



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

8979th meeting

Friday, 25 February 2022, 5 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation)

Members:

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Albania | Mr. Hoxha |
| Brazil | Mr. Costa Filho |
| China | Mr. Zhang Jun |
| France | Mr. De Rivière |
| Gabon | Mr. Biang |
| Ghana | Mr. Agyeman |
| India | Mr. Tirumurti |
| Ireland | Mr. Kelly |
| Kenya | Mr. Kimani |
| Mexico | Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez |
| Norway | Ms. Juul |
| United Arab Emirates | Mrs. Nusseibeh |
| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . | Dame Barbara Woodward |
| United States of America | Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield |

Agenda

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

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The meeting was called to order at 5.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, the Niger, North Macedonia, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey and Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

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

Members of the Council have before them document S/2022/155, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, the Niger, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania,

Samoa, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

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

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): We are here today because of Russia's unprovoked, unjustified, unconscionable war on Ukraine.

Let us never forget that this is a war of choice — Russia's choice. Russia chose to invade its neighbour. Russia chose to inflict untold suffering on the Ukrainian people and its own citizens. Russia chose to violate Ukraine's sovereignty, to violate international law, and to violate the Charter of the United Nations.

Now, all across Ukraine, people are fleeing for their lives. Residents of Kyiv and Kharkiv have left their homes with only the belongings they could stuff in their backpacks to take shelter in subway stations, which have now become bomb shelters. We have seen reports of attacks on kindergartens and orphanages. Newborn babies in an intensive care unit have been evacuated to makeshift bomb shelters, too. We have seen heart-wrenching images of fathers sobbing as they say goodbye to their young children and send their families away to safety while they stay behind to defend their country.

In Kyiv today, thousands of people crushed into a local train station, with mothers passing their children over the crowd, begging for people to help get their babies onto trains and to safety. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, more than 50,000 people have fled Ukraine in less than 48 hours.

We have also seen everyday Russians bravely speak out and demonstrate in cities across Russia against President Putin's decision to plunge them into a war with their neighbour. They do not want to sacrifice Russian lives for Putin's ambition.

The Council, charged with maintaining international peace and security, was created to prevent precisely this kind of aggression from ever happening again. Russia's latest attack on our most fundamental

principles is so bold and so brazen that it threatens our international system as we know it. We have a solemn obligation to not look away. We believe, to our core, that the noble intentions of this institution should still have a place in solving twenty-first century problems and shielding our children and our grandchildren from the horrors of war.

The horrors of war are exactly what our Ukrainian brothers and sisters are experiencing today. The people of Ukraine will soon need food, water, shelter and medical aid. They will face displacement and lose everything they have worked to build.

For those reasons, we and Albania, in consultation with our allies and partners, have proposed draft resolution S/2022/155 to hold Russia to account for its aggression against Ukraine. The draft resolution condemns Russia's aggression. It reaffirms the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine and it demands that the Russian Federation immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its forces. It also calls for the facilitation of rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian assistance to those in need in Ukraine and for the protection of civilians, including those who are humanitarian personnel.

Today, we are taking a principled stand against Russia's aggression in the Council, but many of us are taking action in our capitals to defend international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and to impose severe consequences on Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. In coordination with our allies and partners, we are imposing severe and immediate economic costs on Russia. Those measures include sweeping financial sanctions that will have an immediate impact on its economy and export controls that will cut off Russia's access to vital technological inputs, atrophy its industrial base and undercut Russia's strategic ambitions to exert influence on the world stage.

In addition, as was just announced, President Biden will be sanctioning President Putin himself, along with Foreign Minister Lavrov and members of Russia's national security team. Those actions are meant to complement the important work we are doing in the Security Council and the draft resolution we have put forward today.

History will judge us for our actions — or lack thereof — and so long as we have a Security Council, I believe that we should strive to ensure that it lives up to its highest purposes: to prevent conflict and avert

unnecessary war. Russia has already subverted that mission, but at a minimum — the very minimum — the rest of us have an obligation to object and to stand up for the United Nations Charter.

To those who say that all parties are culpable, I say that is a clear cop out. One country — one country only — is invading another. Russia is the aggressor here. There is no middle ground. To any doubters, I say, look at the kindergarten that was bombed this morning — take a hard look. To those who say that there is a special history between Russia and Ukraine that somehow excuses the war, I say that we should all think carefully about who that label might apply to next.

As I said on Monday night (see S/PV.8970), President Putin has asserted that Russia has a rightful claim to all territories from the Russian Empire. Just a few hours ago, Russia threatened Finland and Sweden with military and political repercussions. Responsible Member States do not invade their neighbours. They do not commit violence against their neighbours just because they have the ability to do so. That is the entire purpose of our international system. That is, fundamentally, the point of the Security Council and the United Nations.

Today's vote is therefore simple. Let me put it plainly. Members should vote in favour of the draft resolution if they believe in upholding the United Nations Charter. They should vote in favour if they support the right of Ukraine or any State to sovereignty and territorial integrity. They should vote in favour if they believe that Russia should be held to account for its actions. Members should vote against or abstain in the voting if they do not uphold the Charter and if they align themselves with the aggressive and unprovoked actions of Russia. Just as Russia had a choice, so do members of the Council.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): Let me begin by stating that my delegation subscribes to the statement just made by the Ambassador of the United States.

We have been called here today to express clearly and loudly where our States stand, individually and collectively, with respect to international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations to which we have agreed, as well as the international norms that we have collectively established to govern our relations as independent and sovereign countries, peace-loving nations and responsible international actors.

As we speak, Ukraine is being bombed and people are being killed. A country in Europe is being destroyed by a more powerful country — its neighbour — that has decided it wants to turn back the clock of history. It is a permanent member of the Security Council — to which the world has given power and trust to decide on peace and security — that has decided instead to dominate and inflict death. With its unprovoked aggression, Russia is not only inflicting untold pain and causing an unprecedented humanitarian situation in Europe; it has stained the Charter of the United Nations with innocent blood. It is burying the Charter under the rubble of destruction in Kyiv and other cities in Ukraine. We must say no. It is not too late to stop this madness.

Albania and the United States, together with many partners, have presented draft resolution S/2022/155, which condemns Russia's actions and underscores that it must immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine and withdraw its forces. It calls on Russia to abide by the Minsk agreements. It also calls for the facilitation of humanitarian assistance to those in need in Ukraine — and their number is growing by the hour — and urges continuous efforts to respond to the humanitarian and refugee crisis that Russia's aggression has created. The draft resolution echoes the call of the Secretary-General publicly addressing President Putin that, in the name of humanity, he bring his troops back to Russia. It echoes numerous similar calls around the globe at the highest level to stop the war. It is the minimum that we can do. We owe it to Ukraine — a Member of the United Nations — and to its people and the world.

This is not just a defining moment for the Council. This is a day that will be long-remembered for one single aspect: our children — the succeeding generations — will know who stood up for respect for human life, international law, rules and solidarity with Ukraine, so that children, young girls, women and men — human beings — may live their lives free and in peace and dignity. And they will remember who did not. This is not a moment to look away; it is a moment to speak.

We call on the members of the Council to support the draft resolution in order to say no to aggression; to say no to an unprovoked war; and to say no to the domination of a country by a more powerful one.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): The Charter of the United Nations begins with the solemn

invocation to peace: “We, the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save successive generations from the scourge of war...” That conviction has been the touchstone of the work in this Chamber since 1945. We must not forget that our fundamental purpose here is to protect people and their futures; to protect people from violence and conflict that destroy lives.

As we speak, women and children in Kyiv, young families in Odessa, pensioners in Kharkiv and civilians all over Ukraine are sheltering from Russia's military onslaught.

First, Russia claimed that this was all Western hysteria. Then, it said that it was about Donetsk and Luhansk. Now, Russia is bombing Kyiv. We have seen dreadful images of Russian tanks crushing civilians in the Ukrainian capital. A country of 44 million people is being attacked on all fronts.

Draft resolution S/2022/155, on which we are voting today, is a message to those people that the world is on their side and that it stands with the Ukrainian people. It is a message to the world that the rules we built together must be defended — because otherwise, who might be next? It is a message to Russia as well — to the brave Russian citizens who are protesting a war that they do not want. This draft resolution demands an end to that war.

President Putin has launched a massive invasion of Ukraine. His aim is to remove its Government and subjugate its people. No fog of war is thick enough to obscure a truth that clear. This is not self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter. It is naked aggression. It is an unprovoked, unjustified war, and the Council must condemn it.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Today the Security Council is tasked with reaffirming the fundamental principles that underpin its existence. The main objective of the United Nations, which was established at the end of a deadly war, has been to prevent and deter another such conflict. Many nations and peoples of the world still struggle to cleanse themselves of the afflictions of the wars of the past. Meanwhile, we are trying to decisively address the multiple vulnerabilities and fragilities that pose a threat to humankind. We do not need new wars or new fears.

War is the denial of the aspirations of the peoples of the world. War sows death and destruction. It causes terrible and often irreparable devastation and trauma.

War never has any real winners, but only serves to inflict horrific suffering and perpetuate a vicious cycle of resentment.

My country is committed to peace and the founding principles of the Charter of the United Nations and supports a fairer, rules-based international order. For those reasons, today we will condemn a war against a Member State of the United Nations. My country joins all those who condemn the war today, in the hope that the language we have used to reaffirm the principles of the Charter will never again be left open to interpretation, and that wherever the principles on which our position is based are violated they will always be defended with the same determination and vigour.

The international community owes it to itself to seize this momentum to take a hard, critical look at itself and refrain from engaging anywhere in the world in all wars of choice, all wars of influence, all hegemonic wars, all resource-driven wars and all unjust and dehumanizing wars. The international stage must not be like a jungle in which nations are either predators or prey.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire and de-escalation. We urge the belligerents not to obstruct humanitarian aid access for the populations in need. We call on all parties to resume dialogue and commit to settling the conflict peacefully. The responsibilities that we must assume today and every day as members of the Council compel us to defend, reaffirm and renew the commitment we made 77 years ago: to save current and succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico will vote in favour of draft resolution S/2022/155, submitted by Albania and the United States for the following reasons.

First, we are confronted with the invasion of one sovereign country by another, which constitutes a flagrant violation of Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations and also constitutes an act of aggression under the terms of General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX), adopted by all Member States of the United Nations.

Secondly, Mexico has itself endured four invasions in its history as an independent State: two by France and two by the United States. The first invasion by the

United States, in 1846, resulted in the loss of almost half of our national territory at that time.

Thirdly, Mexico has always condemned all acts of aggression, as evidenced by our protests at the League of Nations against Italy's annexations of Ethiopia and Albania and Germany's annexation of Austria.

Fourthly, our rejection of the use of force led us to convene the Inter-American Conference on the Problems of War and Peace, held in Mexico City in 1945, in order to bring to the San Francisco Conference a clear and defined regional position on that issue.

Fifthly, Mexico has a pacifist foreign policy. Since the United Nations was established, my country has defended the prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations and we will continue to do so in this Organization and in all other forums.

Sixthly, in 1988 we enshrined in our Constitution the principles of the Charter of the United Nations as normative principles of our foreign policy.

For all those reasons, Mexico condemns the acts of aggression that the Russian Federation has perpetrated against Ukraine. We call on the parties to immediately cease hostilities. We recognize the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine and support the efforts of the Secretary-General to find a diplomatic solution in order to prevent further suffering of the civilian population.

As a result of our historical experience and in line with our constitutional mandate, Mexico will support the draft resolution that is before the Security Council.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): We live in unprecedented circumstances of threat to the international order and of violation of the Charter of the United Nations. We are gravely concerned about the Russian military operations against targets in sovereign Ukrainian territory. We believe that the Security Council should strive to show a united resolve in pursuing diplomatic solutions to all threats to international peace and security and to seek agreement also on the Ukrainian crisis.

As we hear reports of increasing civilian casualties, fear and devastation in Ukraine — a scenario that any war inevitably generates — our main objective now is to stop the ongoing hostilities immediately. How should we do that?

First, the Security Council must react swiftly to the use of force against the territorial integrity of a Member

State. A line has been crossed and the Council cannot remain silent.

Secondly and no less important, we need to create the conditions for dialogue among all parties involved. The world cannot afford a point of no return, at which parties see military victory as the only avenue to end conflict. During the negotiations on the draft resolution, Brazil attempted to seek such a balance and to maintain a space for dialogue, while still signalling that the use of force against the territorial integrity of a Member State is not acceptable in the world today.

We are also deeply concerned about Russia's decision to engage troops in military operations on the ground and the loss of life and danger to the civilian population that may ensue. We continue to hold the firm conviction that threats and force will not lead to a lasting settlement to this crisis.

Military action will inflict damage, undermine faith in international law and put the lives of millions of people in jeopardy.

The mission of the Security Council is not over. If our efforts have so far failed to prevent a war, it is our duty to persevere and seek the immediate suspension of hostilities. We should strive to find ways to restore peace to Ukraine and the whole region. We renew our appeal for the full cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of troops and the immediate resumption of diplomatic dialogue. There is no alternative to negotiation to solve the present crisis.

The security concerns voiced by the Russian Federation over the past few years, particularly regarding the strategic balance in Europe, do not give Russia the right to threaten the territorial integrity and sovereignty of another State. The Security Council has the legitimacy to debate and, with the good will of all, adopt measures to redress this dangerous situation.

The collective security system of the United Nations rests ultimately on the pillar of international law. The sovereign equality and territorial integrity of Member States are not hollow words. It is our duty to give concrete meaning to the high aspirations of the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations. That is our most valuable legacy. To rid ourselves of the scourge of war was the very reason for the establishment of the United Nations. In the end, peace and international order must prevail. We shall not rest until that mission is accomplished.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by a show of hands.

In favour:

Albania, Brazil, France, Gabon, Ghana, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

Russian Federation

Abstaining:

China, India, United Arab Emirates

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The draft resolution received 11 votes in favour, 1 against and 3 abstentions. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of one permanent member of the Council.

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

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): We deeply regret the decision of the Russian Federation to veto draft resolution S/2022/155. The Security Council lost a precious opportunity to show the world its unity, power and usefulness. Instead, it was blocked — it was taken hostage. We are disappointed, but not surprised.

This is not the end of our efforts. We will continue to work with the Member States of the United Nations, those who stand for rules and not chaos and those who base their relations with others on respect and not contempt. We continue to condemn this aggression and call for ending this senseless war. Russia may inflict damage, kill people, overthrow a legitimate Government and try to destroy Ukraine, but as history teaches it will never be able to kill freedom.

Instead, Russia will be held responsible for the consequences of its actions. It is already facing worldwide condemnation. As we heard, it will face sanctions and restrictions, such as the suspension of its rights today in the Council of Europe. But it will not be able to destroy European security, nor will it be able to set back the world. We will continue to stand with Ukraine and as Prime Minister Rama announced today, Albania, in its tradition, is ready if needed to shelter Ukrainians fleeing the war.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Albania supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): Not surprisingly, Russia exercised its veto power today in an effort to protect Russia's premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified and unconscionable war in Ukraine. But let me make one thing clear: Russia can veto draft resolution S/2022/155, but it cannot veto our voices. It cannot veto the truth. It cannot veto our principles. It cannot veto the Ukrainian people. It cannot veto the Charter of the United Nations. And it will not veto accountability.

Responsible members of the Security Council have stood together today in the face of Russia's aggression and we will continue to stand with Ukraine, supporting it in every way we can. We are united behind Ukraine and its people, despite a reckless, irresponsible permanent member of the Council abusing its power to attack its neighbour and subvert the United Nations and our international system.

Today's vote showed which countries truly believe in supporting the core principles of the United Nations and which ones deploy them as convenient catchphrases. The vote showed which Security Council members support the United Nations Charter and which ones do not. We will be addressing this matter in the General Assembly, where the Russian veto does not apply and the nations of the world can, will and should hold Russia accountable and stand in solidarity with Ukraine.

Before I conclude, I want to commend the true and tremendous courage that we are seeing from the Ukrainian people. I also want to thank the Ukrainian Permanent Representative, who is with us here today. Earlier today, President Biden spoke with President Zelenskyy and personally commended the brave actions of the Ukrainian people, who are fighting to defend their country. He also conveyed the ongoing economic, humanitarian and security support being provided by the United States, as well as our continued commitment to rally other countries to provide similar assistance.

It is hard to imagine what it must feel like for people to see tanks rolling into their cities, bombs being dropped onto their streets and soldiers storming their parks and gardens. But in the face of all of that, everyday Ukrainian people are taking extraordinary actions to protect their children, to protect their country and to defend everything they hold dear.

I also want to commend the courage of the thousands of people in Russia who are protesting Putin's war, despite grave risks to their personal safety. They will keep chanting "no war". They will keep asking how many Russian lives Putin wants to sacrifice for his cynical ambitions. As we move forward, I hope that more Member States take their cues from that courage and honour all of that bravery with more of our own.

Mr. Tirumurti (India): India is deeply disturbed by the recent turn of developments in Ukraine. We urge that every effort be made for the immediate cessation of violence and hostilities. No solution is worth the cost of human lives. We are also deeply concerned about the welfare and security of the Indian community, including a large number of Indian students in Ukraine.

The contemporary global order was built upon the Charter of the United Nations, international law and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. All Member States need to honour those principles in finding a constructive way forward. Dialogue is the only answer to settling differences and disputes, however daunting it may appear at this moment. It is regrettable that the path of diplomacy was given up. We must return to it. For all of those reasons, India chose to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): A large majority of the Security Council has just voted in favour of a draft resolution aimed at stopping war. Draft resolution S/2022/155 has not been adopted only because of the single veto of the permanent member of the Council who is perpetrating that conflict.

Russia claims that its invasion of Ukraine is in self-defence. That is absurd. Russia's only act of self-defence is the vote that they have cast against today's draft resolution. Make no mistake: Russia is isolated. It has no support for the invasion of Ukraine. History will record how we voted today and which countries stood up to be counted in defence of the Charter of the United Nations and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The United Kingdom stands steadfast in support of the Ukrainian people and will hold Russia accountable for its aggression.

Ms. Juul (Norway): Norway voted in favour of draft resolution S/2022/155. We deeply regret Russia's veto. Preventing and ending acts of aggression is a direct responsibility of the Security Council. A veto cast by the aggressor undermines the purpose of the Council.

It is a violation of the very foundation of the Charter of the United Nations. Furthermore, in the spirit of the Charter, as a party to a dispute Russia should have abstained from voting on the draft resolution.

As we sat here in the Chamber on Wednesday (see S/PV.8974), we could see the shocking first images of what now amounts to a full-scale Russian invasion of a free and independent Member State. We can only imagine the hardships the people of Ukraine are going through.

With its tanks, missiles, bombs, planes, warships and cyberattacks, the Russian Federation's aggression not only violates the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine but also constitutes a serious breach of international peace and security. Russia has disregarded the very core principles of the rules-based world order that the United Nations has stood for since the Second World War.

Let me be absolutely clear. Norway insists that the Russian Federation immediately, completely and unconditionally stop all fighting and withdraw all of its forces from the territory of Ukraine. Russia must respect the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. Norway expresses full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in the face of Russian aggression.

Indeed, we already see the dire consequences for civilians, with casualties and injuries among large numbers of children, women and men. We fear increased suffering in the time ahead, with potentially large numbers of casualties and extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure, such as schools, medical facilities and water and electricity plants. We see fighting unfolding in and around urban areas.

We are deeply concerned about the long-term and protracted harm to the civilian population caused by such warfare, including by the use of heavy explosive weapons. We already see mass displacement. That will only increase, together with trauma, family separations and missing persons. The situation is a tragedy, both for individuals and Ukrainian society at large.

The parties to the conflict in Ukraine must comply with their obligations under international law, including human rights law and international humanitarian law, and must ensure the protection of the civilian population and detainees. Space for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action must be protected

to ensure safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access to those in need.

We condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. The Council must now carry out the great responsibility of its mandate and act in a determined and united manner to stop the ongoing aggression against a Member State.

We also condemn Belarus for facilitating those attacks. Norway will join our allies and partners in swift and concrete countermeasures. That includes Norway's alignment with the intensified sanctions of the European Union.

Let me conclude by reiterating Norway's unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Kelly (Ireland): Ireland voted in favour of draft resolution S/2022/155, presented by the United States and Albania in response to the Russian Federation's flagrant violation of the Charter of United Nations, international law and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The Russian Federation has turned its back on diplomacy. It has spurned genuine offers of dialogue and rejected repeated calls from the international community for de-escalation. Instead, it has launched an unjustified and unprovoked attack on Ukraine, an attack that continues today to rain death and destruction on Ukraine and its people. We condemn those actions outright. In casting our vote today, we did so in full solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

The Security Council has a responsibility to act in the face of conflict, protect international peace and security and uphold the principles that the world agreed upon in response to the utter devastation of the Second World War. That is not a responsibility that Ireland takes lightly. Yet it is one that we were prevented from discharging today, in spite of the clear and declared will of the great majority of the members of the Council.

We deeply regret the Russian Federation's use of the veto today. The veto is an anachronism that has no place in today's world. The use of the veto to block Council action is always unacceptable. Its use today in blatant defence of military aggression is reprehensible.

However, the veto in no way obscures the plain facts of Russian aggression against Ukraine. Nor will it hinder the international community's response

to Russia's blatant breaches of international law, as demonstrated by the broad co-sponsorship of today's draft resolution by the wider United Nations membership. In that context, Ireland strongly supports the comprehensive sanctions announced yesterday by the European Union. We stand ready to support further measures if Russia does not reverse course.

The unfolding horror of the recent days is a tragedy for the people of Ukraine and one which evokes nightmares that the people of Europe fervently hoped had been consigned to a bloodstained history. Only dialogue and diplomacy offer escape from those nightmares. We call on Russia to end its aggression against Ukraine today, turn away from war and choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy. That is the right path, and the time to take it is now.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): At this moment, Russian missiles are killing civilians, bombing cities and destroying essential infrastructure with the sole goal of making Ukraine a vassal State. It is the dreams of reconquering the Russian empire that we have before us. Ukraine is the victim of a premeditated attack by the President of the Russian Federation. Nothing could ever justify that. No member of the Security Council supports it. The result of today's voting is clear: Russia is alone.

France welcomes the mobilization of all members of the Council who by voting in favour of the draft resolution have expressed their commitment to international law and their support for Ukraine. It condemns Russia's veto of the efforts to restore peace and international order. Russia flouts the responsibilities conferred on it as a permanent member of the Security Council. It uses the Charter of the United Nations to violate the Organization's most basic principles.

At the United Nations and in all forums, France will continue to mobilize with its partners to support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): Ghana voted in favour of draft resolution S/2022/155, on the situation in Ukraine, which was not adopted, because — as a member of the Security Council — that is the minimum duty that we owe to the Charter of the United Nations, the peoples of the world and in particular the Government and people of Ukraine. We join 10 other members of the Council in seeking to deplore in the strongest terms the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine because that act breaches Russia's obligation as a member of the United

Nations and its obligation to respect the provisions of Article 2, paragraph 4 of the Charter.

By not refraining from the use of force in its relations with Ukraine, the Russian Federation has chosen to violate without justification the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, even as several world leaders have appealed for dialogue to find a peaceful settlement to the situation. The Russian Federation's actions, which have assailed the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, have threatened the global order and the balance of peace and security.

We have also taken note of the letter from the Russian Federation submitted to the Security Council, which seeks to indicate that its use of force against Ukraine was in self-defence while dismissing its all-out military action against Ukraine. We are pained by the unnecessary and rising number of deaths that have been occasioned by the invasion and we call on the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its forces from Ukraine and to recommit to dialogue and diplomacy.

Besides our own assessment that Ukraine presented no immediate threat to the Russian Federation, the letter is also interpreted in the context of Russia's own public declarations about the cost of the past days, which have shown to the world that rather than a security merit, this has been about Russia using force against its weaker neighbour because it could.

At the beginning of its military build-up on the borders of Ukraine, we were told that what was being observed was a normal military exercise. When concerns about the massive build-up were raised, the Russian Federation informed the world that its troops were on its side of the borders and had no intention of crossing the frontiers of Ukraine. At one point we were also informed that the possibility of sending troops to the Donbas region of Ukraine in the context of peacekeeping was under consideration.

Today the whole world knows better. As we met in an emergency session on Wednesday night (see S/PV.8974) to afford yet another opportunity for peace, the trust and good faith crucial for diplomatic engagement was broken in a cruel and dismissive manner. The battle against Kyiv may yet be won, but the good will of the world has been lost. The use of force as a basis for securing international agreement has no place in our modern international order and the world cannot accept this.

Ghana is deeply disappointed by the actions of the Russian Federation, a permanent member of the Security Council. Its actions have fallen short of the highest standards expected of those States that are considered to be the enduring guardians of international peace and security. Indeed, for those members of the Council with a special privilege, there is also a special responsibility.

I reiterate Ghana's full support for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, in accordance with the Charter. At a time when the world looks to the Council to send a strong message that threats and use of force against other States are unacceptable, we have been unable to do so — not because there is no broad agreement to do so but because the way and manner in which the Security Council has been structured to function has constrained us.

The present situation creates difficult choices that we all must consider and carefully reflect upon as we proceed with the long-standing efforts to reform the Security Council and how it operates. Fortunately, the ongoing process in the General Assembly provides an opportunity. All Member States must genuinely commit to that process. If we fail to act proactively, our inaction will cost us permanently.

Before concluding, let me indicate Ghana's continuing concern about the situation of the civilian populations in all parts of the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine, as well as the welfare of the more than 1,000 Ghanaian students and several nationals in that country. We recall that in accordance with international humanitarian law, there are consequences for unlawful actions against civilian populations.

Also, as the Secretary-General rightly said in his press engagement on Wednesday night, the invasion of Ukraine by Russia will come at great cost to most of our countries. Already, the price of oil has surpassed \$100. Inflation in most of our countries has begun to rise. Investment decisions are being pulled back. The already difficult situation of economic stagnation triggered by the coronavirus disease pandemic is beginning to worsen. The consequences of those adverse developments are that the fragility of most of our countries will deepen, creating further risks to global stability.

The actions that have been taken against Ukraine are therefore far-reaching and require even greater solidarity — above all for the people of Ukraine, who

bear the direct and immediate impact of an unjustified action that violates the Charter and the principles of international law, and in addition for the many countries, especially developing countries, whose populations are facing severe austerity. Will we find the wisdom and common purpose to overcome the difficult moment we face? I raise the call for peace. Let us give peace yet a chance.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): Brazil regrets that the Security Council was unable to react to a breach of international peace and security that is still happening as we speak. During the negotiations, Brazil favoured a text that could maintain space for dialogue among all the parties, while sending a decisive message for respect for international law and the basic principles that for more than 75 years have saved us from a war of broad proportions. We thank the proponents for their flexibility with respect to several aspects of the draft during the negotiations.

The framing of the use of force against Ukraine as an act of aggression in the draft, a precedent that has seldom been used in the Council, signals to the world the gravity of the situation but could also downplay other times when force was used against the territorial integrity of Member States with no equivalent reaction from the Council. Indeed, we could have ended up with a text that is more conducive to reconciliation. Brazil has fought for that.

However, under the current circumstances, not even a different text would have been enough to allow the Council to fulfil its responsibility to maintain international peace and security today. No country, elected or non-elected, with or without veto power, should be able to use force against the territorial integrity of another State with no Council reaction. The Council's paralysis when world peace is at stake could lead to its irrelevance when we need it most. It is our collective responsibility not to allow that to happen.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates): We all agree that the serious developments in Ukraine undermine regional and international peace and security. Throughout this crisis, my country has consistently called for de-escalation and dialogue. We placed great hope in the various diplomatic initiatives and channels aimed at resolving the crisis and those calls reflected our alarm at the consequences of this crisis for civilians present in Ukraine, as well as for the region and the international community. We emphasize

the importance of ensuring that humanitarian assistance reaches those in need and we call on all parties to respect international humanitarian law, prioritize the protection of civilians and allow for the unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance.

We believe that every Member State of the United Nations has the right to security, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Being from the Middle East, we are intimately aware of the critical importance of a stable regional security environment and of de-escalation, diplomacy and dialogue as the basis of that security. Similarly, we understand from experience — and share — the need for inclusive and consultative processes. We support the draft resolution's emphasis on the need to adhere to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. That must be the basis of the resumption of dialogue and the pathway forward now that the draft resolution has not been adopted.

The United Arab Emirates restates its commitment to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of all Member States of the United Nations. We urge an immediate de-escalation and cessation of hostilities and we once more underscore our readiness to work with members of the Security Council towards that goal. The results of the voting were a foregone conclusion, but the avenues for dialogue and diplomacy must remain open more urgently than ever before and we must pursue them together. That is the clear sentiment that the Council is united on.

Mr. Kimani (Kenya): Kenya voted in favour of draft resolution S/2022/155 to affirm Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, according to which all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. We voted yes to register our opposition to the breaching of the territorial integrity of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. We voted with hearts that are heavy with sympathy for the people of Ukraine. We offer our condolences to all the Ukrainian families that have suffered the devastating loss of loved ones to this unnecessary war. Our affirmative vote today transcends the tragedy unfolding in Ukraine.

We voted yes also having in mind the justifications for past interventions by other powerful States, using resolutions from this very Security Council that seriously compromised international peace and

security. Even as deserved condemnations ring out today about the breach of Ukraine's sovereignty, history's condemnations are allowed silence in this room. We cannot help but recall that Africa's Sahel region is in terrible turmoil due to the hasty and ill-considered intervention in Libya a decade ago.

On that occasion, the African Union sought more time for diplomacy. Its Peace and Security Council was ignored and what resulted was not peace or the safety and security of the Libyan people. Instead, terror was unleashed on African peoples in the countries to the south of Libya. There have been yet other actions of similar magnitude that have brought us to this unfortunate pass. Today the precious fabric of our Charter lies torn and trampled and is threatened with further harm if there is no urgent and visionary leadership with a faith in diplomacy pushing in the opposite direction.

If the United Nations Charter could speak for itself, it would vote for the draft resolution in order to affirm its central role in safeguarding our collective peace. It would remind all members of the Security Council and the United Nations that the Charter contains the tools for the pacific settlement of their disputes by negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice. By failing to adopt the draft resolution, we deeply regret that the Security Council has failed to stop the infringement of the sovereignty of a member of the United Nations.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China is deeply concerned about the latest developments of the situation in Ukraine. Now it has come to a place that we did not want to see. China always forms its own position on the basis of the merits of the matter at hand. We believe that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States should be respected and that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be jointly upheld. We have always called on all parties to seek reasonable solutions to address each other's concerns through peaceful means on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. We welcome and encourage all efforts for a diplomatic solution and we support the Russian Federation and Ukraine in resolving the issue through negotiations.

In the past week, the Security Council has held two emergency meetings (see S/PV.8970 and S/PV.8974) and all parties have fully elaborated their positions and

concerns on the current situation. At present, faced with the highly complex and sensitive situation, the Security Council should make the necessary response.

At the same time, its response should also be undertaken with great caution. All actions should be truly conducive to defusing the crisis rather than adding fuel to the fire. If not handled properly — or if managed only by exerting pressure and imposing sanctions — there could be more casualties, more property loss and a more complicated and chaotic situation, while it could also become more difficult to resolve differences. It may completely shut the door to a peaceful solution and ultimately vast numbers of innocent people would be the victims. We must draw profound lessons from the extremely painful experiences of the past. For those reasons, China abstained in the voting today.

I wish to stress that the issue of Ukraine is not something that only emerged today and the current situation did not develop suddenly overnight. It is the result of the interplay of various factors over a long time. China advocates a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security concept, in the belief that the security of one country cannot come at the cost of undermining the security of other nations, and that regional security cannot be secured through the strengthening or expansion of military blocs. Against the backdrop of five successive rounds of NATO expansion, Russia's legitimate security aspirations should receive attention and be addressed properly. Ukraine should become a bridge between the East and the West, not an outpost for confrontation between major powers. We strongly call on all parties concerned to exercise maximum restraint, ease tensions and avoid civilian casualties.

The final settlement of the Ukraine crisis requires the Cold War mentality to be abandoned and that full attention and respect be paid to the legitimate security concerns of all countries, as well as that negotiations be held to build a balanced, effective and sustainable European security mechanism. We urge all parties to return immediately to the track of diplomatic negotiations and political settlement; show sincerity and goodwill; reach a political decision; and engage in dialogue and consultation for a comprehensive settlement of the Ukraine issue.

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

The Russian Federation voted against the anti-Russian and anti-Ukrainian draft resolution (S/2022/155) that was submitted today. Why is it anti-Russian? I think there is no need to explain that — a cursory glance at the text will suffice. Why is it anti-Ukrainian? Because it without any doubt runs counter to the fundamental interests of the Ukrainian people insofar as it is an attempt to salvage and establish in Ukraine a system of power that has brought the country to the point of tragedy, which has persisted for at least eight years now. We thank those who did not support the draft resolution.

I will not respond to those who just accused the Russian Federation of abusing the right of veto. The main reason for our negative vote is not based on what is included in the draft resolution but what it lacks. If its sponsors were to attempt to make it even remotely balanced, then they would not have left out issues that must be addressed and cannot be overlooked in the context of the Ukrainian problem.

Specifically, what was left out is the fact that the Maidan junta, which assumed and seized power as a result of the anti-constitutional coup in Kyiv in February 2014, unleashed a war against the residents of the country's east, shelling residential areas with artillery pieces and multiple rocket launchers, raining bombs on the people of Donetsk and Luhansk.

What was left out was the way in which the Ukrainian authorities, with the connivance of their Western patrons, consistently and cynically shirked their responsibility to implement the Minsk agreements, the lynchpin of which was direct dialogue with the residents of the country's east.

At the same time, Ukrainian death squads, comprised largely of radical, neo-Nazi battalions, were positioned and deployed on a line of contact, methodically and relentlessly shelling the residential areas of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic on a daily basis, killing women, children and the elderly. That situation continues. Just today four civilians died as a result of the actions of the Ukrainian armed forces.

In addition, how can we fail to mention the blood-chilling crimes perpetrated by the Ukrainian nazis over the past eight years or the fact that the protesters against the Maidan in Odessa were burned alive? How can we fail to mention the fact that peaceful protesters on Maidan Square were shot at by unknown snipers? The

investigation into both of those tragedies is something that has been deliberately dragged out and worn down by the Maidan regime.

At the same time, the culprits in the Odessa tragedy are well known and do not seem to be hiding. Alternative, independent investigations and the confessions of the snipers themselves unambiguously confirm that the slaughter at Independence Square was provoked by Maidan leaders. Last year, we held an informal Arria Formula Security Council meeting on both of those issues with the aim of sharing more information with Security Council colleagues. However, what we heard in response from Western partners were at best merely clichés about so-called Russian propaganda. How can a resolution on the Ukrainian issue fail to mention those issues I just referred to?

It would have been appropriate to include in the draft resolution an honest assessment of the role of our Western colleagues in fueling the Ukrainian crisis. Not only did they stand behind the Maidan coup but they also effectively issued a *carte blanche* to Kyiv to carry out acts and steps that would be unthinkable for any civilized State. That includes the egregious discrimination against the Russian language and consequently against Russian-language speakers. That includes the glorification of Hitler's henchmen, alongside the ban on paying tribute to and honouring the real heroes of Ukraine who freed it of Nazism, as well as the religious schism in that country.

While speakers are spinning tales about the triumph of democracy in Ukraine, the Maidan authorities and nationalists have been, murdering their political opponents with impunity. They have been persecuting the opposition. They have been closing down opposition television channels where one could get at least relatively objective information. Six of those television channels were closed down under President Zelenskyy alone.

And how can we fail to mention the fact that the country has been flooded with weapons that were then used to kill civilians in Donbas? Our Western colleagues have made Ukraine a pawn in their geopolitical game, with no concern whatsoever for the interests of the Ukrainian people. The responsibility for what is transpiring at present lies not only with the Ukrainian Government but also with them. Today's draft resolution is nothing other than yet another move in a brutal and inhumane chess game on this Ukrainian chessboard.

At the moment, all Western media outlets have been inundated with reports about how civilian populations in Kyiv and a number of other Ukrainian cities have been seeking refuge in bomb shelters and how they fear for their lives and flee artillery fire. We genuinely empathize with our neighbours and we urge them not to yield to provocations. President Putin and the Russian Ministry of Defence explicitly stated that there would be no strikes targeting civilian infrastructure.

However, nationalists are already using civilians as human shields. We categorically condemn the placement by nationalists of artillery and multiple rocket launchers in residential areas. That is a direct breach of the norms of international humanitarian law, including Articles 51 and 58 of the first Additional Protocol to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

We see how the situation is being exploited in propagandistic exercises by Western politicians and media outlets. I would like to ask them where they have been for the past eight years. Why were they not concerned when shelling and killing occurred in Donbas? Why did they not even bother to notice that there are more than 4 million people living in the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic who, at best, were branded as pro-Russian separatists? Why did they not call out Poroshenko when he said that the residents of Donbas would rot in basements? Why did they not call out Zelenskyy when he called those same residents "non-people" and "specimens"?

Parenthetically, I cannot but note that in the latest frenzy of propaganda our Western colleagues very frequently use imagery from Donbas, brandishing them as alleged consequences of the so-called Russian aggression in Ukraine. Those fake images are abundant and proliferate today. They have flooded the Internet and a number of Telegram channels. There are videos alleging Russian strikes targeting residential areas that were filmed in other parts of the world and have nothing to do with Ukraine.

That was mentioned today by the BBC, which issued an article entitled "Ukraine conflict: many misleading images have been shared online". There you can find everything. There are photographs from parades. There are photographs of American aviation bombing Libya. There are photographs from Syria. There are even photographs of the explosion in Beirut that is being

presented as something that took place in Ukraine. I will send that article to Council members separately.

I wish to turn to my French, British and American colleagues. The Permanent Representative of France said that civilians are being murdered in Ukraine. That is untrue. Russian troops are not bombing Ukrainian cities, and we have said that civilians are not threatened by anything. There is no verifiable confirmation whatsoever about the deaths of civilians.

I note that the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom alleged that a Russian military weapon system was targeting civilians. I saw the reports today, and I would like to inform that representative that, as we can see from the videos, that is a heavy surface-to-air missile system system called Strela-10 or Arrow-10. It is in the possession of the Ukrainian armed forces. The Russian military does not have that kind of equipment. It is obsolete. That is the kind of fake information being used by the representative of the United Kingdom.

Turning to our colleagues from the United States, I note that with respect to the alleged bombing of the kindergarten, that too is fake information. Of course, it is difficult for us to compete with the United States in terms of the number of invasions targeting their neighbours. I will refrain from listing the aggressions carried out by the United States in its history, but that country is in no position to moralize.

I wish to conclude by emphasizing that we are not waging a war against Ukraine or the Ukrainian people. We are carrying out a special operation against nationalists to protect the residents of Donbas and for the purposes of denazification and demilitarization. Those objectives will soon be achieved and the Ukrainian people will gain an opportunity to once again independently determine their future and in so doing live in peace, good neighbourliness and cooperation with all their neighbours.

I now resume my functions as the President of the Council.

The representative of the United States of America has asked to make a further statement.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I am not going to respond to the atrocious lies, propaganda and disinformation that we have just heard from our Russian colleague. I have asked to take the floor for a different reason.

I have asked to take the floor to recall some of our members whose names may not have been heard earlier. Due to the rapidly moving response to the events in Ukraine, the names of some of the countries that sponsored draft resolution S/2022/155 may not have been clearly read out or heard. I would just like to highlight their names because we greatly appreciate what they have done. Those countries are Barbados, Croatia, Estonia, the Gambia, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Lesotho, the Marshall Islands, Monaco, North Macedonia, Palau, Papua New Guinea and Suriname. I want to thank all of them for their support.

We will continue to all speak within one voice in the days ahead to address the atrocious situation that we see happening every day on the ground, despite what we have heard from our Russian colleagues.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): I will not dignify the Russian diabolical script — which resembles a letter of application for an upscale seat in hell — by commenting on it.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank the parents of every Ambassador here; to thank the people of the democratic nations who put these Ambassadors in their seats; to tell the children of these Ambassadors that they should be proud of their parents who have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

I thank my good friend Nicolas from France, Ronaldo from Brazil, my good friend Mr. Hoxha from Albania, Linda, Barbara and Mona. I thank my good friend from Mexico, Martin from Kenya, Ireland, Ghana and Gabon. I thank the dozens and dozens of co-sponsors who would have voted in favour of the draft resolution if they had had a chance to vote. They will have that chance in days to come.

The draft resolution recalls the obligation of all States under Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

The draft resolution called on Russia to stop its offensive against Ukraine. The memories are very fresh. The Security Council was discussing the ways to prevent the war quite recently in this very Chamber. At the very same moment, deadly air strikes were dropped on civilian heads across my country and Russian troops

crossed the Ukrainian border from the territory of Russia. The territory of Belarus was used for missile attacks and the troops were marching from the occupied parts of the Ukrainian Donbas and Crimea.

Last night was the most horrific for Kyiv since — just imagine — 1941 when it was attacked by Nazis. Last night it was attacked by someone who pretends they are fighting with neo-Nazis. I am therefore not surprised that Russia voted against the draft resolution. Russia is keen on continuing its Nazi-style course of action. The Kremlin regime should not be called the Russian regime. The Kremlin regime should be called the “Russist regime”.

A couple of hours ago my President said “Tonight the enemy will use all the forces at their disposal to break our resistance — vile, cruel and inhuman. Tonight they will storm. We must all understand what awaits us. We have to persevere tonight. The fate of Ukraine is being decided right now.”

We just heard something that the Russian Ambassador wanted to present as assurances from himself and from his leadership: that it is all provocation. He urged us not to yield to provocations. Do Council members remember how many times he said that or how many times his deputy said in this very room that there will be no invasion, no attacks? Do Council members remember that during the previous meeting he was walking out of the Chamber trying to call someone, not knowing what was going on? How can we trust him? How can we trust his assurances? He has no idea what is on the mind of his President. His words have less value than a hole in a New York pretzel.

The Russian Federation, which by treachery occupied the seat of a Security Council member in 1991, daily violates not only the Charter but also the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council. Indeed, if Russia did not violate the provisional rules, then Mr. Nebenzia would have to follow rule 20, which states in relation to the President of the Security Council that

“for the proper fulfillment of the responsibilities of the presidency, he should not preside over the Council during the consideration of a particular question with which the member he represents” — that is, the Russian Federation — “is directly connected, he shall indicate his decision to the Council” not to preside.

So since the Council is not ruled by the current presidency on the basis of rules, I, too, will probably be unruly and ask all here to dedicate a moment of complete silence to pray, or to meditate if they do not believe in God, for peace — to pray for the souls of those who have already been killed and for the souls of those who may be killed, and I invite the Russian Ambassador to pray for salvation. I would suggest that we spend a moment in complete silence.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): My apologies, but before moving to a moment of silence, I want to include on the list those people who perished over all these years in Donbas. They, too, are worthy of being mentioned. All human lives are valuable. Let us not forget them either.

The members of the Security Council observed a minute of silence.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): I shall now continue with my statement.

I am saddened, however, that a small handful of members seem to still be tolerating the war. No complex historical context can be used to justify what is going on. I would say to some that it is exactly because of the safety of their nationals right now in Ukraine that they should be the first to vote to stop the war to save their nationals in Ukraine, and not think about whether they should or should not vote, because of the safety of their nationals. Nothing can justify the missile shelling of a kindergarten, an orphanage and hospitals that took place today. In fact, one of my relatives had a stroke a few days ago and cannot be evacuated even to a shelter, because that person cannot be moved and so is in the hospital in the city of Kyiv. Those attacks are war crimes and violations of the Rome Statute, whether one is a party to it or not.

We are gathering those and other facts and will immediately send them on to The Hague, and responsibility is inevitable. Nothing can justify today’s deliberate shelling by a Russian warship of a Moldovan-flagged chemical tanker with a Russian crew — imagine — or a Panamanian-flagged cargo ship near the port of Odessa, in the Black Sea. That is a flagrant violation of the international law of the sea.

Is this the time to discuss historical reflections against the backdrop of the alarming situation at the

Chernobyl nuclear power plant, which has been seized by Russian armed troops? They detained the staff of the nuclear power plant, not allowing them to rotate as required by technical safety rules.

Another matter of concern there is that the control levels of gamma radiation, those in the exclusion zone, have already been exceeded because of damage to the topsoil owing to the movement of a great deal of heavy military equipment, including tanks, and, as a result, there has been contamination by radioactive dust.

As of midnight the previous night, almost 140 persons had been killed and 316 others wounded on the Ukrainian side during the first day of the Russian invasion. Many civilian infrastructure objects were ruined. To stop the advance of the Russian tanks, a young gentleman, a hero, blew himself up on a bridge. He killed himself in order to destroy the bridge and prevent the Russian tanks from moving ahead.

But the destruction is not only taking place in cities. Indeed, 80 per cent of the infrastructure of the small town of Schastia, located in the Government-controlled part of Donbas, has been completely destroyed, according to the local administration. The name of the town can be translated as “happiness”; that is actually the name of the town. What a grotesque irony. That speaks volumes as to what kind of happiness the Russian Federation will be bringing to Donbas, to Ukraine and to other nations sooner or later if we continue to allow Russia to go ahead with its diabolical plan. The Ambassador can rest assured that there will be no hospitality shown to his troops on our territory.

Ukraine has been exercising its right to self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter. Russia does not have that excuse. Its perverse reading of the Charter is so sick that it is impossible to interpret. Calling occupying troops peacekeepers, claiming the right of self-defence — that is lunacy.

The Russian troops are suffering heavy losses in aircraft, helicopters, tanks, trucks and, most importantly, personnel. Russia can stop the voting in this Chamber, but what may stop the war, unfortunately, are the thousands of bodies of Russian soldiers that will be delivered to their mothers in Russia, whether you like it or not, because we have to defend our territories. We have to defend ourselves on our territory.

Thousands of Ukrainians have already joined the Ukrainian army or the Territorial Defence Forces,

and the resolve and dedication of civilians joining the Territorial Defence Forces are the best proof that we will not surrender, even if Russia succeeds in temporarily occupying additional chunks of our territory.

Ukraine has broken diplomatic relations with Russia — something that should have been done eight years ago. We call on our partners to follow our example or to find other ways to sever diplomatic relationships with Russia. We call on international organizations to ban or suspend Russia’s memberships. The latter has happened today, in fact, as the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, by an overwhelming majority — almost by consensus — adopted a decision to suspend the Russian Federation’s rights of representation in the Committee of Ministers and in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Russia should never have been invited to join the Council in the first place. It was invited to join the Council of Europe — a temple of human rights — in the very middle of the war in Chechnya, even before the Khasavyurt Accord. For hypocritical political reasons, the Europeans were then of the opinion that it was better to invite Russia — and it was invited — in the middle of the war, as it was killing thousands and thousands of its own citizens in Chechnya.

We count upon the proper reaction by the international community to the medieval atrocities committed by Russia in Ukraine. Today, a number of countries have already imposed sanctions on Russia. The burden must be heavy. If you say that sanctions are nothing, I am sure that the bodies of dead Russian soldiers are not nothing, even if you are completely diabolical.

We are sincerely grateful to the United Nations for its prompt decision to support the humanitarian response in Ukraine, and we highly commend the United Nations efforts to encourage major humanitarian donors to make additional funding available. I thank the Secretary-General for his statement to that effect. I have a plea: “Stop harassing the Secretary-General. Stop attacking him. Show respect for the institution. Stop wiping your feet on the Secretary General, who is a very nice person and a dedicated supporter of the Charter of the United Nations.”

We remain open to negotiations, but no one should put words in our mouth or manipulate our statements about negotiations. We are sick of Russia’s interpretations. Let Russia speak on its own behalf and not on ours. It was stated by the President of Ukraine that we are open to negotiations on a permanent basis.

We have been saying that all along. It is Russia that killed the Normandy format. It is Russia that killed the Minsk agreements. All that gibberish about who said what and when in the Normandy format can by no means justify the offensive. By no means can it justify thousands and thousands of Russian troops on our territory. The President of Russia today called on the Ukrainian army to remove the Government of Ukraine. Is he crazy? Russia should show respect for the core principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter: sovereign equality, non-use of force or threat of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of States.

In my opening remarks, I said that the parents of all Ambassadors here are proud of their children and that the children of the Ambassadors are proud of their parents. It is so painful to imagine what your family must think about you when you lie every day. The Russian people deserve peace and democracy. The Russian people deserve liberty, and they will have it — if not tomorrow, because tomorrow is not possible, but probably in the near future.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation, I should like to make only one comment in order to calm Council members' fears. There is a great deal to say about the statement made by the representative of Ukraine. I will let his boorishness weigh on his conscience and say nothing further about it. But let me say one thing.

The Russian Ministry of Defence reported that

“Yesterday, 24 February, units of the Russian paratrooper forces took full control of the area surrounding the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. An agreement was reached with Ukrainian servicemen from the power plant special guard battalion about the joint provision of security for the power units and the sarcophagus at the power plant”.

We do not want Ukraine to build a dirty bomb. The representative of the Russian Defence Ministry also noted that personnel at the power plant continued to carry out their tasks normally and were monitoring the situation of radioactivity:

“The level of radioactivity surrounding the nuclear power plant is normal.”

Vienna reports that the level of radiation at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant is low, and there is no threat to the population, as announced on Friday by Rafael Grossi, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 7 p.m.