



# Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

**9399**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Thursday, 17 August 2023, 3 p.m.

New York

*Provisional*

---

*President:* Mr. Wood . . . . . (United States of America)

*Members:*

Albania . . . . .	Mr. Spasse
Brazil . . . . .	Mr. França Danese
China . . . . .	Mr. Geng Shuang
Ecuador . . . . .	Mr. Pérez Loose
France . . . . .	Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault
Gabon . . . . .	Ms. Koumby Missambo
Ghana . . . . .	Mr. Anyanah
Japan . . . . .	Mr. Hamamoto
Malta . . . . .	Ms. Gatt
Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Fernandes
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
Switzerland . . . . .	Mrs. Chanda
United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mrs. Alhefeiti
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Phipps

## Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

---

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0601 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

23-24324 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



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

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

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

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Danny Haiphong, journalist.

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

I give the floor to Mrs. Nakamitsu.

**Mrs. Nakamitsu:** Since the previous briefing to the Security Council on this topic in June (see S/PV.9364), the provision of military assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine has continued in the context of a full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. Information from Governments about their transfers of weapons systems and ammunition is available through open sources. The transfers have reportedly included heavy conventional weapons, such as battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, combat aircraft, helicopters, large-scale artillery systems, missile systems and uncrewed combat aerial vehicles, as well as remotely operated munitions and small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. In the past few months, reported transfers of arms and ammunition to the Ukrainian defence forces have expanded. There have also been reports of States transferring, or planning to transfer weapons, such as uncrewed combat aerial vehicles and ammunition, to the Russian armed forces for use in Ukraine.

In that regard, I would like to emphasize that the reports on the transfer and use of cluster munitions are very concerning. The Spokesperson of the Secretary-General has called for those types of munitions to be consigned to history and not to be used. An influx of weapons and ammunition into any armed conflict can contribute to its escalation and presents significant risks of their diversion and proliferation even after the conflict has ended. Measures aimed at addressing

the risk of the diversion of weapons and ammunition to unauthorized end users or for unauthorized uses are essential to preventing further instability and insecurity in Ukraine, the region and beyond. Such measures include the enhancement of marking practices, comprehensive pre-transfer diversion risk assessments, end-user certificates, including non-transfer clauses, effective legal and enforcement measures and post-shipment verifications.

The requirements for preventing the diversion of weapons include supply-chain transparency and cooperation and information-sharing among importing, transit and exporting States, as well as concrete measures such as marking and tracing, effective accounting and comprehensive record-keeping practices, the physical safeguarding of arms and ammunition, customs and border control measures and diversion monitoring and analysis. Transparency in arms transfers is yet another confidence-building measure that can serve to reduce tensions, ambiguities and misperceptions between Member States. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms remains a key tool in that regard. In order to prevent the diversion of conventional arms and regulate the international arms trade, States have also established a number of arms-control treaties and instruments, including the Arms Trade Treaty, the Firearms Protocol and 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.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the work of the Open-ended Working Group to Elaborate a Set of Political Commitments as a New Global Framework That Will Address Existing Gaps in Through-Life Ammunition Management and applaud the successful adoption of its final report (see A/78/111) containing the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, which is a much-needed instrument for addressing both the safety and security risks associated with conventional ammunition to prevent diversion and unplanned explosions. I call on States to consider joining the relevant treaties and agreements and to fully implement their legal obligations under conventional arms-control instruments to which they are party, as well as their political commitments, in order to minimize the risk of the diversion of arms and ammunition.

Beyond addressing arms safety and security risks across all stages of their life cycle, including arms

transfers, all parties to the armed conflict have a duty to protect civilians in armed conflict and to ensure compliance with the applicable international law, including international humanitarian law. The impact of the intensifying violence on civilians remains an area of great concern. From 24 February 2022 to 13 August 2023, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights recorded 26,384 civilian casualties in Ukraine, with 9,444 people killed and 16,940 injured. The actual figures are likely to be considerably higher. The vast majority of civilian casualties are a result of the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects, including by shelling from artillery, tanks, multiple-launch rocket systems and cruise and ballistic missiles, as well as by air strikes. The Secretary-General has unequivocally urged all sides to avoid the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, as such use is highly likely to result in indiscriminate harm. I take this opportunity to refer to the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, which was adopted in November 2022. It falls on Member States to implement the Declaration in a broad and meaningful manner.

The continued and intensified attacks against critical infrastructure and services, including energy infrastructure, health and educational facilities, ports, roads and bridges, are alarming. Mines and explosive remnants of war have caused widespread land contamination, rendering land unusable for agriculture, while impeding the movement of people. I encourage all the relevant parties to abide by their obligations under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and not to transfer or use any mines prohibited by its Amended Protocol II. Under international humanitarian law, parties to an armed conflict are prohibited from targeting civilians and civilian objects, including civilian infrastructure, and have the responsibility to take all feasible precautions in the conduct of military operations to avoid or at least minimize incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects. The United Nations strongly condemns attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure and calls for their immediate cessation.

Russia's military offensive in Ukraine, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, is hitting the most vulnerable the hardest. It is imperative to put an end to this brutal war. I appeal

to all Member States to make every effort for peace. The United Nations stands ready to support all genuine efforts to bring a just and sustainable peace to Ukraine, in line with the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

**The President:** I thank Mrs. Nakamitsu for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Haiphong.

**Mr. Haiphong:** Today I am here as a journalist who has dedicated the last 10 years of my life to writing about and speaking out against the long record of human rights abuses and war crimes committed by my country of birth, the United States. I do not consider it a hobby or even a profession, but rather a duty to all of humankind and those who want to see a better and more peaceful future. I am here too as a United States citizen who has witnessed tens of billions of United States tax dollars go to funding and arming a proxy war against Russia, while ordinary people in the United States suffer from rising levels of poverty, homelessness, suicide and economic insecurity. As Martin Luther King Jr. said in 1958, true peace is not merely the absence of tension but the presence of justice.

On 2 June, United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken gave a speech in Helsinki, in which he stated that military support for Ukraine must be prioritized over diplomacy. The argument goes that a steady supply of arms to Ukraine will turn the tide on the battlefield and force Russia to come to the negotiating table. Blinken is supposed to be the United States' top diplomat, not a champion of escalating conflict. However, the sentiment he communicated has been a foundational feature of the justifications given for the West's continued flow of arms to Ukraine. The facts, however, undermine Blinken's assertions.

First, United States and Western arms are anathema to resolving conflict. The United States is the biggest arms exporter in the world, accounting for approximately 40 per cent of all global arms sales. Those arms have been instrumental in some of the bloodiest wars of the past two generations, including the United States-led invasions of Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria. United States arms play a major role in escalating tensions in the Korean peninsula and in the military encirclement of Russia and China, which has ushered in a new Cold War and all the risks that come with it.

Secondly, it was never Russia that needed to be forced to the negotiating table. Members of the Security Council may remember that back in December 2021, Russia provided draft proposals of security guarantees to the United States and NATO that were meant to serve as the basis for dialogue and negotiation. They were summarily rejected. By late January 2022, the United States announced 200,000 pounds of what was deemed “lethal aid” to Ukraine in an obvious signal of escalation. In April 2022, both United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin travelled to Ukraine just weeks after a peace deal fell through and admitted that the United States was all in on winning the current fight in Ukraine. What they meant by that was that the United States was fully committed to corraling its own military arsenal and that of its NATO partners in a proxy war against Russia, to the last Ukrainian.

The absence of diplomacy in times of conflict can lead only to escalation. That Russia’s security, and for that matter, the security of the entire world, has been dismissed so summarily by the West is proof enough that the ceaseless supply of arms to Ukraine endangers peace. The weapons sent to Ukraine therefore do not represent some kind of “arsenal of democracy”, as some in the United States foreign policy establishment tout. NATO countries have already provided \$40 billion in weapons to Ukraine over the span of the conflict, and we have witnessed those weapons become heavier, deadlier and more provocative, stymying the possibility of a negotiated settlement to the conflict. Many of those weapons have landed on the black market and into the hands of drug cartels, criminal organizations and indeed neo-Nazi and fascist elements, many of which now make up parts of Ukraine’s armed forces.

Furthermore, NATO has essentially armed Ukrainian army after Ukrainian army at the expense of its own arsenal. *The New York Times* sounded the alarm eight months ago that Ukraine is the location of an artillery and tank war, the likes of which the West was not prepared to fight in the long term. If that is the case, then rational minds may assume that the West would cease its supply of deadly weaponry. But the opposite has occurred. The United States approved the sending of cluster munitions to Ukraine last month — the same munitions that continue to explode on and kill civilians in Laos, decades after the United States invasion there, and which have long been condemned by more than 100 countries worldwide.

I am a journalist and a geopolitical analyst, not a military expert. But such experts have in recent months come clean about the limitations of Western firepower. Camille Grand, former Assistant Secretary General for Defence Investment at NATO, stated that “a day in Ukraine is a month or more in Afghanistan”. He was referencing the fact that Ukraine burns through nearly half of the artillery produced in the United States per month in a single day. Former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO James Stavridis acknowledged in May that analysts were correct to assume that Ukraine is burning through a year’s worth of United States production monthly. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and United States President Joe Biden have both acknowledged those weapon shortages, with Biden admitting during his announcement of cluster munitions for Ukraine that “[t]his is a war relating to munitions. And they are running out of that ammunition, and we are low on it.” I am not even touching on issues of personnel, training and other logistical problems here.

All of those problems have come to a head in the past several months, in which there has been much discussion of Ukraine’s spring counteroffensive. For months, political and military officials in the West made regular mentions in broadcasts to media outlets about an oncoming victorious offensive that would take large amounts of territory from Russia. Yet at the same time Ukraine, and in particular its Head of State, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has repeatedly demanded that the West increase its supply of heavy weaponry, including air power. Zelenskyy has blamed the West again and again for its lacklustre supply of arms in conjunction with the months-long delay in the counteroffensive against Russia. That counteroffensive is now in its third month and the results have been disastrous. Around 30 per cent of the weapons that NATO has supplied to Ukraine has been destroyed. The death toll on the battlefield is staggering, with an estimated 43,000 members of the Ukrainian forces killed and reports surfacing that local morgues in Ukraine are seeing nearly double the numbers of bodies since the counteroffensive began. And for what? The optimism of Western officials and diplomats has waned, with many now acknowledging that Ukraine has not even penetrated Russia’s first defensive line.

The better question, then, is *cui bono*? Who or what benefits from Western arms being poured into Ukraine? Certainly not Ukraine, if the results of the counteroffensive and the conflict overall are the measure,

and certainly not global peace and stability, either. For all the benefits that come from an emerging multipolar world, the incessant militarization of Ukraine that the West is pushing is helping fuel a worldwide economic slowdown and the potential for conflict between major Powers conflict that could very well take on a nuclear character. A simple answer to that question, therefore, is the arms industry and those corporations that have profited mightily from the conflict. Shareholders of the largest military contractors have been paid handsomely since the conflict began, as profits have soared. The top 25 Western military contractors have seen their revenues increase by 11 per cent over the past year to \$212 billion. Arms sales are expected to increase to a total of \$450 billion by the end of 2023, an increase of \$47 billion, thanks to the Ukraine conflict. That bonanza is therefore making the slim minority of the richest people richer, while the rest of the world is left to resolve the myriad problems left in the wake of the conflict.

One of the primary responsibilities of the Security Council, as stated in the Charter of the United Nations, is the maintenance of international peace and stability. The ongoing Western arms sales to Ukraine are not only a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, but they also reveal the geopolitical realities that undergird the conflict. Indeed, it would be simplistic to claim that it is the profits from Western arms sales alone that are driving a wedge into the cause of peace. The United States, where I live, has a long record of waging unilateral military conflict on a global scale in contravention of the Charter, with more than 800 foreign military bases, 11 command structures and a public military budget of nearly \$1 trillion. There is now an open conflict within the United States foreign-policy establishment over whether arming Ukraine to maximum effect is a good idea or whether other military matters deserve more attention. A leaked memorandum from Air Force top brass claims that the United States must prepare to go to war with China by 2025.

Ukraine therefore finds itself in the eye of a much larger storm, one created by a policy of great Power competition, or what is better termed great Power confrontation led by the United States. Peace and stability are not possible as long as the West pursues a foreign policy of unilateral interventionism in Ukraine to fulfil its larger geopolitical goal of unipolarity. That policy runs completely counter to the principles of the Charter, and the continued flow of arms to Ukraine

is a violation of Article 2, paragraph 3 of the Charter, which requires Member States to resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner. Those weapons are only prolonging the conflict, with devastating consequences. The United States and its Western partners — and anyone else who goes along with them — must learn to operate within the framework of international law, like all other Member States. Otherwise the world will face the continued threat of instability and war, whatever the efforts of the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Haiphong for his briefing.

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

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank today's briefers, and Mr. Haiphong in particular, for his brave testimony as a representative of civil society. His position is shared by many Europeans and Americans whose voices, however, are nowhere to be found in Western media.

For three months now we have been witnessing the death throes of the Kyiv regime in the context of Ukraine's so-called strategic counteroffensive, which according to Western propagandists was supposed to yield a military victory. The entire NATO war machine has been focused on that end, using billions of dollars from the pockets of Western taxpayers. But in the end, as the saying goes, the mountain gave birth to a mouse. Even the West has been forced to admit that the only result of the Ukrainian counteroffensive is tens of thousands of dead Ukrainian soldiers and hundreds of destroyed units of expensive Western equipment. And as the entire world has seen, that equipment is not just hardly unique or invulnerable to Russian weapons but in many cases even inferior to Soviet equipment produced 50 years ago. The military training for troops and operational planning by the Armed Forces of Ukraine further reflect that sad state of affairs, as attested to by captured Ukrainian servicemen who were trained according to Western standards.

The complete collapse of Ukraine's military command system, along with widespread corruption and disorganization, are now repelling even Western mercenaries, who are beginning to realize that they have been assigned roles not as valiant fighters for the freedom of Ukraine but as mere cannon fodder. Against that backdrop, the main intelligence directorate of

Ukraine's Ministry of Defence has begun recruiting all over the world — including, we have learned, in Latin America — for asocial elements who are prepared to fight for much less money. Due to the total corruption in the Ukrainian army, Western weapons are proliferating uncontrollably around the world, surfacing on the black market in conflict zones in the Balkans, Africa and Latin America, directly undermining regional security. It is Ukraine's Western suppliers who are fully responsible for that and who are ignoring all of their obligations to track the end users of their weapons.

But the Western political establishment has not been stopped by any of this. Last week, United States President Joe Biden asked Congress for more than \$24 billion for Ukraine on top of the \$113 billion already spent in official aid. That amounts to approximately \$900 for every American family. Ordinary Americans, as polls by the American media itself have shown, are quite rightly asking why, given that the United States itself is facing acute socioeconomic problems, such colossal sums of money are not being spent on resolving them. Why should the American people pay out of their own pockets for the military ventures of the Democratic Party? Public opinion in Germany and France is also against supplying Taurus and SCALP cruise missiles to Ukrainian nationalists. Yet the Western authorities, despite their claims to “democracy”, are completely deaf to the calls of their own citizens. They are demanding that the Kyiv regime continue its suicidal “offensive” so that they will see at least some results and can justify new shipments of arms and equipment.

Who is the main beneficiary of such a policy? It is certainly not ordinary Americans and Europeans. By emptying out the military arsenals of their satellite States and promising them discounted Western military equipment in return, the United States military has cleared the market for the American military industrial complex's products, so that they can sell those to their own partners, following the scheme that has been successfully used as far back as after the Second World War. And these new weapons are once again being paid for by Europe — not only with money, but also with its sovereignty.

The independent defence policy that the European Union had once been so assiduously building for years has been completely subjugated to Washington's interests, just as it was during the cold war. As for ordinary Ukrainians, neither Kyiv nor Western capitals care about their fate. With chilling cynicism, Polish

President Duda remarked the other day that “right now, Russian imperialism can be stopped cheaply, because American soldiers are not dying”, meaning that in London, Warsaw, Paris and Berlin the lives of Ukrainian soldiers, who are being sent into so-called human wave attacks, are considered to be cheaper than not just American lives but also expensive NATO military equipment. It does not get any more obscene than that.

There is no doubt that in its proxy war with Russia to the last Ukrainian, the West is deliberately turning Ukraine into an uninhabitable testing site contaminated by radioactive elements and unexploded ordnance, which are inhumane. The decision by London and Washington to deliver depleted uranium and cluster munitions has shocked not only the international community but even their NATO allies. The Polish media are already saying that radiation levels in the Western regions of Ukraine and Eastern provinces of Poland have increased following the destruction in May of depleted uranium munitions at a storage site in Khmelnytskyi. However, Britain and the United States do not care about continental Europe, just as they did not care about the consequences of the NATO bombardment of Yugoslavia with depleted uranium. Cluster munitions, if used in violation of international humanitarian law in civilian areas — which is what Kyiv is doing — pose a severe and long-term threat to civilians. That is why Laos and Cambodia asked Ukraine not to use those weapons, as those two countries had experienced first-hand the dire repercussions of their use in the context of United States aggression. Washington itself has for decades moralized about and branded as war criminals all those who have used those weapons. It seems that according to their own logic, Zelenskyy and his henchmen are war criminals, while Washington is directly aiding and abetting them, and it bears full responsibility for their past and future crimes.

We have heard assurances from the West that the cluster weapons it supplied to Ukraine will not be used in violation of international humanitarian law. That is a blatant lie. The Kyiv regime has been carrying out daily strikes with cluster munitions against northern areas in Donetsk, where no military targets are located. Their only aim is to terrorize the civilian population — an act that is also expressly prohibited under international humanitarian law but that is fully in line with the tactics of the Kyiv regime, which has long since resorted to open terrorism. Moreover, cluster

bombs do not afford any real military advantage, and Washington understands that very well. Unlike that of the United States, Russia's position on the use of cluster munitions is consistent and hews fully to the norms and requirements of international humanitarian law.

In this very Chamber, our former partners from the United States have foamed at the mouth, denying that they developed biological weapons in laboratories on Ukrainian territory, and they blocked a Russian-initiated investigation into the matter in the context of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. What will they say now that Robert Kennedy Jr., a Democrat candidate for president, has confirmed those facts? There is no doubt that going forward, the people of Ukraine will definitely want to learn about how the United States has effectively used them as guinea pigs for their own military and biological experiments.

All persons responsible for those and many other crimes against civilians committed by the Kyiv regime with Western backing since 2014 will be identified and receive the punishment they deserve. That process is already well under way. I will give you just a few recent examples. Anatoliy Kilyushyk, the commander of a branch of the neo-Nazi Azov battalion, was recently sentenced to 25 years in prison. Azov soldiers Pavel Artemenko and Anton Rokanyuk, who shelled residential buildings in the Donetsk People's Republic as their forces retreated last spring, were sentenced to 24 years in prison. Vitaliy Minenko, who had admitted to the murder of a civilian in Mariupol, was sentenced to 21 years in prison, while Ukrainian serviceman Vasily Shitrya, who killed four civilians in Mariupol, was sentenced to life imprisonment. Ukrainian marines Vladimir Pafitsevich and Yevgeny Vakhnenko have also been convicted and sentenced to 22 years in prison for the murder of a Mariupol resident.

Since our previous meeting (see S/PV.9390), we have seen an increase in the number of civilian sites struck by Ukrainian anti-aircraft missiles. We all remember how those hit the Transfiguration Cathedral in Odesa, and recently Ukrainian missile crewmen also burned down a supermarket there. Ukrainian social networks are calling upon citizens to beware of their national anti-aircraft systems deployed in residential areas in contravention of international humanitarian law. The Ukrainians understand very well that Russian high-precision weapon strikes on the facilities related to Ukrainian military capabilities in and of themselves pose no threat to the civilian population.

Meanwhile, the Russian military are making substantial progress in the Kharkiv oblast and are preparing to liberate Kupyansk. The Kyiv regime. That regime, which is covering up this disadvantageous trend, however, has announced the forced evacuation of 37 towns and villages, including Kupyansk. That is not surprising, as a substantial share of the local population express an affinity with Russia and would prefer to await the arrival of Russian troops. That said, Zelenskyy's regime has not hesitated to take children away from their parents, who have been hiding them from Ukrainian patrols in basements. In Kupyansk alone, more than 500 children face that threat. We draw the attention of the United Nations and our colleagues on the Security Council to those numerous flagrant violations of international humanitarian law being committed by Ukraine. We have been documenting and consolidating them in order to find those responsible later.

The people of Ukraine are starting to understand more and clearly that the Kyiv regime is driving it down a suicidal path to serve the interests of Western countries. This understanding is growing stronger at all levels. One clear example is that, according to the Ukrainian media, approximately 60 per cent of diplomats have not returned from Ukrainian embassies abroad since the beginning of 2022. If we are to believe Ukrainian journalists, approximately 20 embassy staff were supposed to return from the United States last year, but only one did.

The Ukrainian leadership cannot help but realize that its aggressive Russophobic policy has failed, yet Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who has driven his country into an impasse, has no other choice but to continue going to foreign summits and begging for aid. The supply of Western weapons is not bringing peace any closer, as Western delegations claim, but they are the only thing keeping Zelenskyy's regime afloat for now. However, no matter how hard they try, sooner or later the Ukrainian people, which has paid too high a price for the promotion of Western geopolitical interests, will start asking the right questions and will want to hold to account the true architects of this crisis. Many of them, as all are well aware, are represented in this Chamber, and today they will again repeat their unconvincing mantra that there is a need to continue military assistance to Ukraine as a "victim of aggression". The number of those still believing it is steadily dwindling, as recent international contacts show. More and more our international partners are becoming aware of the

real causes of the Ukrainian crisis and the fact that the supply of Western weapons to the Kyiv regime is hindering the search for ways to resolve the crisis and compounding the suffering of ordinary Ukrainians. That trend is a direct result of, among other things, our efforts to draw attention to this narrative in the Security Council. We will therefore continue that effort, whether the Western backers of the Kyiv regime like it or not.

**Mrs. Chanda** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her statement. I have taken note of Mr. Danny Haiphong's remarks.

Since the last meeting on Ukraine (see S/PV.9390), Russia has continued its relentless attacks on its neighbouring country. We have expressed our concerns about the impact of the Russian military aggression on civilians in Ukraine on numerous occasions, and we reiterate them today. Civilians are protected by international humanitarian law and must not be targeted. However, our appeals have not been heeded. To the contrary, according to the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, the number of indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure has reached "unimaginable levels". Since the beginning of this month alone, we have received many reports of the destruction of homes, restaurants, shops and other civilian infrastructure in every region of the country. Waves of attacks are affecting dozens of civilians, including children, and are tearing whole families apart. Strikes against Ukrainian port facilities continue to increase the risks to global food security.

In addition, people helping the victims, including medical personnel and humanitarian aid workers, have been affected. Sometimes the same target is hit twice within the space of minutes, endangering rescue workers. Places where representatives of humanitarian organizations are staying have also been targeted. The means deployed to help the victims of the conflict are therefore jeopardized. We recall that international humanitarian law protects the wounded and medical missions, as well as humanitarian personnel and their activities.

The list of atrocities suffered by the Ukrainian people continues to grow. Switzerland disputes the allegations that Ukraine and its partners are responsible for the worsening of the current situation.

Our position remains unchanged: we condemn Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a serious violation of international law. Like all States, Ukraine has the right to defend its territorial integrity and ensure its security.

Switzerland calls for strict compliance with international humanitarian law. The principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution must be respected in the conduct of hostilities. It is essential that those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law are held accountable for their actions, in order to render justice to the victims and prevent the recurrence of such violations in future. We recognize the indispensable work of humanitarian actors who provide aid in extremely difficult circumstances.

Switzerland welcomes the diplomatic efforts being made to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. We are ready to play an active part in achieving this goal. If a diplomatic solution is to be achieved, we call on Russia — once again — to de-escalate the situation, cease all combat operations and withdraw its troops from Ukrainian territory.

**Mrs. Alhefeiti** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I thank Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for her valuable briefing, and I welcome the participation of the representative of Ukraine in today's meeting.

The United Arab Emirates reiterates its adamant call to the parties in Ukraine to make further proactive efforts aimed at avoiding the dangers of weapons diversion and at preventing weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists or criminal groups during the storage, transfer or distribution of such weapons and munitions. In this context, we have expressed our support for the United Nations and its Member States in establishing criteria that would prevent, combat and eradicate illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, which was done through the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument, which are among the most valuable United Nations initiatives designed to counter and mitigate those risks.

The responsibility of preventing weapons diversion in conflicts is that of national authorities. We therefore encourage the authorities to take all the steps necessary to avoid any unforeseen consequences. In this regard,



we also stress that it is important to respect international law, including international humanitarian law, for it applies equally to all Member States, regardless of the weapons source. The United Arab Emirates urges the parties to the conflict in Ukraine to fully comply with international law, including international humanitarian law, and make every effort to ensure the protection of civilians and the civilian objects necessary for their survival, as well as to respect the basic principles of necessity, proportionality and distinction.

The United Arab Emirates is extremely concerned about the consequences of war on the civilians and the worsening of the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. There have been more than a thousand attacks against health-care facilities in the country, an average of two attacks a day. Last week, rocket shrapnel fell on a children's hospital in Kyiv. Reports also refer to the killing or injuring of three children a day as a result of the war. In addition, nearly 2,000 educational institutions have been destroyed due to the ongoing fighting.

The most important demand we can make, therefore, is that the legal and moral responsibility for the protection of civilians be assumed, that the suffering of civilians be alleviated, and that the war be brought to an end in line with international law, the Charter of the United Nations, and the principles of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. The United Arab Emirates expresses its full readiness to work with all partners worldwide to set a serious path forward that would lead to achieving a just and sustainable peace in Ukraine.

**Mr. Hamamoto** (Japan): I thank Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu and the other briefer for their briefings.

Today's meeting was called by Russia to discuss the increasing Western arms transfers to Ukraine and the undermining of efforts to find a peaceful solution. Japan finds itself obliged to repeat its position. Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine is the origin of this war. Furthermore, Russia has repeatedly attacked Ukrainian ports and held the world hostage. We emphasize Ukraine's right to self-defence against Russian aggression. The supply of arms to Ukraine is driven by the necessity for Ukraine to protect itself.

Japan has been stating this same position in the Security Council since January. The support of the international community for Ukraine has not changed since the beginning of Russia's aggression.

The Security Council is discussing Russia's aggression against Ukraine in this month of August not only because of the immediate developments on the ground, but also because the continuing aggression is a matter of international peace and security. We expected meetings on Ukraine to take place at the beginning of this month. In this sense, it is difficult to see a substantive difference between this and other meetings that are scheduled in August.

Justice must be the cornerstone of any diplomatic endeavour to end this war. Rather than suggesting that support for Ukraine will imperil diplomatic efforts, Russia should immediately withdraw all its troops and military equipment from Ukraine. Russia must uphold Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

**Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mrs. Nakamitsu for her briefing.

Today Russia is calling for a meeting to spread its propaganda, but it is not fooling anyone. It was Russia, on 24 February 2022, that deliberately undermined our collective security with its war of aggression against Ukraine — an illegal, unjustified and unprovoked war. It was Russia alone that illegally decided to use force and violate Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty. It alone is guilty of war crimes and even crimes against humanity.

Russia has the opportunity to put an end to the war it has single-handedly unleashed by ceasing its aggression and withdrawing its troops from Ukrainian territory, without any prejudice to its security, as demanded by the International Court of Justice as early as 16 March 2022. But it refuses to do so.

There is no alternative to this withdrawal, if a just and lasting peace that complies with international law is to be ensured. The vast majority of the members of the United Nations General Assembly have repeatedly deplored this aggression and condemned Russia's attempt to illegally annex territory.

In the face of this act of aggression, Ukraine is exercising its right to self-defence, recognized by Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Consistent with its principles, France has unflinchingly chosen to support Ukraine in the exercise of its right. We will continue to do so bilaterally and via the European Union to help the Ukrainian people defend their freedom, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

France has pledged, together with its main partners, to maintain its military support for Ukraine for as long as necessary and to strengthen its defence system, in particular by supporting its air defence capabilities. In that way, France is helping Ukraine to defend itself against Russian strikes against its civilian infrastructure, which are in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, while Russia is continuing to deliberately target those that enable grain to be exported from Ukraine.

By supporting the Ukrainian counter-offensive, we hope to shift the balance of power and create the conditions for a diplomatic settlement of the conflict. It is on that basis that credible negotiations can be envisaged, when Ukraine so decides, leading to a just and lasting peace.

Russia is pointing to Western arms deliveries to Ukraine but let us not forget the facts: it was Russia alone that decided on this war, and it is also Russia that is violating international law and in particular Security Council resolutions. In particular, it is obtaining combat drones from Iran, in violation of resolution 2231 (2015). It is also acquiring missiles and munitions from North Korea, despite the resolutions and sanctions adopted by the Council.

This war of aggression is having catastrophic consequences for the Ukrainian people and for the entire world, especially among the populations of the most vulnerable countries. It is also a dead end for Russia, after almost 18 months of conflict.

Our support for Ukraine will not waver. There is only one way out: a peace consistent with the Charter of the United Nations, which respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

**Mr. Anyanah** (Ghana): I thank High Representative Izumi Nakamitsu for her briefing. We have also taken note of the remarks of Mr. Danny Haiphong.

The consequences of war are grave, and it is in that regard that the Charter of the United Nations has clearly proscribed the use of force or threat of force in State relations except in the limited instances when it is necessary for self-defence or required under the mechanisms of collective security.

As we know, Ukraine did not start the present war and has no choice in stopping hostilities or withdrawing its troops. It has a duty and a legitimate right to

defend its territorial integrity, political independence and sovereignty.

As expected in conflict settings, arms proliferate. The aggression against Ukraine is not an exception, and it is in that context that we reiterate the importance of the Russian Federation heeding the many calls made across different parts of the world for it to withdraw its troops from the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine. The negative impact that the proliferation of arms poses to international peace and security affects different parts of the world, with civilian populations bearing the greatest brunt, including the loss of lives and the displacement of thousands of men, women and children whose only chance of survival is to escape and seek refuge elsewhere under deplorable conditions.

We re-emphasize the need to respect the regime of arms control aimed at preventing the diversion of arms and regulating international arms trade. Adherence by States to their obligations under those global arrangements, such as the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the European Union Common Position on arms exports, as well as national regulations, can help mitigate illegal proliferation.

We re-emphasize the point we have consistently made that the continuation of the war is not the solution to achieving the desires of the parties and strongly urge the cessation of hostilities and the resort to dialogue and diplomacy to agree on a political and just settlement on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations and the tenets of international law.

We reiterate our call on the parties to fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law and to ensure that their military actions do not harm civilians or civilian infrastructure.

With the myriad challenges facing the world at the present moment, the Russian war against Ukraine adds another painful layer to prevailing global hardships. We re-emphasize the importance of ending this unjustified war as a matter of urgency through the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Russian Federation's troops from the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine.

**Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank High Representative Nakamitsu for her briefing, and I thank Mr. Haiphong for his briefing.

The Security Council has considered in multiple meetings the issue of arms supply to Ukraine, and China has expressed its position and propositions many times. In particular, we find the dire consequences of the continuous provision of weapons to the battlefield worrisome and disconcerting. Currently, the massive influx of weapons and equipment to the battlefield persists with an expanding spillover effect, making the hope of achieving an end to the hostilities more remote.

Weapons may be used to win the war, but they cannot win peace. Restoring peace requires dialogue and consultation. For some time now, an increasing number of countries have raised their voices of reason and proposed peace initiatives. We hope that relevant parties will respond positively to the call of the international community, keep calm and maintain restraint, refrain from the escalation of tensions, step up engagement, galvanize consensus and gradually create conditions for the final settlement of the crisis.

On the issue of Ukraine, China has remained consistently on the side of peace and dialogue and actively promoted peace talks. We are firmly convinced that, in the face of difficulties, it is all the more necessary to leave space for peace and, especially when divergences are acute, efforts to promote dialogue must not be renounced.

Saudi Arabia recently hosted an international summit on the issue of Ukraine. The Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs attended the summit, engaged and communicated extensively with all parties and elaborated on China's position and propositions.

China will continue to work on the basis of its position paper entitled "China's position on the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis", step up dialogue and communication with all parties and play a constructive role in promoting the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

**Ms. Gatt** (Malta): I thank High Representative Nakamitsu for her updates.

Malta strongly condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which is a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We are unwavering in our support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and its inherent right to self-defence.

I reiterate that Russia bears the sole responsibility for its war of aggression in Ukraine. Russia is seeking to subdue a sovereign neighbouring country through the use of force to expand its territory and extend its borders.

The grave humanitarian crisis resulting from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine must be at the centre of our deliberations. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has recorded more than 26,000 civilian casualties in Ukraine since the start of the war. An estimated 5.1 million people have been internally displaced and more than 6.2 million have crossed into neighbouring countries. Of those figures, 90 per cent represent women and children, who are at risk of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, while facing perilous health conditions.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continues to pose serious and direct threats to the safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear facilities. Nuclear incidents should be avoided at all costs. Unfortunately, we are all too familiar with the indiscriminate and devastating effects that would have on lives and the environment.

The war not only threatens the security of the region, but is having a serious impact on the entire world. By withdrawing from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, the Russian Federation has consciously weaponized food security. The naval blockade and attacks on Ukrainian ports, as well as the illegal boarding of ships by the Russian armed forces, is further evidence of Moscow's strategy to use food security to create global disruption. That is unacceptable. The attacks on critical infrastructure have also continued unabated, including most recently in the Kharkiv region. Malta strongly condemns Russia's actions, in particular the vile attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, which should never be targets, and we reiterate our call on Russia to cease such attacks immediately. On a related note, we would like to point to our commitment to holding Russia accountable for all its crimes and violations. We support the ongoing efforts of the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice and welcome the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation Against Ukraine and the International Centre for the Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression Against Ukraine.

Ending this war and its negative consequences depend exclusively on this permanent member of the

Security Council. We also want to remind members of Ukraine's legitimate and sacrosanct right to self-defence, enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

In conclusion, we once again urge the Russian Federation to end its hostilities, withdraw its military forces and proxies from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and embark on constructive dialogue and diplomacy as the means to establish lasting peace, stability and security.

**Mr. Fernandes** (Mozambique): I would like to start by thanking the presidency for convening this briefing at the request of the Russian Federation. I would also like to thank Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for her insightful briefing, and Mr. Danny Haiphong for his presentation.

The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, coupled with the increase in weapons transfers, poses a serious threat to global peace and security. As Mozambique has repeatedly done previously in this Chamber, we call urgently for an immediate cessation of hostilities as the most desirable and significant step towards ending this worrisome armed conflict. In that context, we welcome the recent peace initiatives, including those led by African States and the summit held in Jeddah.

As the military hostilities continue into their nineteenth month, there are no clear prospects for a settlement. Mozambique is deeply concerned about the prevailing reliance on a military solution in lieu of diplomatic engagement. With the intensification of the conflict and the continued proliferation of arms, our apprehension is growing along with the likelihood that the region will turn into a ticking time bomb. Even a minor miscalculation could potentially ignite a full-scale confrontation with unimaginably devastating global repercussions.

Mozambique is deeply worried about the possibility that the continuing escalation of military rhetoric and arms acquisition could drive us to the most perilous of thresholds — the deployment of troops by allied parties and the potential use of tactical nuclear weapons. As the High Representative highlighted in this Chamber in April (see S/PV.9301), the illicit and unregulated transfer of arms can instigate, fuel and prolong armed conflict and violence, terrorism and crime. We have stated clearly that public announcements of arms deliveries outside

the United Nations arms-control and disarmament framework will lead to further confrontation and take us further away from de-escalation and compromise. At a time when the world is facing existential challenges, recovering from a crippling pandemic and battling the repercussions of climate change, the looming threat of global terrorism and mounting humanitarian needs, this conflict is diverting essential resources and deepening divisions. Money for weapons procurement means fewer resources for tackling critical global challenges.

As a guardian of global peace and security, over the years the Security Council has adopted numerous resolutions addressing arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in the context of armed conflicts and broader security concerns, including its landmark resolution 1540 (2004). The Council must therefore remain a central player in advocating for peace, reminding all the parties to the conflict of the need to adhere to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and its pledge to avert the scourge of war. We therefore reiterate our urgent call on the parties to the conflict to make use of diplomatic channels and dialogue in order to seek a negotiated and lasting solution in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

**Mr. Phipps** (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu for her briefing today.

Last week Russian missiles targeted hotels in Pokrovsk and Zaporizhzhya. As people rushed to rescue the wounded from the rubble, further missiles hit both locations — a double-tap strike, deliberately timed to kill first responders. On Sunday, a baby, just 22 days old, her 12-year-old brother and their parents were among seven people killed by Russian shells in Kherson. On Tuesday, a Russian missile ripped through a playground in Lviv. That is how Russia's leaders conduct their war of choice, and it is why we are proud to support Ukraine as it defends itself in line with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The United Kingdom wants peace. Ukraine wants peace. Indeed, the whole world wants peace. But President Putin has shown that he is not serious about any peace that respects international law. While last week Ukraine and international partners from all over the globe discussed the importance of a just and sustainable peace underpinned by the Charter, Russia continued to drop bombs on Ukrainian ports and grain

silos, targeting the world's food supply. Russia now claims that it is under assault from the West. But it was President Putin who chose to invade Ukraine in February of last year, despite calls from within the Security Council to withdraw Russian troops from Ukraine's borders. It was Putin who ordered hundreds of thousands of Russian troops to go their deaths on the soil of another country to which they should never have been sent. It is his choices that have diminished Russia's standing in the world and destroyed the trust of Russia's neighbours. It is President Putin who is hurting Russia.

The Russian authorities estimate that as many as a million people left the country in 2022. Many have spoken of their concerns about the war and its impact. Others fled to avoid being conscripted to fight. Those who have stayed face dire consequences for speaking out. It is telling that our Russian colleagues can rely only on fringe journalists to defend their war in this Chamber. Let me be clear. An unstable Russia is in none of our interests, and we have the highest respect for the Russian people. President Putin could end the suffering of the Ukrainian people and Russia's own soldiers tomorrow by withdrawing all Russian forces from within Ukraine's internationally recognized territory. Until then we will continue to help Ukraine defend itself.

**Mr. Spasse (Albania):** Let me start by thanking High Representative Nakamitsu for her briefing.

Here we are at another meeting on Ukraine, on a topic that we have discussed many times before. The Security Council was unable to adopt a programme of work for this month because of the meeting planned on Ukraine. At least for now, two meetings have been scheduled on a subject that according to Russia cannot be allowed to be included in our programme of work. We wonder if this is not just a tactic to create a kind of inflation in the work of the Security Council on the issue and create a derogatory sense of Ukraine in the United Nations. It will not work. An unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against a United Nations Member State is not routine. And a threat to European security, with a worldwide economic and humanitarian impact, cannot be taken lightly. That is what 143 United Nations Member States have strongly and clearly spelled out — more than once.

As we have heard several times here and just heard again from Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu, the arms transfers to Ukraine are open data. Everything is

legal, justified and for the right cause. The Ukrainian people are fighting fiercely, defending their country and its sovereignty, freedom and independence. Those are the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act, including that borders may not be changed by force. The international community is helping Ukraine in that regard, based on international law and the United Nations Charter. We reiterate that Article 51 of the United Nations Charter provides a very clear legal basis for individual States to offer any kind of assistance to a country exercising its inherent right to self-defence in protecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The arms transfer to Ukraine has been conducted in accordance with national legislation and the Arms Trade Treaty, and with the obligations that arise from conducting it, as well as an assessment of the risk of diversion. An ad hoc commission, established by the Ukrainian Parliament, is responsible for monitoring the entire process, so that weapons are used for defence purposes and do not fall into the wrong hands. On the other hand, Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, is using weapons illegally procured from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran, thereby blatantly violating the resolutions of the Security Council. Let me emphasize that Albania has aligned itself with the decision of the Council of the European Union (EU) of 20 July on a new sanctions framework in view of Iran's military support to Russia, which prohibits the export from the EU to Iran of components used in the development and production of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). It also provides for a travel ban and asset-freeze measures that could be imposed against persons responsible for supporting or involved in Iran's UAV programme.

No distorted narrative — however hard one tries to impose it — can change the reality in Ukraine. It cannot disguise the killing and suffering of innocent civilians. According to the recent report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 48 civilians have been killed and another 210 injured as a result of the aggression during the first two weeks of this month alone. Russia continues its attacks on Ukraine's civilian infrastructure. After withdrawing from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, Russia is deliberately attacking ports and grain warehouses in order to make grain exports from Ukraine impossible in the future. It knows that those acts constitute war crimes, but they fit with its aims. If the war continues,

calculations show that in the next three to five years, Ukraine will lose approximately 2 million tons of agricultural production each year, which will amount to approximately \$1.5 billion in losses.

There are many ways to inflict pain on civilians during a war. Russia is using them all: killing them in their houses, destroying vital infrastructure and now assaulting their food. In that way, Russia is punishing not only Ukrainians but also many around the world who risk not having enough food for their families. Global prices are rising, and food security problems will only worsen in the short term. Countries with a heavy dependence on imports will continue to experience shortages, which could cause political instability in many parts of the globe through geopolitical conflicts and famine. While Russian missiles are destroying hundreds of thousands of tons of grain in the Odesa region, which should have been shipped through the grain corridor, hunger and poverty will hit the most vulnerable countries in Africa and South-East Asia. That is why this war must end. That is why Russia should put an end to it. Until then, the support for Ukraine should continue, with the hope that Russia will realize that the best solution is for it to withdraw all its troops from Ukraine and engage seriously in peace talks.

**Mr. França Danese** (Brazil): I thank Under-Secretary-General Izumi Nakamitsu for her briefing. I welcome the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to this meeting.

It is disturbing to see that some of the worst predictions about the conflict's trajectory seem to be coming true. Brazil recognizes the right of all States to self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. However, the increasing flow of weapons into the conflict in Ukraine is based on the doubtful assumption that there is a military solution to this conflict. Indeed, the introduction, threat of use or use of certain weapons in the conflict can erode the potential for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, spiralling into further acts of violence and making a de-escalation of hostilities even less likely. We share the concern about the risk that weapons and ammunition transferred to any conflict zones can end up in the hands of non-State actors, including criminal and terrorist groups, which becomes an additional factor of instability in the long term. Brazil endorses the call for all Member States to adhere to the Arms Trade Treaty and other international instruments in order to prevent the diversion of arms.

It is imperative to reflect on the consequences of the current escalation. In addition to the risk of diversion, it is necessary to bear in mind the suffering inflicted on the civilian population and the impact of the current trends on our collective security. We remind all States, in particular those directly involved in the conflict, of their obligations under international humanitarian law. Innocent civilians should never be targets of military operations. We urge the parties to prevent harm to residential areas, to energy and transport infrastructure, including port facilities, and most important of all to human lives.

Brazil believes that only a political solution, taking into account the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and the legitimate security concerns of all the parties, will bring a lasting peace. We renew our call for a de-escalation of hostilities and the establishment of negotiations, either directly or through the other peaceful means described in Article 33 of the United Nations Charter.

**Ms. Koumby Missambo** (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Izumi Nakamitsu for her briefing. I also paid close attention to Mr. Haiphong's briefing.

We are concerned about the announcements of additional arms deliveries and the rhetoric with regard to offensives, counter-offensives and new military alliances, at a time when many voices around the world are calling for de-escalation and for solutions to be sought to end the war. We are all the more alarmed that the fighting continues to uproot the lives of more than 7 million innocent civilians and that 9,444 civilians have been killed. One of the most dreaded scenarios is unfolding — namely that of massive rearmament — which clearly demonstrates a reversal of the direction of progress expected and desired by most United Nations Member States, which have made remarkable efforts in favour of disarmament, marked in particular by the adoption of important treaties on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones and, more recently, the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The risks associated with the massive circulation of conventional weapons are just as worrisome, given their long-term effects on civilian populations, whether through the insecurity driven by small arms and light weapons or the delayed effects of cluster munitions. The

parties must take the necessary precautions to prevent such risks, notably through existing mechanisms, such as the International Tracing Instrument and the Arms Trade Treaty.

We are concerned that the scenario that is taking shape will lead to prolonging the war, in contradiction of the obligations of every member of the Security Council and every member of the United Nations to act in favour of international peace and security. In that regard, I would like to emphasize and reiterate our shared commitment, in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, to protecting the peoples of the world from the scourge of war. I also reiterate my country's opposition to war.

The immediate consequence of the intensified fighting is an exponential worsening of the humanitarian situation, with civilian infrastructure and populations being the primary targets of bombardments, including in the latest attacks in Odesa. Humanitarian organizations are struggling to raise the \$4.3 billion expected for the humanitarian response, which has received only 30 per cent of the funding pledged, according to the latest statistics from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. At the same time, military aid is at an all-time high, estimated by some sources to have reached nearly \$160 billion.

I would like to conclude by stressing the urgency of bringing the conflict to an end. We call on all parties to activate the channels of dialogue and negotiation to silence the guns and pave the way for peace and peaceful coexistence.

**Mr. Pérez Loose** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): What kind of resistance to a military invasion is possible without weapons and military means? That has not generally been the case in the wars of this century or the previous one. When has war not been a voracious driver of increased arms production and supply or of an arms race? The former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics — whose historic role in the victory against the Nazis we of course recognize — received supplies of armaments and military equipment for its campaigns from third countries. Today we deem it contradictory that on the one hand a neighbouring country has been militarily invaded and occupied, while on the other, on the diplomatic side, it is claimed that equipping the invaded and occupied country militarily undermines peace. Which provision of the Charter of the United

Nations undermines the right of peoples to legitimate self-defence?

I thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her briefing. I want to reiterate Ecuador's position whereby we reject armed violence, militarization and armaments. I also reiterate our continuing concern about the threats to peace, security and stability posed by large-scale flows of arms and ammunition into any conflict situation. It is therefore essential to intensify and uphold standards of marking, record-keeping and traceability of arms and ammunition. We support any measures aimed at preventing the diversion and spread of weapons and the escalation of conflict, efforts that will be key to post-conflict recovery.

We will continue to insist on the need to prioritize the protection of civilians and the objective of global stability over any other logic of industry, production or distribution. We recognize that the supply of certain defence materials and systems, including air defence, will contribute to reducing the destruction of civilian infrastructure and the numbers of casualties. To that end, it is essential to focus on the question of use. Any supply of arms or ammunition must be subject to guarantees of respect for the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in their use. For that reason, Ecuador will continue to reject the production, transfer and use of cluster munitions. Likewise, the supply of weapons must serve the purposes of security and protection alone and should never be used merely for testing new materials in a theatre of confrontation.

In conclusion, we urge the Russian Federation to stop its attacks on civilian infrastructure, including ports and food supplies, especially considering that a year and a half has already elapsed since the invasion began. We insist that it definitively cease its military aggression in order to make way for a peaceful solution that is based not on the logic of domination or neocolonial aggression but on that of the Charter of the United Nations and of peace and diplomacy, and that it is always guided by the principle of justice established by the General Assembly, which underpins a just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

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

Let me first thank High Representative Nakamitsu for her briefing today. Her continued leadership in the global effort to counter the diversion of weapons, and

the steadfast efforts of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in that regard, is critical.

The United States will continue to demonstrate its enduring commitment to supporting Ukraine's self-defence, including through the provision of arms and equipment that enable Ukraine to defend its territory and protect its people from Russia's unprovoked and unjustified aggression. Russia continues to falsely allege that it is the unified support of Ukraine's defence from more than 50 nations that is exacerbating the war and hindering peace discussions. Think about that. Russia is telling us that it is not the invading country that is responsible for the crisis, but rather alleging that it is the country that is doing everything in its power to defend itself from an illegal invasion that is at fault. That narrative is hypocritical and preposterous, and it strains credulity to breaking point. It is Russia's full-scale invasion of its sovereign neighbour that violates the Charter of the United Nations and constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Russia's efforts to insinuate otherwise are farcical.

Again, Russia's illegal invasion and continued aggression inside Ukraine's borders, including daily rocket and drone attacks that hit civilian infrastructure and kill innocent people, are the undeniable cause aggravating the crisis and undermining efforts to find a peaceful solution. Every day Russia continues those violations in Ukraine, which have united the international community in support of Ukraine and in support of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the right to self-defence — all in the Charter. Russia's decision to call yet another of these wasteful meetings instead is a clear tactic intended to distract from the Kremlin's actions undermining international peace and security. While Russia attempts to brazenly rewrite history, we cannot be distracted from the truth of its destabilizing activities in Ukraine and elsewhere. Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and its announced stationing of its nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus risk further aggravating an already highly dangerous situation.

The Russian Federation is seeking increased military cooperation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including by pressing Kim Jong Un to sell additional arms to Moscow to fuel its war in Ukraine. Such arms transfers are a violation of Security Council resolutions that Russia voted in favour of. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea already made an initial delivery of weapons to the Kremlin-backed

Wagner Group last November, in violation of Security Council resolutions. On 16 August, the United States Treasury Department designated three entities connected to the Slovak national Ashot Mkrtychev, whom we previously designated for attempting to facilitate such arms transfers. Last month, on 20 July, the Department of State designated two individuals involved in the shipment of those munitions to Russia, including one Democratic People's Republic of Korea national.

Furthermore, in clear violation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), Russia has procured armed drones from Iran and then deployed those uncrewed aerial vehicles in cruel, lethal attacks against civilians in Ukraine. The United States renews its call on the Secretary-General to investigate those serious violations.

We have seen reports that a Russian warship fired shots at the *Sukru Okan* cargo vessel headed towards a Ukrainian port through the Black Sea on Sunday, 13 August. We strongly condemn such actions. Russia is once again acting recklessly in the Black Sea, and the effects of its unlawful war of choice are having ripple effects in terms of shipping safety and commercial activity, in addition to impeding the international community's efforts to deliver food to those who need it most. Russia must comply with its international legal obligations and respect freedom of navigation. Further, Russia continues to use food as a weapon of war. Just yesterday, we awoke yet again to reports of Russian strikes on grain facilities and ports along the Danube. Those attacks are inexcusable.

We cannot forget Russia's brutal, unrelenting attacks against Ukraine and its people for the last 18 months. Putin has shown no interest in meaningful diplomacy since first starting this unprovoked war nearly one and a half years ago. In fact, since we last discussed this topic in June (see S/PV.9357), it is Russia that has escalated its brutalization of Ukraine's people and weaponized food through its unilateral withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

Let us be clear: Western weapons provided to Ukraine to prevent Russia's brutalization of Ukraine's people are not the cause of this war, nor are they prolonging this war. That responsibility is the Kremlin's alone. Russia remains the sole obstacle to peace in Ukraine. The Government of Ukraine and the United States continue to work together to maintain safeguards



against diversion, while responsibly providing for Ukraine's ability to exercise its inherent right of self-defence against Russia's brutal war. Ukraine has been a transparent and willing partner, as we stress accountability and ensure robust processes to counter any attempts at illicit diversion. Battlefield losses occur in every conflict, and we cannot speak for what Russia does with the arms it captures. Pro-Russia forces pose the greatest risk of onward trafficking. Russia has even stated publicly that it will supply captured weapons to non-State actors. The best way to address that risk is for Russia to end its war of aggression.

If Russia were concerned about reducing conflict and mitigating the potential diversion of illicit weapons, it would choose to end the war it started and withdraw its forces rather than escalate with nuclear rhetoric, barrages of missiles, human rights abuses and war crimes, crimes against humanity and violations of various Security Council resolutions and of the Charter of the United Nations. We once again renew our calls for Russia to do so immediately.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

**Mr. Dvornyk** (Ukraine): I recognize the representative of Putin's regime in the permanent seat of the Soviet Union.

It is a matter of concern that that seat is still being misused to turn the Council into a platform for disseminating propaganda and justifying the war of aggression. Akin to an experienced criminal before a jury, Putin's envoy attempts to shift responsibility by blaming the victim for provocations, inappropriate behaviour — you name it. We have heard so many falsehoods meant to whitewash the Russian aggression — secret biolabs, dirty bombs, war mosquitoes — that one could hardly expect something more bizarre and insane. However, every time we think Russia can no longer surprise us, it hits a new low. This time, Russian intelligence chief Naryshkin shared with the audience of the so-called Moscow security conference the most recent revelations about the so-called "biomechanoids" that the West is going to replace human beings with. I wonder why Putin's envoy has not brought this interesting fairy tale to the Council's attention — perhaps he felt too shy or decided to request a special Security Council meeting on the matter. The latter would not be surprising, as

it would be in line with Russia's deliberate practice of undermining the Council's credibility.

It seems that Russia's greatest outrage — which is also the reason for this meeting — is caused by the fact that Ukraine and Ukrainians have not accepted the role of helpless victim. On the contrary, they have opted for resistance and are fighting for their lives and dignity. Ukraine has faced a cruel and unprovoked attack that targets not only our statehood, but also the very existence of the Ukrainian nation. Just tune into Russian television or watch Russian movies, browse Russian social media or open new Russian schoolbooks, and everywhere you will find narratives portraying the Ukrainian people as inferior and suggesting that Ukrainians do not have the right to their own State. The occupied territories bear the heaviest burden of those neocolonial practices, suffering from enforced assimilation and repressive measures for manifesting Ukrainian identity, in addition to changes to the population's demographic composition, wrought by deporting local Ukrainian residents and bringing in migrants from Russia instead.

For my nation, this is an existential battle for survival. It was Russia's choice to attack, and it is our response to defend ourselves, in strict accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. We will persevere in our fight until every Ukrainian citizen and every parcel of our sovereign land is liberated and Russia faces a military defeat in Ukraine. All weapons, whether produced by Ukraine or received from our allies, serve this goal: to survive and to stop the dictatorship infected with insane imperial sentiments. To that end, Ukraine will continue targeting all legitimate military objectives, including enemy troops, storage facilities, military hardware and logistical routes used to resupply the Russian occupying forces.

That approach stands in stark contrast to the terrorist methods of warfare employed by the Russian forces, which raze to the ground the towns within their reach and use their missiles and drones to kill civilian populations and destroy critical infrastructure throughout the country. Among the most recent tragic examples is the killing of an entire family — a husband, a wife, a 12-year-old boy and a 23-day-old girl in the village of Shyroka Balka in the liberated part of the Kherson region on 13 August. Two days earlier, on the opposite side of the country, in the western region of Ivano-Frankivsk, a Russian missile killed an eight-year-old boy.

Yesterday Russia again struck grain export infrastructure in the Odesa region, damaging grain warehouses and foodstuffs at the river port of Reni on the Danube. That was Russia's seventh massive attack in a month, since its attempt to undermine the Black Sea Grain Initiative. The port of Reni, the port of Izmail, the port of Pivdennyi, the port of Odesa, the port of Chernomorsk, Mykolayiv — every Russian attack on them is a blow to global food prices and a blow to social and political stability in different parts of the world. As follows from the examination of the remnants of the Kh-101 fired at Ukrainian cities on 15 August, Russia is able to produce them because there are still ways to circumvent the sanctions. These loopholes should be closed, and the sanctions strengthened, so that Russia cannot obtain from abroad critical components for missile production.

Despite the fierce Russian attacks against my country, which continue unabated, Ukraine is extremely active on the peace track, seeking a just, comprehensive and lasting peace based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, as outlined in General Assembly resolution ES-11/6, adopted on

23 February 2023, and the peace formula plan proposed by President Zelenskyy. The recent meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, has contributed to translating this vision into reality, and we will build on the dialogue that the representatives of more than 40 countries engaged in there.

In his statement, the representative of Ecuador mentioned the victory over Nazism, which was the shared achievement of the Allied forces. The truth is that, starting with the attempted annexation of Crimea, the Russian Federation has cosplayed Nazi criminals, employing their practices of protecting compatriots, making territorial claims based on fake history and bombing Kyiv at the same early hour. The Third Reich never made a resurgence because it was militarily defeated and its political, economic, and military leadership was brought to justice. A similar fate is expected for Putin's regime. The sooner this comes to pass the better, not only for Ukraine, but for all of us, as well as for the integrity of this body, which increasingly erodes with each passing day that Putin's Russia sits in it.

*The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.*