. Zhorin said that these were citizens of Kupyansk, in Kharkiv oblast, adding that “there will be retribution”.

The metadata of the video show that it was recorded slightly more than a half hour before it was published. The bodies are wearing warm clothing, which is consistent with October weather in the region. It should be recalled that Russian forces have been absent from Kupyansk since the beginning of September, which shows that these people were executed by Ukrainian neo-Nazis, as part of their cleansing of the city.

Have we heard one word of condemnation from Western delegations about this? Their silence is the best proof that, despite their hypocritical statements, none of the Western countries are worried about the fate of civilians in Ukraine. They prefer to provide cover for this criminal regime, which counts among its ranks nationalist radicals and open Nazis. They help them with their provocations and join them in spreading lies about Russia and Russian armed forces.

Incidentally, once again, I would like to recall that, despite all of our reminders, we have still not received a list of the names of the victims of the Ukrainian provocation in Bucha in April. That confirms that the Kyiv authorities have no evidence to back up their allegations. Our Western colleagues are trying to pretend that there is nothing that needs to be proved. All we need to do is just trust them, they say, and take the words of the representatives of the Kyiv regime at face value.

Before concluding, I would like to warn in advance that I will not listen to yet another serving of the representative of the Ukrainian regime’s spiteful tirades in the Security Council and therefore provide

him with the very strange and perverse pleasure that he gets from them. All those who are familiar with his recent boorish insults against Russian diplomats on social media will know what I am referring to in this regard. Regrettably, such outbursts reflect the current state of Ukrainian diplomacy and show Kyiv’s inability and lack of readiness for any kind of dialogue, much less for a civilized one.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Resident Coordinator Brown for the information they have provided on the situation in Ukraine

Since 24 February this year, every one of our meetings on Ukraine has started in a most sobering way: deploring an unjustified aggression, expressing deep concern for the useless loss of life and repeating unheeded calls for Russia to stop. Today’s meeting is no different, as the situation has not changed, even though next week we will mark exactly eight months since the special operation in Ukraine — the special Russian madness — began.

I would nevertheless like to pause for a moment, set aside the grim situation at hand and congratulate Ukraine and its people for receiving the Sakharov Prize awarded last week by the European Parliament, which praised Ukrainians for standing up for what we all believe in, defending themselves, fighting for common values and protecting democracy, freedom and the rule of law. It is as symbolic as it is meaningful.

Ukraine remains the only place in Europe where sirens have sounded day and night since February. Thousands of people have died or been injured, mostly as a result of the use of explosive weapons, including shells, missiles and air strikes. Attacks on civilian infrastructure, including damage to residential buildings, schools, hospitals and health-care facilities, have continued affecting people’s access to critical services. Russia is now escalating its attacks and is targeting key civilian infrastructure, aiming at energy installations in particular but also at residential areas, with the clear aim of terrorizing the population, inflicting severe damage and leaving entire families, women and children without water, electricity or heating as winter approaches. That is another and a higher level of cruelty.

Moreover, Russia is now carrying out its attacks together with the extended malicious hand of Iran, notoriously known for its destabilizing policies, through

an open breach of resolution 2231 (2015). We call on the United Nations not to yield to threats but — as part of the regular report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), in accordance with paragraph 7 of presidential note S/2016/44 — to undertake an adequate verification of the reports that hundreds of the drones used by Russian forces in Ukraine have been unlawfully imported from Iran. The evidence is there. Everyone can verify it. After all, my question — and it may not be mine alone — is about what Russia has to hide from an independent and impartial investigation, a routine exercise to examine evidence that the Secretariat has conducted plenty of times. Did Russia not agree to a similar inquiry by the Secretariat after the bombing of a prison in Donbas in which more than 50 prisoners were killed and the circumstances of which have yet to be elucidated?

In March, in this Chamber, I asked the representatives of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (see S/PV.9008) if they were able to corroborate allegations of sexual violence used by Russian soldiers. It was not an accusation but a request for information and clarity. The Russian delegation reacted by stating that Russian soldiers would never commit such acts, because they have high standards and rules. Guess what? Now we have United Nations reports, compiled after meticulous investigations, saying that they have documented patterns of summary executions, unlawful confinement, torture, ill-treatment, rape and other acts of sexual violence committed in areas occupied by the Russian armed forces. It appears that this despicable behaviour did not even spare children, including allegedly a four-year-old girl — a baby. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine has reported that family members, including children, were sometimes forced to witness those crimes. That is simply sickening and does not meet any known standard of human behaviour, let alone military discipline. There is no way these acts can be described as coming under the category of high standards. They are monstrous activities, crimes, war crimes and crimes against humanity, and one day they will be presented before a court.

Let me highlight another worry. Weeks after Russia and Belarus announced the formation of a new joint force, and days after the force started to assemble in Belarus, there is reason to fear a growing military threat from the north. Thousands of Russian servicemen, equipment and aircraft are flooding into Belarus,

accompanied by increasingly bellicose rhetoric from the Russian and Belarusian leadership. I would not be surprised to hear that that has nothing to do with Ukraine and that they are performing drills in their countries and so on and so forth. The fact is that we have been played this way before, and as we now know, every time there has been a Russian denial concerning Ukraine, the exact opposite has happened.

Last week, after the Council was blocked in a pattern we all are familiar with (see S/PV.9143), the General Assembly voted overwhelmingly, through its adoption of resolution ES-11/4, to condemn Russia's latest annexation of parts of Ukraine's territory. The world's response was clear and resounding, and Russia was once again alone, immured in denial. Albania recognizes none of Russia's actions. They have no legitimacy or legal effect. They are null and void, and Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya are and will remain Ukrainian territories. This war must end, and we call on Russia to end it by respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Gabon.

I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, Ms. Denise Brown, for their briefings.

The war in Ukraine continues. It has become increasingly brutal and deadly, and the humanitarian situation is continually deteriorating. Civilians and civilian infrastructure continue to be attacked and bombed, with serious repercussions for supplies of electricity and drinking water and telecommunications. The use of remote-controlled weaponry is adding to the overall terror. Rather than itemizing the destruction and suffering, I would like to say once again that it is time for the Security Council to act in order to end this war. It is time for us to channel our discussions, rhetoric and action towards resolving the crisis in Ukraine.

That has been Gabon's continued call since the beginning of the crisis. We have spent almost eight months counting the numbers of deaths and the names of the refugees fleeing the war. For the past eight months, we have turned every one of these meetings into an occasion to rail against the causes, the situation on the ground and the devastation, to attribute blame

and discuss the current, imminent and potential consequences of the conflict without attenuating the scope of the devastation on the ground in the least degree. Today we have continued to list the fears, atrocities and humanitarian suffering according to a logic of one side against the other, which leads us to the sole postulate that each one of the world's nations must align itself with one or the other.

It is time to consider a solution to silence the guns in Ukraine. That is certainly the aspiration of all peoples in the grip of insecurity caused by war. Silencing the guns is first and foremost the calling of the Council and the Organization. We call on the warring parties to respect international humanitarian law and the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2231 (2015), and enable unhindered access for the delivery of humanitarian aid. As we are on the threshold of winter, we call for a humanitarian truce and for the opening of new humanitarian corridors in order to maintain access to drinking water, electricity, heating and medical care and to facilitate the delivery of the humanitarian aid that the people affected desperately need.

There is a time for everything — a time for war and a time for dialogue. We believe that the time has come to silence the guns in order to give dialogue a chance. My country calls on the parties to engage in negotiations in good faith to end this deadly war and achieve peaceful coexistence in the region.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): I am happy that the months, if not years, of our efforts to remove Russia from the Security Council have brought forth fruits. Now at least the Permanent Representative of Russia has removed himself from the Council. The day will come when Russia will be removed from the Council altogether.

I regret that the Security Council was still compelled to listen to the representative who has just fled, as the only thing he has done over almost eight months of the invasion has been to pile lie upon lie at every meeting and about every aspect of the war of aggression that his master ordered in February. Let me remind Council members of what that person said at Security Council

meetings at the beginning of the invasion. I will cite him very carefully. On 27 February, he said,

“The Russian military poses no threat to Ukraine’s peaceful citizens. The military does not fire at peaceful civilian infrastructure” (*S/PV.8980, p.7*).

Let me offer another quotation from the same representative:

“We repeat again that the goal of Russia’s special military operation is not to occupy Ukraine or to harm the local population.” (*S/PV.8983, p. 14*)

And further:

“Russia’s special operation does not impact critical civilian infrastructure.” (*ibid., p. 14*)

That was said in this very Chamber on 28 February by the Ambassador who just left. I wonder whether Putin’s representative is ready to repeat those statements now. Apparently not, because he is not physically present. I wonder if he would be willing to repeat them against the backdrop of mass graves and tens of thousands of Ukrainians killed and tortured by Russians, or against the backdrop of the attempted illegal annexation of four Ukrainian regions by the Russian Federation, which the General Assembly rejected on Wednesday by an overwhelming majority (*see A/ES-11/PV.14*) or, finally, against the backdrop of the recent deliberate attacks against Ukrainian critical energy infrastructure.

In the wake of deliberate attacks by Russia, since 24 February Ukrainian law enforcement agencies have registered the damage or destruction of 51,412 civilian infrastructure facilities. Since 10 October, there have been about 300 missile and drone attacks by Russia targeting energy facilities and other civilian infrastructure in 14 regions, including the capital. As a result of those attacks, at least 17 civilians have been killed and 99 injured; nearly 40 per cent of Ukraine’s energy facilities have been damaged or destroyed; power plants, central heating plants, transformers, oil storage sites, distribution devices, overhead power lines and other energy equipment throughout the country remain under Russian fire almost on a daily basis.

In that connection, let me recall some Council history. I would like to remind the Council that, on 13 February 2017, the Security Council adopted resolution 2341 (2017), initiated by Ukraine, on the protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks. The resolution called upon all Member States

to ensure that they establish criminal responsibility for terrorist attacks intended to destroy or disable critical infrastructure, as well as the planning and financing of, and training and logistical support for, such attacks.

Even Russia joined consensus on that day. What is more noteworthy, is that Russia claimed at that meeting that:

“[i]t is not worthwhile to start negotiations that seek merely to outline obvious points”. (*S/PV.7882, p. 22*)

Obvious for Russia, indeed? Can the Russian representative state it again for the record — apparently not — that it is obvious that the destruction and disabling of critical infrastructure should be regarded as terrorist attacks that entail criminal responsibility? Every part of the criminal regime in Moscow is soaked with blood and permeated by crime.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Putin has chosen as new commander of his army in Ukraine a person who is infamous for his bloodthirsty and criminal nature. In 1991, during the coup d'état attempt by Soviet hardliners, that person, Surovikin ordered his military unit to drive through barricades erected by pro-democracy protesters in the streets of Moscow. Three of them were killed, and Surovikin spent half a year in a pre-trial centre under investigation. Several years later, he was convicted for illegal possession of, and trafficking in, firearms and given a one-year suspended sentence. As a commander of Russian forces in Syria, Surovikin was responsible for unrestrained bombing and attacks on civilian targets, including schools and hospitals. Now, in an attempt to live up to the expectations of his masterminds, he is transferring the practice of making no differentiation between soldiers and civilians to Ukrainian soil.

We have information that Russia is deliberately preparing the ground for a large-scale disaster in the south of Ukraine. Russian terrorists have mined the dam and aggregates of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant — one of the largest power facilities in Ukraine. That power plant's dam holds about 18 million cubic metres of water. If Russian terrorists blow up the dam, more than 80 settlements, including Kherson, with hundreds of thousands of inhabitants, will become an area of rapid flooding. The water supply of a large part of the south of Ukraine may be destroyed. Such a Russian terrorist attack could leave the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant without water for cooling, as that water is taken from the Kakhovka Reservoir.

The Russian representative may call that information “speculations and unfounded accusations”, triggered by “a wish to generate hysteria”, both phrases he used at a Security Council meeting on 31 January (*S/PV.8960, p.2*). Accusing those who expressed concerns over Russian military preparations on Ukrainian borders of “whipping up hysteria” (*ibid., p.11*) and claiming that “discussion about the threat of war is provocative in and of itself” (*supra.*), he tried to mock the supposedly unfounded information about planned military action that “is going to take place in just a few weeks' time” (*supra.*). We all know what happened a few weeks' time thereafter.

And now it is necessary to act immediately so that Russia does not have the chance to commit another act of terror. An international observation mission to the Kakhovka power plant is needed. It is also necessary to return the Ukrainian personnel there and to ensure the immediate and professional demining of the aggregates and the dam itself. We are concerned about the so-called “evacuation” of residents of temporarily occupied Kherson region announced by the Russian occupiers. The consequences of such an evacuation may be unpredictable, because it means the forced deportation of citizens of Ukraine. And every time, the Russian fakes and propaganda in that regard have been refuted by credible and independent sources.

We all remember Russian attempts to avoid responsibility for the Bucha massacre. Those attempts failed almost immediately due to numerous eyewitness accounts, findings and investigations. The most recent contribution to revealing the truth about Russian war crimes and crimes against humanity was made by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, which was established by the Human Rights Council.

Our memory of the convulsions of the Russian delegation at the meeting of the General Assembly held on Monday, 10 October (see A/ES-11/PV.12) are still fresh. We just witnessed how the Russian delegation desperately seeks to prevent the United Nations from looking into allegations of gross violations of Security Council resolutions.

We are extremely concerned about the use of long-range unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) of Iranian origin by Russia in its indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure in Ukraine. They are a blatant violation of the Joint Comprehensive

Plan of Action, signed by China, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Union and Russia itself and adopted in resolution 2231 (2015).

As members are aware, according to annex B to that resolution, prohibitions were imposed on the supply, sale or transfer to or from Iran of such equipment. In September, UAVs, marked Geran-2, were captured by Ukraine's defence forces and, after technical examination, they appeared to be similar to Iranian Shahed-136 UAVs, which are capable of delivering payloads to targets at a range in excess of 300 kilometres and fully correspond to the technical parameters set out in document S/2015/546.

As members are also aware, on 15 October Ukraine officially addressed the President of the Security Council on those violations and requested the initiation of the relevant investigations. However, there is even more worrisome information about Russia's determination to continue further attacks on Ukraine using advanced Iranian missile and UAV systems, including ballistic missiles and Fateh-110 and Zolfaghar missiles, which are capable of striking targets at a range of 300 kilometres and 700 kilometres, respectively. That will bring more death and destruction to Ukraine and will represent another gross violation of resolution 2231 (2015), which calls on Iran not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

Another important issue that must be thoroughly examined is related to the possible export by Russia to Iran of dual-use services, including technical assistance or technical information, by providing Iran, as the original exporter, with data on the results of the use of UAVs on the battlefield in Ukraine. Iran must also face serious consequences for its illegal actions, which help to escalate the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. That is why we call on all States to consider any possible steps to stop the transfer of UAVs, missiles or conventional arms from Iran.

We fully agree that a United Nations investigation should start immediately, and we welcome the strong support for such steps on the part of many members of the Security Council. We have already invited United Nations experts to visit Ukraine to inspect recovered UAVs of Iranian origin in order to facilitate the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

Ukraine remains committed to the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. Since its launch, 362 vessels, with 8 million tons of food products on board, have left Ukrainian ports for countries in Asia, Europe and Africa. Ukraine continues working with the World Food Programme to increase the amount of food that is sent to the most vulnerable countries. In particular, on 18 October the sixth bulk carrier assigned under the programme arrived in the port of Chernomorsk to be sent to Yemen. The export of Ukrainian grain has already contributed to the stabilization of the global market, a decrease in prices and a reduction in the chaos caused by the lack of food around the world. We therefore support its extension after 22 November, when the initial 120-day period will expire.

Terrorist attacks by Russia against Ukraine serve only to mobilize greater support from the international community for Ukraine and put even greater pressure on that terrorist State. Each terrorist and war criminal, including the suspects of war crimes in the Chamber, will be held accountable, sooner or later, and that terrorist State will pay for its terrorism in the form of its isolation and degradation of the assets of both State and quasi-private entities that are connected with the Russian regime.

The world must respond with preventive action to ensure that another Kakhovka or similar disaster does not happen. As President Zelenskyy said yesterday in his address to the nation, the principle of preventive response to security threats should finally become one of the basic principles of international politics.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Slovakia.

Mr. Mlynár (Slovakia): Slovakia strongly condemns the ongoing unprovoked and unjustified Russian military aggression against Ukraine, which is a clear sign of a serious violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the rules-based international order.

We thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting. It is important to continue focusing on the situation in Ukraine. The fact that the Council has to date failed to take decisive action on the crisis and the war should not stop us from focusing on what is going on. In that context, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Brown for their informative and important briefings.

As a neighbouring country of Ukraine, Slovakia remains gravely concerned about the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, which is the focus of our discussion today, and rightly so. If there is one thing that should never escape our attention, it is the people who are suffering from this senseless war, who need to be heard and whose situation must be addressed.

Unfortunately, as we have heard, the situation continues to deteriorate — and that should not go unnoticed. Older persons, persons with disabilities and others belonging to marginalized groups and minorities are also affected by the consequences of the war. They face major trauma and are even more likely to become victims of devastating violations of their rights.

We remain appalled by the huge number of killings of innocent civilians, the attacks on critical infrastructure and the huge scale of sexual and gender-based violence committed by Russian soldiers and occupiers. The thousands of people killed, the hundreds of schools destroyed or damaged, with negative impacts on children whose fundamental right to education has been undermined, as well as the attacks on medical facilities, are only a short list of the consequences of the madness caused by Putin's senseless decision to begin the war.

It is obvious that the Russian Federation does not understand the saying “enough is enough”, which the Secretary-General recently used in this context. In recent days, we witnessed a slew of attacks by missiles and Iranian drones, targeting cities in Ukraine, including Kyiv, Dnipro, Vinnytsia and Ivano-Frankivsk in central Ukraine, Zaporizhzhya in the south and the Kharkiv and Sumy regions in the east, among others. We are particularly concerned about the attacks on energy infrastructure having an impact on people's access to water and heat, which is particularly disturbing with regard to the coming winter.

We are deeply concerned about the serious effects of the Russian invasion on global food security. As we know, millions of people around the world are being pushed into extreme poverty, hunger and lack of access to food. In that context, we of course fully support the extension of the Black Sea Grain Initiative and safe passage for agricultural deliveries and shipping from Ukrainian ports, and we hope that that will be done.

Unfortunately, no one can predict when this senseless war will end, and we want that to be as soon as possible. But those who believe that, by reaching a

truce and silencing the guns, everything will be over are wrong. The perpetrators of heinous attacks, such as those in Bucha, Kramatorsk and, quite recently, Izyum, cannot remain unpunished and must, and will, be brought to justice.

Slovakia recognizes Ukraine as an independent, sovereign State with unquestionable territorial integrity. All acts associated with the forcible acquisition of Ukrainian territory by the Russian Federation are null, void and illegitimate. The so-called referendums in the occupied regions took place during an active armed conflict in areas under Russian occupation, and they cannot be called a true expression of the will of the people. Slovakia will never recognize those territories as anything but a part of Ukraine.

Last week, the voice of the United Nations was crystal clear. We received many questions from our citizens, the media and young people, and the message needs to be made clear. We therefore urge the Russian Federation to fully implement the General Assembly resolution of 12 October (resolution ES-11/4) without further delay. That is the least that we can do for the people of Ukraine, for those suffering and for the future of our planet.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Ms. Leendertse (Germany): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Resident Coordinator Denise Brown for their briefings. They yet again made clear the horrific consequences of Russia's ongoing aggression for the people of Ukraine and around the world.

The world remains united for peace. A total of 143 countries once again condemned Russia's actions and demanded that Russia respect the Charter of the United Nations and end its war immediately and unconditionally (see resolution ES-11/4).

Russia's reaction to the world's call for peace is shocking. Over these past days, it has escalated its attacks, deliberately and systematically targeting civilian infrastructure. Hundreds of missiles and drones, including drones supplied by Iran, hit playgrounds, residential buildings, schools, hospitals, bridges and power stations.

Russia's aim is clear. The Moscow regime wants to subjugate Ukraine. It wants to plunge Ukraine, quite literally, into darkness and make Ukrainians freeze,

knocking out electricity and heating for millions of civilians. Those attacks violate international humanitarian law and could amount to war crimes. Those responsible for such blatant violations of international law will be held accountable.

Let me join colleagues in pointing out that Russia is also violating resolution 2231 (2015) — yet another example of how Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, undermines the United Nations Charter. All the information that we have is quite clear. Iranian drones are being used to terrorize civilians, and they were delivered to Russia without the prior approval of the Council. That is therefore in blatant violation of resolution 2231 (2015). We are greatly concerned by reports that Iran also intends to deliver ballistic missiles to Russia. We would welcome an investigation by the United Nations team responsible for monitoring the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), and we stand ready to support its technical and impartial efforts.

Germany will continue to stand by the United Nations Charter, wherever in the world it is breached, and we will continue to stand by Ukraine. We stand ready to support Ukraine in mitigating the devastation caused by Russia's attacks. This coming Tuesday, Chancellor Scholz and President Von Der Leyen will host the International Expert Conference on the Recovery, Reconstruction and Modernization of Ukraine in Berlin. The conference will galvanize international support for Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction.

In conclusion, the Russian Federation must change its course, fully respect the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter and withdraw from Ukraine. It must comply with the legally binding order of the International Court of Justice to immediately stop its military operations against Ukraine and withdraw. Germany will continue to uphold the territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, and that is the duty of each and every one of us.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): At the outset, I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important briefing. I also thank today's briefers for their valuable statements. Poland supports the written statement submitted by Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Czech Republic.

The main reason that we again meet today in this Chamber is Russia's deliberate strategy to create a humanitarian catastrophe in Ukraine by pursuing its brutal war. Regrettably, that brutal war is far from being over. The recent Kremlin decisions on military mobilization and the illegal annexation of Ukrainian territory, coupled with nuclear rhetoric and mass air strikes against civilian infrastructure, indicate that Russia has chosen the path of escalation. That has dramatic consequences not only for Ukraine, but also for global security and economic stability, including the dire situation in the food and energy markets, as well as the cost-of-living crisis.

The fierce Russian air attacks against civilian targets launched on 10 October and in the following days, which have continued since then, are yet another violation of international law. They seem to have two purposes. Moscow wants to intimidate the civilian population and to destroy Ukraine's energy infrastructure, which is critical, especially during the winter period. That is why the issue on which we need to immediately focus is the perspective of the upcoming winter. Due to the Russian bombings, more than 3.5 million people are left without a roof over their head.

Another immediate aspect of the everyday life of people that we do not discuss very often is the presence of explosives deliberately left behind by the Russians. The challenge ahead of us is therefore the demining of areas, including agricultural lands, in various regions of Ukraine. The mines and unexploded ordnance are a threat to civilians, including children. There is an urgent need to provide adequate equipment to conduct those operations efficiently and quickly.

We condemn in the strongest possible terms the recent missile attacks on Ukrainian cities. Shelling civilians is a war crime. Civilians are not a target. Civilians are protected by international law, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Civilians must not be taken hostage. The Russian Federation has shown a total lack of respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Its forces have committed horrific atrocities. Poland will continue to work with international institutions and Ukraine to ensure that those responsible for those barbaric acts are held accountable.

Poland has consistently supported Ukraine and its citizens in the fight against the aggressor. Poland became a new home for more than 1.3 million refugees,

who enjoy the same access to public services and social security benefits as Polish citizens. We also help those who stayed to fight for their country or cannot leave by providing Government humanitarian aid. The only appropriate response to the Russian attacks is to increase the scale of our support for Ukraine. In that context, let me express Polish support for the brave and valuable work of the United Nations team in Ukraine.

I would like to emphasize that the whole tragedy and this enormous humanitarian crisis are purely human-made. There are no elements to blame. It is Russia that started the aggression, and only Russia bears the full responsibility for all the destruction and loss of life that it has caused. The only way out is peace, and for there to be peace, we need Russian troops to leave Ukraine.

In its recent resolution ES-11/4, the General Assembly demanded that Russia reverse course on the attempted illegal annexation. A total of 143 Member States strongly reaffirmed Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity in its internationally recognized borders (see A/ES-11/PV.14). That confirms without any doubt that no territorial concessions are expected from Ukraine for peace to occur. Despite that clear decision, Russia continues on its path of escalation and acts against peace in Ukraine.

Poland appeals to the members of the Security Council and the whole international community to increase pressure on Russia to stop this war. That would be an immediate, almost overnight, solution to the whole crisis. Russia must immediately stop the aggression, withdraw its troops and abide by the rules of the Charter of the United Nations, which apply equally to all. That will enable us all to start peacebuilding and to restore the shattered lives and livelihoods of the Ukrainian people. And we are ready to do so. Give peace a chance.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to Mr. Skoog.

Mr. Skoog: I thank you, Mr. President, for convening and highlighting today's meeting. It is very important that this subject be discussed and that all concerned be able to address the Security Council on such an important issue.

Two days ago, the European Parliament awarded the 2022 Sakharov Prize to the people of Ukraine. For a people who is safeguarding the values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law — who has been forced

to flee and has sadly lost relatives and friends — no one deserves that kind of recognition more than them.

We are appalled by Russia's intensification of bombardments on civilians and civilian facilities, which constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law. This and last week's air attacks deliberately targeted critical infrastructure and terrorized civilians in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities. Targeting civilians, schools and energy supplies can never be legitimate. Almost a third of Ukraine's power stations have been disabled. Russia must be held accountable for those evident violations of international humanitarian law, which are resulting in hundreds of civilian casualties every week. The same goes for those that facilitate the aggression — Belarus and Iran. We also strongly condemn the clandestine transfer of combat drones by Iran to Russia without seeking the Council's prior approval, which constitutes a material breach of resolution 2231 (2015).

The damage to Ukraine's energy infrastructure is creating major challenges in view of the upcoming winter and will require stepping up the international humanitarian response. During his visit to Kyiv this week, European Union Commissioner Lenarčič announced the mobilization of an additional €175 million in humanitarian funding to address urgent needs and provide education, food, access to water and protection from the cold winter. However, no level of humanitarian funding will be enough if Russian attacks continue to target energy infrastructure and heating stations. More than 400 of them have been damaged in the past two weeks alone. The Russian Federation must immediately stop its attacks, suspend its military operations in the territory of Ukraine and withdraw all its military forces, armed groups and other unauthorized personnel from the territory of Ukraine, as set out by the General Assembly.

We know that the humanitarian needs in Ukraine are immense and growing, yet we cannot even assess their scale in the non-Government-controlled areas. On Wednesday, we heard a plea from the United Nations Resident Coordinator for immediate access to be given to humanitarian organizations to allow them to assist all vulnerable people in Ukraine, without distinction. This is not about politics; it is a humanitarian imperative.

We are devastated by the repeated discoveries of atrocities in liberated areas and the increasing horrific number of civilian casualties across the country. Where

the Russian armed forces have been, minefields are left behind, making the delivery of humanitarian assistance impossible and endangering the lives of innocent people. Shocking are reports of arbitrary executions and detentions, rape, torture and other ill-treatment, as well as unlawful forcible transfers and deportations of Ukrainian civilians, including children, within territories under Russian military control to Russia. We note that the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine concluded, based on the evidence gathered in the regions of Kyiv, Chernihiv, Kharkiv and Sumy, that atrocities to be classified as war crimes have been committed in Ukraine.

We stress the importance of collecting, consolidating and analysing evidence of violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law and related crimes committed in the context of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. We also support measures to ensure accountability, including the investigations by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. We also underline that all international and regional accountability and monitoring mechanisms should be granted full, secure and unrestricted access to the entire territory of Ukraine, including to all war-related detainees. We therefore urge the Russian Federation to comply with the appeal of the Secretary-General to grant the International Committee of the Red Cross full access to all prisoners of war. The release of more than 100 Ukrainian women, which took place on 17 October, is an important step in the right direction.

Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine has created a humanitarian crisis that is also having devastating global impacts. The deliberate destruction by Russia of Ukraine's agricultural and transport infrastructure is causing worldwide food supply chain disruptions and endangers the food security of millions of people around the globe. In that context, the Black Sea Grain Initiative is of key importance to mitigate the global impact of Russia's aggression, and we support the call by Secretary-General Guterres to extend it beyond 19 November.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Greece.

Mrs. Theofili (Greece): The Minister for Foreign Affairs for Greece, Nikos Dendias, travelled to Kyiv on Wednesday under well-known extraordinary circumstances in the only visit that has taken place in the city during this troublesome period. Kyiv, as the

rest of the country, is suffering daily vicious attacks, resulting in the death and injury of dozens of unarmed innocent people. It was Minister Dendias' third visit to Ukraine since the beginning of the war, as he has visited Odesa twice, a city connected with Greek history and the Greek community of Ukraine.

Those visits send a strong message expressing the full solidarity of the Greek Government with the Government and the people of Ukraine. For centuries, Greeks have been present, especially on the Black Sea shores, in particular in the area of Mariupol, which has been home to a centuries-long established Greek community of around 100,000 people. It is also one of the areas that has been hit the hardest by the Russian forces. The city of Mariupol has been almost entirely destroyed. For Greece, respect for international law and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries is a pillar of our foreign policy. That is why we condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine from day one.

Recent worrisome attacks carried out by drones are having far-reaching repercussions, directly affecting vital civilian infrastructure, leading to an inhumane continuous and merciless shelling targeting innocent lives. Greece condemns those attacks in the strongest of terms. We have repeatedly asked for urgent compliance with international humanitarian law for the protection of civilians and their property, for safeguarding the right of safe passage from conflict zones and access to valid information concerning areas of safe temporary shelter, as well as humanitarian access to areas where civilians continue to reside.

Greece has been providing humanitarian aid from the very start of the war. We have so far delivered multiple packages of needs-based, in-kind humanitarian assistance. Moreover, we are firmly committed to the reconstruction of Ukraine. We have announced that we are ready to rebuild a maternity hospital destroyed by Russian shelling in the city of Mariupol and to contribute to the reconstruction of Odesa — another city that is close to our hearts, since our struggle for independence began there. And we are ready and working together for the promotion of the candidacy of the historic centre of Odesa to be designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Given my country's particular sensitivity regarding children, we have pledged €200,000 to UNICEF's humanitarian action in Ukraine. Furthermore, we have taken over the treatment of children with cancer at the

Elpida Oncologic Hospital for Children — “Elpida” means “hope”.

Also, we responded effectively to the needs of tens of thousands of Ukrainian citizens seeking refuge from the war, having welcomed more than 75,000 refugees, including unaccompanied minors unfortunately separated from their families in Ukraine, who are eligible for immediate protection. A call centre was set up to facilitate communication for displaced persons from Ukraine, with detailed information provided in Greek, English and Ukrainian. Actions on the education level have also been put into effect to ensure the inclusion of Ukrainian pupils in the educational system. At the same time, through our commercial

fleet, we contribute to the transfer of Ukrainian grain to key ports in the North Africa region, in an effort to address the food crisis.

Greece is strongly committed to accountability for war crimes. Minister Dendias has sent relevant letters to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and visited The Hague in that respect.

No matter all the efforts by the international community, the only real solution to the ongoing suffering of the Ukrainian people is the immediate cessation of the unprovoked aggression on the part of Russia.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.