



# Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

*Provisional*

**9693**<sup>rd</sup> meeting

Thursday, 25 July 2024, 10 a.m.

New York

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*President:* Mr. Nebenzia/Mr. Polyanskiy . . . . . (Russian Federation)

*Members:*

Algeria . . . . .	Mr. Latrous
China . . . . .	Mr. Fu Cong
Ecuador . . . . .	Mr. De La Gasca
France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
Guyana . . . . .	Ms. Persaud
Japan . . . . .	Mrs. Shino
Malta . . . . .	Mr. Camilleri
Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Fernandes
Republic of Korea . . . . .	Mr. Sangjin Kim
Sierra Leone . . . . .	Mr. George
Slovenia . . . . .	Ms. Jurečko
Switzerland . . . . .	Mr. Hauri
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Woodfield
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Wood

## Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Threats to international peace and security**

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): Before inviting the briefers in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I would like to say a few words in connection with the fact that, when it assumed the presidency of the Security Council in early July, Russia undertook, as it always does, the obligation to act in a transparent and impartial manner. I would like to publicly provide a number of clarifications on the issue of Ukraine's participation in the Council's meetings.

As will be recalled, on the most recent occasion, on 9 July (see S/PV.9682), Ukraine sought to participate in a briefing requested by the Western delegations. However, the presidency never received a request from the Ukrainian delegation in the proper form, despite the fact that such requests had been received from all the other delegations seeking to participate in the meeting under rule 37. Ultimately, Ukraine was admitted because the relevant request came from a member of the Security Council, namely, from the United States.

In view of that situation, we decided, on that occasion, to spare our Ukrainian colleagues from having to prepare and submit a request to participate in the meeting since they, unlike all other States Members of the United Nations, have difficulties in submitting a request in accordance with the established practice under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, which states that representatives of countries that are not members of the Council may be invited to participate in Security Council meetings. We proposed, in accordance with that rule, that Council members invite Ukraine and the European Union (EU) so that their representatives could come to today's meeting to contribute to the discussion. Naturally, the decision whether to accept or decline such an invitation is the sovereign right of any State, and no State can be forced to decide one way or the other. However, one member of the Council opposed the invitation, arguing that it would serve only to exert pressure on Ukraine and the EU and that they should address the Security Council only when they so wished. On the basis of that

objection, no invitation was extended to Ukraine and the EU. We regret that this was the case.

The position taken by the objecting member runs counter to rule 37, which clearly states that the Council may invite a State that is not a member of the Council if it considers that its interests are particularly affected. The participation of such a State is intended to assist the Council in its decision-making. That is the point of invitations under rule 37 and not that they should come to the Council only when they want to because they have something to say. That is a perverse interpretation of the fundamentals of how the Council works. The Council is not an open mic event or a talk show, but the principal organ responsible for the maintenance international peace and security.

The representative of the United Kingdom has asked for the floor.

**Mr. Woodfield** (United Kingdom): I ought just to correct the record on that procedural matter and we explained all of this to colleagues on PC Net. But as Council members know, the very long-standing practice for briefings in the Council is that we extend an invitation to non-Council members upon their request, and we do not do it proactively as a matter of practice. There are very good reasons for that, and fundamentally, from our perspective, it is a matter of respect for the wider United Nations membership. It is not for the Council to put pressure on non-Council members to appear before us. It is up to non-Council members to decide when their interests are engaged in a debate and when they would like to speak. We should not be in the business of trying to summon non-Council members. So we do not believe we have diverted from standard practice. We are simply sticking to what we always do.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of the United Kingdom. That was pretty much the thrust of what I said, only framed differently. But the meaning of the invitation was that the State invited could have made a contribution to discussions in the Council.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Adedeji Ebo, Director and Deputy to the High Representative of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs; and Ms. Karin Kneissl, analyst.

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

The representative of France has asked for the floor.

**Mr. De Rivière** (*spoke in French*): I apologize for taking the floor briefly, but I do so, first, to support the interpretation of our British colleague and, secondly, to encourage the Russian Federation to adhere not only to the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, but also to the Charter of the United Nations.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of the United States has asked for the floor.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I just want to briefly second the opinion that was expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom with regard to that matter.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I want to reiterate once again, as I already said very clearly in my earlier statement, that we are of the view that it is the Council that invites States to participate when it wishes to do so. As there was no unanimity on the Council in that regard, we did not invite those who could have made a contribution to today's discussion because it directly affects those Members of the United Nations.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ebo.

**Mr. Ebo**: I provide this briefing on behalf of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu.

Since the most recent briefing to the Security Council on this topic (see S/PV.9658), on 14 June 2024, the provision of military assistance and transfers of arms and ammunition to the armed forces of Ukraine has continued in the context of the full-scale invasion of that country launched by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

According to publicly available information, those transfers have reportedly included heavy conventional weapons such as battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, combat aircraft, helicopters, large-calibre artillery systems, missile systems and uncrewed combat aerial vehicles, as well as remotely operated munitions and small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. They have also included anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions.

In addition, there have been reports of States transferring, or planning to transfer, weapons such as uncrewed aerial vehicles, ballistic missiles and ammunition to the Russian armed forces and that these weapons have been used in Ukraine. Any transfer of weapons and ammunition must take place consistently with the applicable international legal framework, including, of course, relevant Security Council resolutions.

Reports related to the use of cluster munitions and widespread contamination with mines and explosive remnants of war in Ukraine are worrisome. Mines and explosive ordnance directly threaten civilians caught up in armed conflicts around the world, including in Ukraine. Even after the fighting ends, those deadly devices can contaminate communities for decades to come, posing a daily and deadly danger to society and hampering reconstruction efforts. The universal participation in, and the full implementation of, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects must therefore remain a priority.

The influx of weapons and ammunition into places where armed conflicts are ongoing can contribute to escalation and presents significant risks of diversion and proliferation even after the conflict has ended. Measures to address the risk of diversion of weapons and ammunition are key for preventing further instability and insecurity in Ukraine. Such efforts will also be essential to post-conflict recovery. To prevent the diversion of arms and ammunition, supply chain transparency and cooperation and information exchange between importing, transit and exporting States are required. Diversion risks exist at each stage of the life cycle of a weapon, including manufacture, before and during transfer, post-delivery storage in stockpiles and end use or disposal. Concrete counter-diversion measures include the enhancement of marking, record-keeping and tracing practices, comprehensive pre-transfer diversion risk assessments, end-user certificates, including non-transfer clauses, post-shipment verifications and diversion monitoring and analysis.

In June, States met to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action to

Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its International Tracing Instrument. They expressed collective concern about escalating tensions, crises and conflicts aggravated by the illicit trade in those weapons, which heighten the risks of diversion of small arms and light weapons to unauthorized recipients. States adopted, by consensus, action-oriented measures for 2024–2030 in order to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons throughout their life cycle.

All States should now implement those commitments and other related commitments, including those in the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and the obligations under all instruments to which they are a party to prevent the diversion of arms and regulate the international arms trade, such as the Arms Trade Treaty and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition — the Firearms Protocol.

Since 24 February 2022, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has recorded 34,658 civilian casualties, with 11,430 killed and 23,228 injured, in Ukraine. The actual figures are likely to be considerably higher. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 72 per cent of civilian casualties in June occurred as a result of artillery shelling, multiple-launch rocket systems and aerial bombardment, while 26 per cent were caused by missile and loitering munitions strikes. It is deeply concerning that the number of casualties among children in June is the highest in 2024.

The use of armed uncrewed aerial vehicles and missiles continues to cause civilian deaths and injuries as well as damage to civilian infrastructure. The Secretary-General condemned the 8 July missile attacks by the Russian Federation hitting residential and civilian infrastructure across Ukraine. The strike reportedly killed dozens of civilians, including children, and injured more than 150 others. The incidents in which missiles hit the Okhmatdyt national specialized children's hospital in Kyiv, the largest paediatrics facility in Ukraine, and at another medical facility in the capital's Dniproviskyi district, are particularly concerning.

In addition, there have also been reports of an increasing number of cross-border strikes using missiles and uncrewed aerial vehicles by Ukraine inside the Russian Federation, with some, according to the Russian authorities, reportedly resulting in civilian casualties. Just like any other weapons or weapons systems, armed uncrewed aerial vehicles and missiles must not be used in a manner inconsistent with international humanitarian law.

The continued and intensified attacks affecting civilians and civilian infrastructure are deeply concerning. All parties to any armed conflict have an obligation to protect civilians and to ensure compliance with applicable international law, in particular international humanitarian law. Directing attacks against civilians and civilian objects and indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks are prohibited by international humanitarian law. All such attacks must stop immediately.

All parties to an armed conflict must refrain from any actions that could endanger civilians, including by avoiding the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and ultimately should aim to take combat out of urban areas altogether.

The United Nations will continue working towards a just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and all relevant General Assembly resolutions.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Ebo for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Kneissl.

**Ms. Kneissl**: It is my honour to join the Security Council, at the invitation of the Russian presidency of the Council, to share some elements on the vast topic of the weapons market that has been built up by European tax money in Eastern Europe. I will focus on the evident risk of trading and smuggling — in other words, the mobility of the weapons market — and in my first part I will focus on what is well known to the United Nations, which has been seized of the matter of small weapons and light arms for decades.

Let me start with one main message — weapons travel as easily as crude oil, they are truly global goods. When we look at the oil market, which I happen to be a bit more familiar with than the arms business, those pushing for sanctions have largely failed in obstructing Russian energy exports. Oil is the global good par

excellence. Those Europeans asking for more arms for Ukraine ignore the nature of arms trading. That might be because the arms industry is just a business, but no longer integrated into European State economies. It seems to me that the Hungarian Government is a lone voice in Europe asking to stop arms supplies to Ukraine. As a neighbour, Budapest is aware of the cross-border temptations former fighters who are changing their métier might have, namely, large-scale arms trading once the battle is over.

I had the opportunity to observe that well-known phenomenon in Lebanon in the third quarter of 1990, when militiamen sold their materiel. Apart from Hizbullah and various Palestinian factions such as the Palestine Liberation Organization, most militias were obliged to lay down their arms. The Christian Falangists, for instance, did business with certain like-minded groups in Yugoslavia, which had also already been shaken by secessionism. The arms market gradually moved across the eastern Mediterranean to the Adriatic ports. What was sold in Jounieh in October 1990 was distributed in Dubrovnik in June 1991. The war in Lebanon officially stopped with another Syrian intervention. The war in Yugoslavia officially started in late June 1991. It took some months for the arm traders to move to new shores. As of 1992, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and displaced millions as Europe witnessed the most horrific fighting on its territory since the end of the Second World War. In 1999, violence erupted again in Kosovo with the NATO bombing.

Until the rise in violence in the Balkans, Lebanon had been the centre of arms dealing for decades, not only with regard to weapons travelled but also an entire mindset of militia mentality, drug-addicted fighters and the business as such. The German author Bertolt Brecht describes it much better in his theatre drama *Mother Courage and Her Children* than any United Nations report can do. War is often all about business, and the war of 30 years in Central Europe lasted for such a long time precisely for that business reason.

Approximately 350 years later, European mercenaries who looked for adventures and money in disintegrating Yugoslavia resembled their ancestors. And when they moved back to their countries of origin, a major part of them continued their criminal careers, with visibly increased violence, such as bank robbery and drug dealing. According to the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, there are

821 criminal networks with more than 25,000 members across the European Union (EU). The Ukrainian arms market, marked by corruption, might increase new business opportunities for those criminals.

A similar situation was observed in spring 2011 when, here at this very Security Council, France eagerly pushed, during a busy weekend, for the adoption of resolution 1973 (2011) to enable a no-fly zone in Libya. What was started as another humanitarian intervention turned into a regime change within 48 hours. The killing fields in Libya were initiated by European politicians and an activist philosopher, the notorious Bernard-Henri Lévy, who is now also based in Ukraine on a part-time basis. The inflow of arms for the good guys in Benghazi of course spilled across the borders of Libya, once the best friend of the EU due to its solid assistance in containing migration. What followed were domino effects of brutal terrorism in north-western Africa. In addition to the Libyans, the peoples of Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali paid a high price for the European arms deliveries. Unrest and terrorism spilled over from Libya to those Sahel countries, and the weapons market found new channels across the region.

The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty in 2013 marked a turning point in the international community's efforts to regulate the global trade in conventional arms and to promote peace and security. All those present here are aware of its shortcomings; some signed but did not ratify. Alas, when it comes to the tremendous inflow of weapons into Ukraine, which started in spring 2014, the diplomatic consensus on the need to contain the global flow was quickly abandoned.

Europe calls for more weapons, most of which are not made in Europe — very much to the dismay of traditional European arms builders present in this Chamber. At its recent meeting on 27 June, the European Council elaborated once more on increased arms deliveries to Ukraine. In an irony of history, the European Peace Facility assistance has been in charge over the past years. Let me quote:

“The European Council welcomed progress on the initiatives launched by several Member States regarding ammunition and missiles, fighter jets, air defence and training, and calls for their further reinforcement and acceleration.”

It is useless to search for a diplomatic approach in such resolutions. Those asking for talks are considered traitors. I know that label well myself. Tanks, not talks,



is the EU path, eager to push the flow of weapons to Ukraine — or at least facilitate the transit, as neutral Austria does in contrast to certain NATO members. It is in Türkiye and in the People's Republic of China that diplomacy is practiced.

Let me go back to the potential of a rise in terrorism and organized crime on European soil when all those small weapons and light arms, in combination with warfront-experienced mercenaries, return to their countries of origin. They might engage in fighting simply for boredom or for economic reasons. The presence of former militants of the Syrian proxy war in Ukraine but also in Germany and other EU States is a well-established fact. As of 2016 and 2017, many EU Governments gave the green light to the elimination, i.e. killing, of their own citizens who were about to return from Syria where they had been with the Islamic State terror groups. Such extrajudicial executions were committed on a large scale by EU authorities to pre-empt the return of those terrorists to their countries of origin in the EU.

Those EU citizens who opted to join the Islamic State in 2014 were considered terrorists for clear reasons and were arrested once back home. However, those persons who recently decided to join the battlefield in Ukraine were encouraged by their respective Governments to do so and never risked losing their citizenship for joining foreign armed forces or militias. In the case of Ukraine, the number of EU-citizens with warfront experience is probably much higher than the group of those Europeans who ravaged in Syria.

Personally, I do not see the war in Ukraine turning from a conventional into a non-conventional one, but Europe will have to face the aftermath of an uncontrolled weapons market in Eastern and Central Europe. That chapter will be tougher than what the outflow of the wars in the former Yugoslavia were and remain. It will mean more organized crime and more terrorism. There will be people who will not be reintegrated in their respective societies in the EU. They will do business in the weapons market, and that will be a major headache.

Let me conclude with one further thought on the European remilitarization. As somebody who has been teaching in various military academies for about 20 years, I am aware of what happened to the armed forces in various EU countries. They were downsized. Even the cooks were outsourced to catering firms on a contractual basis. There was no obligation to feed

the troops in case of war, so to say. It was all about the special forces which would operate wherever in the case of a terrorist attack or for regime change. All that was taught since the 1990s, namely, the end of artillery and the rise of cyberwarriors, is currently revised. And Europe now has an ammunition problem. Where can it produce all those shells and grenades? There is a lot of talk of new generations of hypersonic missiles to be stationed in Germany, but those weapons first will have to be fabricated first.

The Germany of 2024 is not the famous Federal Republic of Germany — the famous *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* built on an invincible deutsche mark. Germany is once again considered by many the sick man of Europe. In contrast to the German economy in the 1980s, with its missile stationing, the present-day German economy is simply not healthy enough to finance the very ambitious plans of a military budget that is two per cent of the gross domestic product. The envisaged return to a draft army, abandoned under Chancellor Merkel, will cause heavy rifts within a fragmented German society. And it has become increasingly clear to the world that it is less about material, such as Western tanks and fighter planes, and it is much more about the soldiers — the humans. It was during the war of attrition, which started in 1914, that the notion of the soldier was replaced by the German notion of *Menschenmaterial*, human material or human resources if you want.

One hundred and ten years later we are back to square one in the Ukrainian battlefield, which has become the gruesome stage of a larger proxy war between the East and the West. The German writer Erich Maria Remarque, whose novel on the horrors of war remains topical, said: good or ill, life is life; you only realize that when you have to risk it. And that holds true for every single soldier in that war on both sides. And there is bewilderment when Ukrainian soldiers shout to the Russian front line: "Russians never surrender."

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Kneissl for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

At the outset, I would like to thank our briefers.

A little over a week ago, we convened members to this Chamber to discuss ways to bring international relations out of the impasse resulting from the long-

standing and deliberate policy of Western States to exclude Russia from the picture and from the equation when it comes to European and global security. Our country has been depicted as an enemy that violates the fundamental agreements and understandings that allowed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States to put an end to the cold war. The Ukrainian crisis is just one such consequence of that policy.

Today we all know, including from declassified Western documents, that the United States began its crusade against Russia immediately after the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, masking its actions with appeals and speeches about its good intentions.

The anti-constitutional coup against the Kyiv Maidan in 2014 turned Ukraine into an outpost of that policy. That once-friendly neighbour was gradually moulded into an anti-Russian country with all its ugly attributes — violations of the rights of Russian-speaking residents, rabid Ukrainian nationalism, suppression of all dissent, glorification of Hitler's collaborators and persecution of the canonical Orthodox Church. All of that, as we now know for certain, took place under the cover of the Minsk agreements, which, from the very outset, the Kyiv regime and its Western patrons had no intention of implementing at all and instead used solely as a smokescreen for arming Ukraine and preparing it for war with Russia.

It is clear that our Western colleagues are extremely reluctant to abandon that course, the obvious victim of which is Ukraine itself. That was also evident during the aforementioned open debate on multilateralism (see S/PV.9686), during which the United States and its allies demonstrated their absolute unwillingness to engage in any dialogue and continued to employ the logic of a zero-sum game.

They are continuously pumping arms into the Kyiv regime, but not without some serious problems and setbacks. It is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the pervasive corruption accompanying those supplies. Thus, the report by the Inspector General of the Pentagon shows that the United States Army failed to verify contractor accounts totalling \$20 million in relation to contracts for provide aiding to Ukraine. Earlier it was reported that the Pentagon has brought more than 50 criminal cases in relation to military aid for Ukraine. That is clearly just the tip of the iceberg.

So-called Western “benefactors”, together with Zelenskyy's clique, which has entrenched itself in power, are continuing to bleed Ukraine dry. As recently reported in the media, foreign corporations have already sold off more than half of Ukraine's arable land. What is now being implemented in the country is a colonial scheme, pure and simple.

Meanwhile, the scale of corruption in Ukraine has already reached such unprecedented levels that Ukrainian members of parliament have to invent new cover-ups for it on the fly. Here is a remarkable example of Ukrainian ingenuity. In mid-July, the Ukrainian parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, approved draft law No. 11340 in its first reading, which will allow those suspected of receiving substantial bribes to redeem themselves by paying money. We cannot but admire the beauty of the scheme: it is legal for someone caught taking a bribe to just share it with the State and go on taking bribes. I wonder if there is a similar tax on bribes elsewhere in the world or is Ukraine, for now, alone in having come up with such a brilliant idea.

Meanwhile, the total unwillingness of Ukrainians to fight and die for Western geopolitical interests has forced the United States and its allies to get further bogged down in the conflict and send not only their mercenaries but also their instructors to that country. They, of course, have become a legitimate target for the Russian Air Force. As a result, the West is seeing more and more obituaries for senior military officers who have mysteriously disappeared during a walk in the mountains or suddenly died of a heart attack. According to a NATO officer's admission that was exposed by the media, a recent strike on Odesa killed 18 British Special Air Service personnel and a number of French special forces personnel. None of them were mercenaries, they were military personnel on active duty. Another 25 were wounded. On 23 July, approximately 50 foreign instructors were killed in the Kharkiv region. Yesterday, approximately 200 foreign specialists were hit in Izmail.

We warned about such an occurrence and repeatedly warned our Western colleagues that the consequences would be dire. Not all of them seem to have realized the real state of affairs at the front and the prospects for Ukraine, as a State, should the conflict be resolved militarily. However, the reality has started to hit some of them, perhaps thanks to the growing number of unflattering reports by Western journalists about the Ukrainian authorities.

Those who are suddenly beginning to masquerade as peacemakers include the former head of the British Government, Boris Johnson, who in fact was one of the main perpetrators of the unfolding Ukrainian tragedy. We all recall that it was he who dissuaded the Ukrainian ringleader in late March to early April 2022 from signing a peace agreement. That agreement was actually very favourable to Ukraine, and, what is more, it had been initialled by the Ukrainian delegation at the talks in Istanbul. And now he is arguing that, for the sake of peace, Ukraine could give up its demand for a return to 1991 borders and, in compensation, grant rights to the Russian-speaking population. The cynicism on the part of that retired British politician is staggering. It turns out that the rights of the Russian-speaking residents of Ukraine are, in his eyes, a bargaining chip. But what about the rights of the British or, say, the Flemish in Belgium or the Swedes in Finland? Does he see them the same way?

We must disappoint the British pseudo-peacemaker: we will not trade away the rights of the Russian-speaking residents of Ukraine, nor will we trade away the issue of the denazification of Ukrainian society. We believe that it is the moral duty of all Europeans to seek the eradication of those ugly phenomena, which are a disgrace to European civilization itself, not least because eradicating them would be in line with the demands of the European public.

For example, the Head of the Polish Ministry of Defence, Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz, recently stated unequivocally: “We must make it clear: we will not see Ukraine’s accession to the European Union until the issue of the Volyn massacre is addressed”. We could not agree more with the Polish politician. However, he should not stop there: he must also say that Ukraine will not be accepted so long as it glorifies those who committed that massacre and thousands of other atrocities against Jews, Poles, Russians and the Ukrainians themselves in serving their Nazi masters. I reiterate that not only does Russia need this, but so does the whole of Europe and the entire West, if they want to claim even the slightest adherence to the values that our grandfathers put their lives on the line to defend 80 years ago.

The consequences of the Ukrainian crisis will not be addressed as long as the lies that underpin the Kyiv regime persist. Those lies are fuelled and propagated by Ukraine’s Western backers. They are multifaceted and pervade the Western narrative about Ukraine.

They include the Bucha provocation, the denial of Kyiv’s years-long aggression against the population of Donbas, the suppression of the truth about the Odesa Trade Union House tragedy and the ulterior motives behind the 2014 coup and the ensuing bloodshed.

A few days ago, we commemorated the tenth anniversary of one of the most high-profile Ukrainian untruths. I am referring to the tragedy that took place in the skies over Donbas on 17 July 2014. On that day, a Malaysian Airlines Boeing, Flight MH-17, was shot down, and all 298 people on board were killed. That catastrophe had a direct impact on the course of the conflict that Ukraine had unleashed one month earlier. Struck by the scale of the tragedy, the Donbas self-defence forces halted what was turning out to be a successful offensive against Ukrainian troops and created the necessary conditions for the Dutch investigators to work, in the hope that they would identify the true perpetrators of the tragedy. Alas, those hopes were in vain, even though our country has consistently advocated for an independent, comprehensive and credible investigation into the causes of the incident. Russia was responsible for the adoption of resolution 2166 (2014) and remains fully committed to its implementation in the interests of establishing the truth and bringing those responsible to justice.

However, we cannot accept the biased conclusions of the technical investigation by the Dutch Safety Board and the subsequent criminal investigation by the Joint Investigation Team, which consists of States hostile to Russia. Their sole purpose was to hastily concoct an indictment of Russia’s involvement in the Boeing crash and engage in a sloppy attempt to make the evidence fit their conclusion. Our proposals to work together were rejected, and the data we provided as irrefutable proof that the missile could not have been launched from the militia-controlled territory was ignored.

Over the past 10 years, the Netherlands, guided by anti-Russian logic, never mustered the courage to look into the details of the tragedy. The obvious issue of Ukraine’s responsibility for not closing its airspace over the war zone was never investigated, and neither were many other egregious facts.

Moreover, with the active support of its allies, The Hague is trying to employ its dubious experience regarding the Flight MH-17 case at international forums, including the International Civil Aviation



Organization (ICAO) Council and the European Court of Human Rights, in order to cement a false version of Russia's involvement in the Boeing crash in the eyes of the international community. At ICAO, Russia provided extensive and convincing evidence testifying to our country's non-involvement in the crash. We called on ICAO to conduct an impartial investigation into all the circumstances of the accident, which the ICAO Council refused to do. It is also telling that the parties concerned ignored the decision of the International Court of Justice of 31 January 2024 on the case initiated by Ukraine in January 2017. That decision rejected Kyiv's demand that Russia be held responsible for the crash of the Malaysian Airlines Boeing.

We regret to note the lack of a comprehensive, thorough and depoliticized impartial international investigation. The politically biased versions promoted by the Netherlands and its associates shield Kyiv and deliberately ignore all facts pointing to its responsibility for the tragedy. In these circumstances, there can be no talk of objectivity and restoring justice.

In that connection, we once again express our condolences to all those who lost their loved ones over Donbas 10 years ago. We would like to believe that one day the truth about that tragedy will come out and that the true perpetrators, as well as all those who covered up for them, will receive the punishment they deserve. Unfortunately, that is still a long way off.

In conclusion, I would like to touch upon another issue. The situation of the Ukrainian army is so catastrophic that in recent days we have seen a number of statements by the leaders of the Kyiv regime, who have hastily put on sheep's clothing and now claim that they are ready to engage in peace talks with Russia. We have heard such statements from the Kyiv ringleader himself who has lost all legitimacy and his subordinates. I would like to point out that the readiness for negotiations voiced by the Kyiv regime is in line with our position that the diplomatic path is the preferable way to resolve the Ukrainian conflict. As members know, we have never rejected negotiations — it was Zelenskyy and his clique who did so at the instigation of their Western sponsors. What are important in that regard are details and nuances, but we do not know them. What we do know is that back in November 2022, the Kyiv ringleader legislatively banned himself and his subordinates from engaging in any talks with the Russian authorities, and that decree remains in force. We also know that, just recently, the Kyiv authorities promoted Zelenskyy's

pseudo-peace formula as the only basis acceptable to them for resolving the conflict. That formula makes no sense in terms of basic logic and the actual situation on the front line. Therefore, we have many questions, and without answers to them we cannot assess the nature of the modified Ukrainian position.

The representative of the Kyiv regime could perhaps have provided some clarity, but for reasons known only to him he ignored our invitation to attend the meeting today, as did the EU representative, demonstrating once again the unwillingness of that once influential Union to engage in any diplomatic efforts. The very fact that Kyiv's Western sponsors found it unnecessary for a representative of the Kyiv regime to attend today's meeting on Ukraine is telling — it proves once again that the current regime in Ukraine can make no sovereign decisions in principle.

Before envoys come to us with appeals to assess a potential change in the rhetoric of the ringleader of the Kyiv regime, who is past his expiration date and failing on the front, we would urge that they clarify the details of his epiphany. Perhaps nothing has actually changed in his views. If he has finally come around to talking about peace, he has before him the proposals put forward by the Russian President a month ago. We advise him to hurry up, because Ukraine will not be offered anything better. In no way will it be given a break on the battlefield in the form of a preliminary ceasefire. We have seen how arrangements with Ukraine cannot be trusted from the example of the Minsk agreements. And while the Kyiv leader is considering our proposals, our special military operation in Ukraine will continue and all its objectives will be achieved, either on the battlefield or as a result of negotiations. It is therefore now up to Kyiv to decide.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

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

**Ms. Jurečko** (Slovenia): I wish to thank Director Ebo for his briefing. I also take note of the statement by Ms. Kneissl.

Let me make a couple of points on behalf of my delegation.

First, as a staunch supporter of international law, Slovenia cannot and will not accept this aggression and rejects this violent attempt at land acquisition, as well as any and all violations of international law that took

place since it began more than two years ago. Ukraine is defending itself in line with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Slovenia sees its assistance to Ukraine not only as supporting the protection of its civilians against drones and missiles but also as protecting the Charter against the erosion of its basic tenets. With that in mind, I can inform the Council that my Prime Minister and President Zelenskyy signed a security agreement between Slovenia and Ukraine just last week. It solidifies Slovenia's support for Ukraine's self-defence efforts and highlights Slovenia's commitment to humanitarian aid for Ukrainians.

Secondly, as we discuss transfers of arms that support the Ukrainian defence against aggression, it is becoming increasingly hard to ignore reports that Russia is replenishing its arsenal by importing missiles and artillery shells from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. While transfers to Ukraine are in line with the international legal framework, transfers of weapons from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea violate multiple Security Council resolutions. The procurement of weapons from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea supports the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and destabilizes two parts of the globe at the same time.

Our discussions of Ukraine's self-defence have security implications for countries like mine. However, we know that there is only one long-term security guarantee for everyone — strict application of and respect for international law. This is why we will be one of the first to man the barricades in defence of the United Nations Charter, this is why you will always hear us exposing double standards in the application of international humanitarian law and this is why we will keep supporting Ukraine as long as there is an aggressor on its soil.

**Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Ebo, for his briefing. I have also taken note of Ms. Kneissl's remarks.

Last week, we discussed the importance of respecting the Charter of the United Nations in order to preserve our multilateral order (see S/PV.9686). It is precisely that Charter that forms the basis of the international legal order. It enshrines the prohibition on the use of force, the right to legitimate self-defence and, in particular, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States.

We recall that the current situation giving rise to this meeting is a direct consequence of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, in clear violation of the United Nations Charter and international law. We condemn that military aggression and reject any attempt to evade responsibility for it.

Over the past two weeks, Ukraine has once again been the victim of Russian attacks against, inter alia, a children's hospital in Kyiv.

We reiterate that medical and humanitarian personnel and infrastructure must be respected and protected. Yesterday, other attacks in Kharkiv damaged, among others, the office of the Fondation Suisse de Déminage, one of our important partners in carrying out humanitarian demining. That reminds us of the dangerous conditions in which humanitarian workers operate, including in the area of humanitarian demining — an essential prerequisite for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

Switzerland condemns those recent attacks and reiterates its call on all parties to comply strictly with international law, in particular international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The civilian population and civilian infrastructure must not be targeted. We are deeply dismayed by the fact that Russia's military aggression appears to continue to be fuelled by transfers of arms and ammunition to Russia from third parties, in particular Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We have repeatedly stressed that States must respect and comply with their obligations under international arms control instruments. That includes the relevant resolutions of the Council.

In order to achieve a peaceful solution, we renew our appeal to Russia to cease all hostilities and withdraw its troops from Ukrainian territory. The summit on peace in Ukraine in June attests to Switzerland's ongoing commitment to peace and dialogue. Switzerland remains determined to do everything in its power to contribute to a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, based on the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental principles of international law.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I thank Deputy High Representative Ebo for his briefing.

Before beginning my statement, I would just like to say that the lies, fabrications, threats, distortions and historical revisionism on the part of the representative

of the Russian Federation know no bounds. It is quite unfortunate that everyone had to sit here and listen to that.

Two weeks ago, Russia lectured the Security Council on multilateral cooperation (see S/PV.9686), even as it blatantly violated the Charter of the United Nations by continuing to wage its brutal war against Ukraine. Today Russia's hypocrisy is once again on full display, misusing the Security Council as a platform to broadcast its disinformation.

Despite repeated calls from more than 140 countries for Russia to end its war of aggression, a few countries have deepened their support for Russia. Today I would like to focus on the military support provided by China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran to Russia, support that is directly contributing to Russia's war against Ukraine.

China's so-called "no limits" partnership and large-scale support is propping up the Russian defence industrial base. Despite its calls on countries not to prolong the conflict, China is exporting to Russia nitrocellulose — which, for those who do not know, is a highly flammable compound — machine tools, microelectronics, optics and uncrewed aerial vehicle (UAV) and cruise missile technology that are prolonging and enabling Russia's violation of the Charter of the United Nations through its invasion of Ukraine. Russia deploys its acquisitions from China in attacks that kill civilians and destroy Ukraine's infrastructure.

We need only look to Russia's appalling attack on Okhmatdyt children's hospital to see the consequences of supporting Russia's defence industrial base. Collectively, exports from China have given the Russian war effort a lifeline and are increasing the threat Russia poses to Euro-Atlantic security.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has unlawfully transferred dozens of ballistic missiles and more than 15,000 containers of munitions to aid Russia's war against Ukraine, prolonging the suffering of the Ukrainian people. Last month, an expert from a leading independent think tank, Conflict Armament Research, described to the Security Council his trip to Ukraine to inspect debris from a ballistic missile that hit Kharkiv on 2 January (see S/PV.9676). He shared photographs of the missile debris and described its distinct jet vane actuators, the bolt pattern around the igniter and the presence of Korean characters on specific rocket components. That independent determination

that the ballistic missile had been manufactured in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea corroborates the United States Defense Intelligence Agency analysis published on 29 May.

Russia's procurement of Democratic People's Republic of Korea ballistic missiles violates the United Nations arms embargo on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that Russia itself supported. Troublingly, Moscow and Pyongyang have also signed a mutual defence treaty and elevated their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership after Putin's visit in late June. Russia-Democratic People's Republic of Korea alignment evidences a dangerous quid pro quo: Russia shields the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from United Nations scrutiny, allowing the Kim regime to continue developing unlawful ballistic missiles, so long as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea supplies those arms for the Kremlin's war effort. That kind of quid pro quo undermines this institution. We must hold one another to account and uphold our obligations under international law. Credible reporting suggests that Moscow plans to follow the same playbook with Tehran, elevating bilateral ties with a comprehensive bilateral agreement.

Iran is another country that continues to fuel Russia's war of aggression with direct military support, providing Iranian UAVs, which the Kremlin is using to devastating effect against Ukrainian civilians and civilian infrastructure. I would also like to highlight the serious consequences of Iran potentially transferring ballistic missiles and related technology to Russia. To that end, we urge all countries to cease military cooperation with Russia and to halt materiel and political support for its war of aggression against Ukraine. Such support for a country that violated the Charter of the United Nations only pours fuel on the fire. The NATO Washington summit declaration demonstrated that many countries share those concerns.

Here in New York, in the General Assembly on 11 July, 100 countries also demanded that Russia return control of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant to the sovereign and competent authorities of Ukraine (see A/78/PV.99). Again, the hypocrisy of Russia in calling for this meeting should not be lost on Security Council members. We cannot allow Russia to unabashedly promote its disinformation while it wages a war of aggression for territorial conquest against a fellow State Member of the United Nations.

The United States remains committed to providing Ukraine what it needs to defend itself, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. We call on all countries to support Ukraine's pursuit of a just and lasting peace, consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. We regret that Russia has shown no support or readiness for good-faith negotiations or engagement on such a peace, including the Kremlin's refusal to participate in Ukraine's second peace summit. The United States will continue to stand by Ukraine. We will continue to call for justice for the victims of the Kremlin's war of aggression and for accountability for those responsible.

In conclusion, let me make one final point. It is obvious to everyone that there is a clear difference between supporting the efforts of a country to defend itself, in line with the Charter of the United Nations, and supporting an international terrorist group sanctioned at the United Nations. The fact that Russia and its chosen briefers cannot tell the difference, frankly, tells the Council everything it needs to know.

**Ms. Persaud** (Guyana): I thank Mr. Ebo for his briefing and take note of Dr. Kneissl's contribution to the discussion.

Guyana remains concerned about the mounting civilian casualties and widespread destruction sustained in the ongoing war. We maintain that any lasting solution will not be achieved through military action. It must be achieved through diplomacy and good-faith negotiations conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

We reiterate our call for the parties to the conflict to commit in good faith to a serious political and diplomatic process towards ending the conflict. The tragic human toll of the war and its devastating impact on regional stability and international security cannot be overemphasized. Guyana condemns the use of violence against civilians and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and calls upon the parties to uphold their obligations under international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and to respect the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution. We also demand that they ensure the safety of civilians and humanitarian workers in the affected areas.

The updates provided by Mr. Ebo regarding the transfer of weapons are concerning. Guyana continues

to stress that the supply of weapons and ammunition in any armed conflict situation risks further escalating or prolonging the violence and presents a significant risk of their diversion to unauthorized end-users. Every year, we receive increasingly harrowing reports of the detrimental impact of the diversion, illicit trafficking and proliferation of weapons, especially of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, on entire communities and their disproportionate impact on women and girls. We must do more to ensure effective arms-control measures and prevent further instability and insecurity in the world.

In that regard, Guyana urges all parties to ensure that the transfers are transparent, conducted within international legal frameworks and include stringent provisions for controls to prevent their irregular transfer. As a State party to the Arms Trade Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Guyana deplores the use of those weapons and calls for full compliance with international law and international disarmament instruments and obligations. We further encourage States that are not yet party to those treaties to accede to them.

In conclusion, I wish to once again stress the urgency of resolving this conflict through peaceful means. We again call for the Russian Federation to withdraw its military forces from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine and encourage the international community to redouble its efforts to secure lasting peace in Ukraine.

**Mr. Latrous** (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Adedeji Ebo for his briefing. We also listened carefully to the comprehensive briefing by Ms. Karin Kneissl.

Our position on this conflict remains crystal clear. We have underscored it time and again in different meetings of the Security Council. We stress that a just and lasting peace based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations that takes into account the security concerns of all relevant parties is vital to end this crisis. In today's deliberations, I would like to stress the following points.

First, the increased proliferation of weapons in conflict zones remains a deep concern. The influx of such weapons will undoubtedly lead to further loss of lives, prolonged suffering of civilian populations and



additional hurdles that undermine diplomatic solutions to the conflict.

Secondly, we reiterate our urgent call to all parties to refrain from escalatory narrative and prioritize the protection of civilians and vital infrastructure. In that regard, we should act to alleviate the suffering of those affected by the conflict. Moreover, all parties must strictly adhere to their obligations pursuant to international law, especially international humanitarian law.

Thirdly, the growing polarization will lead only to further escalation of tension and prolonged crisis. It is therefore important to redouble international diplomatic efforts to bring about sustained peace.

Fourthly, my country calls on all parties to de-escalate, refrain from confrontation and establish the conditions conducive to comprehensive and productive dialogue and negotiations in line with the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In conclusion, Algeria emphasizes its full commitment to supporting any initiative aimed at maintaining international peace and security, whether in the region or worldwide, leading to a peaceful settlement in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter and addressing the legitimate security concerns of all parties.

**Mr. De Rivi re** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Ebo for his briefing.

A few days ago, Russia invited Member States to discuss multilateral cooperation with a view to a more just and sustainable world order (see S/PV.9686). Many were surprised by that initiative, at a time when Russia is undermining the foundations of our multilateral system by carrying out large-scale aggression against a sovereign State, in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Following the same logic, Russia has today organized a meeting — the seventeenth — to blame arms deliveries to Ukraine for a war that Russia alone unleashed. Almost two and a half years ago, Russia launched an illegal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, even though that State did not threaten it in any way. Since then, Russia has chosen to continue the war, despite the resolutions adopted by a large majority in the General Assembly unequivocally condemning it.

To continue that aggression, Russia is ready to weaken the international non-proliferation architecture,

which is one of the guarantors of our collective security. In violation of Security Council resolutions, Russia is receiving deliveries of weapons and ammunition from North Korea, including the use of North Korean ballistic missiles against Ukraine. It strengthens military cooperation with Pyongyang that could allow the North Korean regime to advance its illicit programmes, at the cost of irresponsible trivialization of the nuclear threat.

Russia has also received armed drones from Iran, in violation of resolution 2231 (2015). France again reiterates its deep concern about reports of possible transfers of Iranian ballistic missiles to Russia. If confirmed, we will respond to them in a resolute and coordinated manner, including with further far-reaching measures. We also urge all States to refrain from supplying Russia with dual-use goods and components that could support its war of aggression.

To undermine the cohesion of the Ukrainian people, Russia is deliberately striking at the civilian population and infrastructure of Ukraine, in violation of international humanitarian law. One of the latest examples of that is the salvo of barbaric strikes that hit the Okhmatdyt children's hospital on 8 July.

In the face of this aggression, Ukraine has the right to defend itself, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Along with many partners, France has chosen to give Ukraine the means to exercise that right. That is why we have decided to grant military support and the transfer of equipment to Ukraine. It is in order to defend itself that Ukraine must be able to neutralize military targets on Russian territory directly involved in operations targeting it. France will continue to provide Ukraine with the support it needs to legitimately defend itself, for as long as it takes.

It is Russia, and Russia alone, that has chosen to prolong this war. It could end it today simply by withdrawing its troops from Ukrainian territory, as requested by the International Court of Justice on 16 March 2022. By enabling Ukraine to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, our military support aims at creating the conditions for negotiations that will pave the way for a just and lasting peace. Such a peace cannot be the result of armed aggression or the changing of borders by force.

**Mr. George** (Sierra Leone): I thank Mr. Adedeji Ebo, Deputy to the High Representative of the United

Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, for his briefing. We note the contribution of Ms. Karin Kneissl.

We take note of the different perspectives presented on the supply of arms with respect to the conflict in Ukraine, including those relating to the continuous supply of weapons having the potential to prolong and escalate the level of violence in the conflict, potentially leading to a state of attrition.

Notwithstanding the increased civilian deaths, injuries and displacements, as well as the massive destruction of civilian infrastructure, the gains achieved by both sides in the conflict do not point towards total victory. The situation appears to be a stalemate, and if the military objectives remain unachieved, political dialogue and settlement should be pursued.

The alarming civilian casualty figures and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine since the start of the conflict to date underscore the urgent need for all parties to the conflict to prioritize the protection of civilians and refrain from further escalation and the pursuit of the option of winning the war on the battlefield. Dialogue and diplomacy should be the primary tools employed to de-escalate tensions and pave the way for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. The international community, including the Security Council, must remain steadfast in its commitment to supporting the pursuit of a just and sustainable peace in Ukraine.

Sierra Leone reiterates its commitment to upholding the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, emphasizing the importance of respecting national sovereignty, territorial integrity and encouraging the peaceful settlement of disputes. We also reiterate our principled position that all transfers of weapons in conflict situations should occur within the applicable international legal framework and relevant Security Council resolutions and include pre-transfer risk assessments and end-user verification to prevent the diversion of arms and ammunition.

In conclusion, Sierra Leone calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities, respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and genuine diplomatic efforts to achieve a peaceful and lasting resolution to the conflict, taking into account the legitimate concerns of all parties involved.

**Mr. De La Gasca** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the briefers for their informative briefings.

Ecuador shares the concern of the Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Adedeji Ebo, in particular with regard to the risks posed by the inflow of arms and ammunition, and we support his recommendations regarding the measures necessary to mitigate those risks.

Self-defence is addressed in and must be in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The transfer of arms and ammunition must be in accordance with the applicable international legal framework and relevant Security Council resolutions.

All Member States must conduct comprehensive risk assessments to prevent the diversion, illicit trafficking and misuse of weapons. It is necessary to increase the marking, registration and traceability standards for arms and ammunition to prevent them from reappearing in other parts of the world, including Latin America, and being used for malicious purposes by transnational organized crime groups and terrorists.

Unfortunately, 29 months — 883 days — since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, there remains a lack of genuine willingness to engage in dialogue and make meaningful efforts to put an end to the military confrontations. Instead of abating, the hostilities are escalating, leaving civilians to bear the brunt of the conflict.

I reiterate the urgency of ending the attacks against the population and civilian infrastructure, and I insist on the responsibility of the parties to fully respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution. Similarly, Ecuador reiterates the need to protect all nuclear facilities in Ukraine, including the Zaporizhzhya power plant, through compliance with the seven pillars of nuclear safety and the five fundamental principles outlined by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The increase in nuclear rhetoric and the escalation of hostilities is of global concern. The path of escalation leads only to greater devastation and erodes the basis for any viable peace process. I therefore reiterate my delegation's call for an end to the violence, an end to the illegal occupation and a return to dialogue and diplomacy, which will allow for a return to peace, within the framework of respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders.

**Mr. Fernandes (Mozambique):** We wish to thank the briefers for their informative briefings.

Almost two years and half have elapsed since the outbreak of the conflict. The situation continues to deteriorate with no signs of improvement in sight and innocent civilians bearing the brunt of the hostilities. That persists despite repeated calls by the international community for the cessation of hostilities and the resumption of direct negotiations between the parties involved.

The increasing trend in arms transfers is yet another sign of the escalatory trajectory of the conflict. The primacy given to military approaches, at the expense of negotiated and peaceful solutions, leads only to further death, destruction and chaos.

We recognize the sovereign right of each and every country to self-defence and to adopt the necessary measures to that end, including through arms supplies. However, we firmly believe that, if not carefully handled by the parties to the conflict and their allies, arms transfers can have devastating consequences on both countries in the region and the world at large. History has shown that the availability, proliferation and massive arms supplies can aggravate conflicts, insecurity and, ultimately, divert resources from critical areas of development to sustain wars.

Given that complex and fragile context, mitigation measures are crucial. Therefore, we underscore the importance of responsible arms transfers within the existing international legal framework. Responsible arms transfers are indispensable tools to enhance transparency, reduce uncertainty and promote strategic stability. They can potentially contribute to establishing communication channels that may help to build the much-needed confidence and trust between the parties. However, to be effective, all mitigation measures, including those related to arms control, should not be seen in isolation. They must be taken as a complement to other necessary measures, including the political one aimed at finding an agreeable solution.

It is against that backdrop that Mozambique consistently advocates for a political and negotiated solution as the only viable way to end the conflict and sustain peace. We reiterate our call to the parties to the conflict to immediately cease hostilities, resume direct negotiations without any prerequisites and actively engage in constructive and meaningful dialogue.

**Mr. Sangjin Kim (Republic of Korea):** I extend my gratitude to Mr. Ebo for the briefing and also take note of Ms. Kneissl's remarks.

At the outset, my delegation reiterates its consistent position that Ukraine is defending its people and territories in the exercise of its inherent right to self-defence, as enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, alongside the international community's assistance. For that reason, we are of the view that today's meeting, on the issue of weapons transfers to Ukraine, is irrelevant.

Instead, the Council should address, in depth, Russia's illegal weapons procurement from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the worrisome trend of enhanced military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow, which is in violation of multiple Security Council resolutions adopted unanimously in the Chamber. This is all the more necessary after Russia vetoed the mandate renewal of the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), which was serving as the crucial monitoring mechanism on violations or evasion of sanctions imposed upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Despite repeated warnings from the international community, the two countries are now pursuing deepened military cooperation following Russian President Putin's visit to Pyongyang, as shown by their comprehensive strategic partnership treaty and the recent meeting in Pyongyang between Russia's Deputy Defence Minister and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. In addition to violating multiple Security Council resolutions, such military cooperation poses a serious threat to international peace and security and undermines the global non-proliferation regime.

It is indeed regrettable that while all State parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are now working together in Geneva to strengthen and uphold the non-proliferation regime, the permanent member of the Council with the largest number of nuclear weapons is intensifying dangerous military cooperation with the world's most serious nuclear proliferator.

Since the invasion of Ukraine, Russia has undermined international laws and global norms on multiple levels. And we have witnessed the untold human suffering this war has caused in Ukraine and beyond. We once again urge Russia to end the war by

withdrawing its troops from the territories of Ukraine, as affirmed by multiple General Assembly resolutions, underpinned by the clear support of the majority of United Nations Members.

We believe that the first Summit on Peace in Ukraine, held in Switzerland last month, laid important groundwork towards achieving lasting peace in Ukraine. At the same time, we support all diplomatic efforts to end the war, as long as they are in line with the United Nations Charter and international law.

For our part, the Republic of Korea will continue to stand with Ukraine and its people in their endeavours to achieve a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, as reaffirmed by our President at the NATO Summit earlier this month.

**Mr. Camilleri** (Malta): I begin by thanking Mr. Ebo for his briefing.

It is deeply regrettable that the Russian Federation continues to try to justify its flagrant violations of international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations by requesting yet another meeting on Western arms deliveries to Ukraine.

Let us be clear — Western weapons are not the cause of this senseless war, nor the reason for its prolongation. Russia's unrelenting aggression against its neighbour is the sole reason for this conflict. If Russia were to withdraw from Ukraine today, the war would end today. Until that day comes, Ukraine has no alternative but to exercise its right to defend itself.

In the areas it has temporarily occupied, Russia has brought suffering, death and destruction, not peace. To allow Russia to continue with these actions is to reward an open act of aggression being committed daily, in full violation of the United Nations Charter.

For months, Ukraine's electricity grid has faced repeated Russian missile and drone attacks that have destroyed about half of the country's generating capacity, knocking out power plants and causing a widespread blackout across the entire country.

The continued and intensified attacks affecting civilians and civilian infrastructure are deeply concerning. The shelling of Kyiv and other urban centres on 8 July marked one of the worst days of violence against civilians in months, destroying two of the country's main specialist hospitals for children and women. Furthermore, last week's attacks in the

Donetsk region and the city of Mykolayiv destroyed homes and critical civilian infrastructure, killing and injuring dozens of civilians.

We stress once again that attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure are against international humanitarian law and must stop immediately. There must be full accountability for all crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. In that connection, we also support the ongoing work of the International Criminal Court and the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate, causing the largest displacement in the Kharkiv and Donetsk regions. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 14.6 million people require some form of humanitarian assistance.

Malta is also concerned about recent reports related to the use of cluster munitions and widespread contamination with mines and explosive remnants of war. Around 297 individuals, including 15 children, have lost their lives due to mine explosions and other explosive hazards. Protecting the people of Ukraine and ensuring their recovery from the devastation caused by Russia's war require demining without delay.

We are also deeply concerned about the mounting evidence of Russia's procurement and use of missiles from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea against Ukraine. That is in clear violation of Security Council resolutions and the sanctions regime.

Malta welcomes the adoption of General Assembly resolution 78/316, regarding the threats posed to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. It serves as a powerful message to ensure nuclear safety and security and Ukraine's territorial integrity.

In conclusion, Malta reiterates that the only path to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace is for Russia to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): As the President of the Security Council, I am obligated to thank the representative of Malta for his statement.

**Mr. Woodfield** (United Kingdom): I thank Mr. Ebo for his briefing.



On 24 February 2022, many of us were sitting in the Council when we learned the terrible news that Russia had launched an illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

On that day, and on every one of the 882 days since, Ukraine has been bravely exercising its right to self-defence under the Charter of the United Nations. Ukraine has defended its sovereign land, and it has rejected Russia's vision for a world where States can change borders by force. It has stood up for the principles at the heart of the United Nations Charter. The United Kingdom's commitment to support Ukraine is ironclad.

I would like to use my remarks today to make three points.

First, we must never lose sight of the terrible human cost of the war in Ukraine — Putin's war of choice. Just a few weeks ago, we met (see S/PV.9682) after a Russian missile reduced a children's hospital in Kyiv to rubble. That was the latest example of the horrific attacks against Ukrainian cities and civilian infrastructure, which have resulted in more than 34,000 civilians confirmed killed or injured and more than 14.6 million Ukrainians in need of humanitarian assistance since the invasion began. The Russian people are also experiencing the terrible consequences of the invasion. Nearly 70,000 Russian soldiers have been killed or wounded in the past 60 days alone, adding to the more than half a million Russian troops killed or wounded since the start of the invasion.

Secondly, Russia has become increasingly desperate to procure weapons to sustain its attacks on Ukraine. Russia has received hundreds of drones from Iran and significant quantities of weapons from Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is absurd, but frankly no longer surprising, that Russia criticizes legitimate Western support for Ukraine's self-defence while it procures weapons from Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions that it supported. We reiterate our call on all third parties to immediately cease providing material support for Russia's war of aggression.

Thirdly, the United Kingdom, together with our allies and partners, will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes. At the NATO Summit earlier this month, the United Kingdom, alongside 22 other countries and the European Union, signed up to the Ukraine Compact, which declared our enduring

commitment to support Ukraine's self-defence and deter future aggression. Our resolve will not waver. The United Kingdom has committed to sustain current levels of military support to Ukraine for as long as it takes. And we will continue to support Ukraine's fight against Russian aggression until a just and lasting peace is secured in line with the Charter of the United Nations. It is for Ukraine to determine its position in any negotiations, just as it is for Ukraine to determine its democratic future. Ukraine is a sovereign country making sovereign decisions about the defence of its sovereign land. The sooner Russia understands that, the better.

**Mrs. Shino** (Japan): I thank Deputy High Representative Adedeji Ebo and the other briefer for their briefings.

As members may recall, on 9 July, France and Ecuador requested a Security Council meeting (see S/PV.9682) following Russia's attack on civilians and civilian infrastructure, including a hospital for children in Ukraine. We once again condemn such heinous attacks in the strongest terms. Every month, Russia continues its abusive practice of requesting meetings on Ukraine whenever other Member States do so merely to match the numbers. By doing so, Russia has wasted much of the Council's precious time and resources. Today's meeting is no exception.

When it comes to Ukraine, Russia's intention in the Council has been consistent and clear: it attempts to place itself, the violator of the Charter of the United Nations, and its victims on the same moral footing, trying to justify its actions in vain. For more than two years, Russia has engaged in hypocrisy and attempts to use the Security Council as a platform for disinformation. It is totally unacceptable to compare Russia's actions with Ukraine's legitimate defence against aggression and the entirely lawful and justified international support it receives.

At the start of the aggression in February 2022, an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly declared who was violating the United Nations Charter by attacking a sovereign neighbouring State. That fact has not, and will not, change. The fact of Russia's procurement of ballistic missiles from North Korea, in violation of Security Council resolutions, and their use in Ukraine has not, and will not, change. The fact of Russia using its veto to end the mandate of the Panel of Experts that monitored the implementation of those

Security Council resolutions has not, and will not, change.

No one wishes for further escalation of harm. The path towards peace is simple: an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukraine. Since this is an unprovoked war of aggression that Russia started, it will end if Russia decides to do so.

Next month, Ukraine will commemorate its Independence Day. As a friend and partner of the independent State of Ukraine, Japan reaffirms its strong and unequivocal stance in support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Japan continuing to stand with Ukraine and its people for them to achieve a just and lasting peace has not, and will, not change.

**Mr. Fu Cong** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ebo and Ms. Kneissl for their briefings.

In the protracted crisis in Ukraine, civilians are the ones who suffer the most. The continued flow of weapons and munitions onto the battlefield will only further aggravate the crisis and deepen the cruelty, danger and unpredictability that war brings, resulting in even more innocent casualties while diminishing the hope for a peaceful end to the fighting and creating profound and broad negative impact on regional peace and stability. It is therefore in the best interests of all parties to seek a political settlement by way of an early end to the fighting.

At present, the focus should be on observing the three principles of no expansion of the battlefield, no escalation of fighting and no fanning of the flames by any party so as to promote de-escalation of the situation as soon as possible. Recently, to varying degrees, the parties to the conflict have signalled their willingness to negotiate. We expect them to continue to show political will, walk towards each other rather than away from each other and start peace talks as soon as possible. The international community should create conditions and provide assistance in that regard and work together for a political settlement of the crisis.

The Ukrainian crisis occurred against the backdrop of historical complexities and practical realities. It is, in essence, an outbreak of the security conflicts in Europe. China had no part in creating the crisis, and

neither is it a party to the conflict. China has not provided lethal weaponry to any party to the conflict and has not, and will not, do anything to profit from it. China's position on the Ukrainian issue has been consistent and clear. It is to urge and promote peace through a political settlement. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kuleba is currently on a visit to China. Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with him, where both sides had an in-depth exchange of views on the Ukrainian crisis. We note that Foreign Minister Kuleba said that Ukraine values China's views and has carefully studied the six-point understanding proposed by China and Brazil on the political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis and that Ukraine is willing and ready to engage in dialogue and negotiation with Russia. China will continue to uphold an objective and impartial position, stand on the side of a dialogue and peace, support the international community in forging more consensus and work tirelessly and constructively to promote an early political settlement of the crisis.

In his statement a moment ago, the United States representative resorted to tactics of slandering and smearing China in an attempt to create a false narrative, mislead the international community and shift the blame to China on the issue of Ukraine, which China categorically rejects. I wish to reiterate that China is not the creator of the Ukrainian crisis, much less a party to it. However, we have not stood by with folded arms. On the contrary, we have all along insisted on promoting peace and negotiation and on pushing for a political solution, to which the international community can bear witness. And this is not something that the United States can write off simply by resorting to slandering and a few untruths. China has never poured oil on the fire or taken advantage of the situation, and neither has it provided lethal weapons to any party to the conflict. China always exercises strict control over the export of military and civilian dual-use items. That Chinese enterprises carry out normal economic and trade cooperation with other countries, including Russia and Ukraine, in accordance with the rules of the World Trade Organization and the rules of the market, is something that is reasonable.

*The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.*