



# Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

**9767**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 30 October 2024, 3.20 p.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mrs. Baeriswyl . . . . .	(Switzerland)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria . . . . .	Mr. Merabet
	China . . . . .	Mr. Geng Shuang
	Ecuador . . . . .	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
	France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
	Guyana . . . . .	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Japan . . . . .	Mr. Yamazaki
	Malta . . . . .	Ms. Gatt
	Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Fernandes
	Republic of Korea . . . . .	Mr. Hwang
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sierra Leone . . . . .	Mr. George
	Slovenia . . . . .	Mr. Žbogar
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Wood

## Agenda

Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine**

**The President** (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Latvia and Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Miroslav Jenča, Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and Americas, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, to participate in this meeting.

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

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

I give the floor to Mr. Jenča.

**Mr. Jenča:** Just last week, we briefed the Security Council on the continued large-scale suffering and destruction that the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, launched in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, continues to inflict on the people of Ukraine (see S/PV.9755). Since then, relentless Russian attacks have continued to cause further civilian casualties and additional damage to critical infrastructure across Ukraine.

We once again reiterate that attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure are prohibited under international law. They are unacceptable no matter where they occur and must cease immediately. To date, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has verified that nearly 12,000 civilians, including hundreds of children, have been killed since February 2022. Nearly 26,000 civilians have been injured. Millions remain displaced and in need of life-saving humanitarian assistance. Millions more in Ukraine remain under the threat of further displacement as a result of widespread Russian attacks,

particularly in eastern and southern Ukraine. The massive damage to Ukraine's critical infrastructure, in particular energy infrastructure, risks exacerbating the already dire humanitarian conditions and access to essential services as we are entering the cold winter season.

In addition to the devastating toll on civilians in Ukraine, this war continues to inflame regional and global tensions and divisions. As the Secretary-General warned the Council on 24 September,

“[t]he longer this tragic war continues, the greater the risk of escalation and spillover” (S/PV.9731, p. 3).

We have followed with serious concern the recent reports of military personnel of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea being deployed to the Russian Federation, including their possible deployment to the conflict zone. The United Nations does not have any additional details on those developments and is not in a position to verify or confirm the claims or reports made. Our knowledge on that topic is therefore based solely on information that is publicly available.

According to media reports and statements made by officials of Member States, troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have reportedly arrived in the Russian Federation, with estimates of their size varying widely. The reports regarding the presence of troops of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in Russia follow the signing, on 19 June 2024 in Pyongyang, of the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the Russian Federation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which reportedly outlines cooperation on security- and defence-related issues, among other issues. The Treaty was ratified by the lower house of the Russian Parliament, the State Duma, on 24 October. The upper house is expected to follow suit. The alleged troop deployments also follow earlier reports of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea having allegedly transferred military supplies, including ballistic missiles and artillery shells, to the Russian Federation, for possible use in its military operations in Ukraine.

We urge all relevant actors to refrain from any steps that may lead to spillover and intensification of the war in Ukraine. In that regard, we also recall the relevant Security Council resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The question of whether the reported presence of North Korean troops in Russia might fall within the scope of those resolutions is a matter for the

Security Council to determine. We reiterate our call on all countries to abide by the resolutions of the Security Council, including those concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

As we have repeatedly warned, the dangerous, escalatory trajectory of the war in Ukraine will lead only to further suffering, mounting destruction and deeper geopolitical divisions that we simply cannot afford. It is therefore time for us all to redouble our efforts towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in Ukraine, in line with the United Nations Charter, international law and resolutions of the General Assembly. The United Nations continues to support all meaningful efforts to that end.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Jenča for his briefing.

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

**Mr. De Rivière** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Jenča for his briefing.

France has taken note of the statements about the deployment of North Korean troops in Russia, which would constitute an increase in North Korean support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The participation of North Korean soldiers in a war of aggression against a sovereign State would be a violation of international law, Security Council resolutions and the Charter of the United Nations. It would be a hostile act that would have direct consequences for the security of Europeans and international peace and security and would only increase the suffering of the Ukrainian people. North Korea was already complicit in the Russian aggression because of its considerable military support for the Russian war effort. Russia's acquisition and proven use of North Korean missiles in its war of aggression is already taking place in flagrant violation of resolutions adopted by the Council, on which Russia itself voted. North Korean-made ballistic missiles have been used to strike Ukraine, for example in Kharkiv in January and even in July and August in documented cases. France condemns those serious acts.

In return for that military support, Russia has become a purveyor of impunity and assistance to North Korea's illegal weapons of mass destruction programmes. That poses an increasingly obvious threat to international security. In March, Russia alone vetoed the renewal of the Panel of Experts of

the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), which had been renewed by consensus for 15 years. It has therefore deprived all Member States of a vital source of information on the implementation of Council resolutions. In order to continue its illegal war, Russia is attempting to undermine the international non-proliferation regime, which is a key element of international security.

The increase in North Korean military support also reflects Russia's weakness. Russia, alongside North Korea and Iran, is seeking to continue its war of aggression by any means, with the deleterious consequences we all know that will have for the entire international community. Russia alone chose to start this war and is responsible for this human tragedy. Although Russia could put an end to the war without prejudice to its own safety, it persists in pursuing it and continues to choose to escalate. To support its war effort, Russia chooses to foster military cooperation that contravenes international rules and its own international commitments, jeopardizes international non-proliferation norms and undermines its credibility as a permanent member of the Security Council. It is very clear that Russia is not seeking peace but rather the defeat of the victim of its attack. That can in no way be the basis for just and lasting peace, which is the only way to restore lasting regional security and stability. And no one can allow Russia to undermine the foundations of the international order in that way.

We reiterate our call on Russia to end its war of aggression, and we urge Russia and North Korea to comply with their international obligations, including Council resolutions.

**Mr. Yamazaki** (Japan): We thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for the briefing.

We are grateful for and support the initiative taken by Ukraine to discuss the issue of military cooperation between Russia and North Korea in the war of aggression against Ukraine. Today we have the opportunity to let the international community know the facts and truth about what is happening on the ground and share understanding on how Russia and North Korea are deepening military cooperation and breaching international law in Russia's unprovoked aggression against Ukraine. The story of cooperation between Russia and North Korea did not begin just recently. Taking one example, it was about half a year ago that the Panel of Experts of the Committee

established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) was forced to terminate its mandate due to the regrettable veto by Russia, which was clearly intended to give breathing room to North Korea. Just a couple months after the veto, Russia and North Korea signed the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which highlights the increasing cooperation between Russia and North Korea.

The Security Council discussed the military cooperation between Russia and North Korea in June this year in the light of a clear violation of relevant Security Council resolutions (see S/PV.9658). We have repeatedly and strongly condemned Russia's procurement of ballistic missiles from North Korea to use against Ukraine. Yet military cooperation between the two has only accelerated.

Last month, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov publicly stated that applying the term "denuclearization" to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea no longer makes any sense. That is off the table. He publicly denied the goals established by multiple Security Council resolutions that Russia itself has supported. That represents an endorsement of North Korea's nuclear and ballistic-missile development and undermines the international non-proliferation regime, which is absolutely unacceptable. The Council's discussion last week on the maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine (see S/PV.9755), in which many Council members expressed their grave concern about the mobilization of North Korean soldiers to the battlefield, is still fresh in our minds. Japan has confirmed information sufficient for us to believe that North Korea's soldiers have been dispatched to Russia and have engaged in military training. That constitutes a blatant violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. We are closely monitoring this development with serious concern, including the imminent risk that these troops may take a direct part in Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which would constitute a grave violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations.

President Putin did not rule out the possibility of advancing cooperation on military technology with North Korea during his visit to Pyongyang in June. That is totally unacceptable behaviour for a responsible permanent member of the Security Council. We continue to closely monitor what Russia is providing to North Korea in return. We, the Council members, have an essential role in maintaining international peace and

security, including the global non-proliferation regime that all Member States are committed to. No Council member should dilute our role in that regard.

The fact that North Korea is becoming an accomplice to Russia's unprovoked aggression will worsen the situation in Ukraine, and we cannot just overlook a situation in which they have repeatedly and flagrantly violated the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. We must act to stop it. Let me once again call on all Member States to abide by their obligations under all the relevant resolutions of the Council — and the permanent members of the Council in particular should never fail to do so. Such a failure would jeopardize the system for international peace and security that was established by the Charter and has been in effect for eight decades.

**Mr. Hwang** (Republic of Korea): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his briefing.

We are gathered here today in the Security Council to address a grave and unprecedented development in Russia's ongoing war of aggression in Ukraine. Although we are all familiar with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's illegal and immoral activities — whether we are talking about its development of weapons of mass destruction in flagrant violation of the Security Council's resolutions, counterfeiting, money-laundering, drug trafficking, cyberhacking or systematic human rights abuses — the recent turn of events is surprising, even to long-time North Korea watchers like me. Besides providing deadly munitions and ballistic missiles to Russia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is now deploying thousands of its own troops to Russia disguised as Russian soldiers.

The Republic of Korea provided an early warning on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's direct involvement in the war. We have repeatedly warned against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's provision of military materials to Russia. We have also released detailed information on the dispatch of North Korean troops to Russia. However, our repeated warnings and condemnations have fallen on deaf ears in North Korea and Russia, which have both completely denied their collusion until just recently. Now they are acknowledging what they are doing by arguing that their activities will be in conformity with international law. Their change of attitude, though belated and reluctant, implies that they are clearly aware that those activities are in fact illegal and unjust. Otherwise they would not

have denied them so strongly in the first place. Without clear evidence, they would have continued denying or shifting the blame onto us, as we have witnessed time and time again over the years.

Regardless of what is written in the comprehensive strategic partnership treaty between Moscow and Pyongyang, signed in June this year, their military cooperation is totally illegal. To begin with, it is illegal to support an act of aggression, which completely violates the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In addition, resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009) and 2270 (2016) prohibit any transfer of weapons, ammunition or related training, advice, services or assistance from or to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The hosting of trainers, advisers or other officials for military training purposes is also prohibited. Taken together, any activities that entail the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's dispatch of troops to Russia are clear violations of multiple Council resolutions.

The deployment of troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the front line in Russia's war against Ukraine could take place sooner than expected and would mark a dramatic escalation in the war. According to some assessments, more than 600,000 Russian troops have been killed or wounded since the start of the war. The reality is that Russia needs more soldiers to feed its war machine. And we all know what will happen to those ill-fated North Korean soldiers once they are deployed to the deadly battlefield. As legitimate military targets, they will end up mere cannon fodder, while the wages that they are supposed to receive from Russia will end up squarely in Kim Jong Un's pocket. As a fellow Korean, I personally feel pity for those soldiers. It is tragic that they could have enjoyed a far better life had they been born south of the demilitarized zone. Pyongyang's treatment of its young soldiers — its own people — as expendable will never be forgiven.

With boots on the ground, alongside its supplies of munitions, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has become the most visible, ardent and committed supporter of Russia's aggression in Europe. The deepening illegal military cooperation between Russia and North Korea poses a serious threat to both Europe and North-East Asia. Indeed, the unprecedented military support from Pyongyang to Moscow will change the dynamics of geopolitics in both the eastern and western areas of the Eurasian continent. It will also have serious military and security effects on the Korean

Peninsula. By sending its troops to the battlefield, North Korea will gain combat experience in modern warfare for the first time since the Korean War. The North Korean regime will naturally seek to exact a high payback from Moscow. And that quid pro quo will not be limited to things such as food and fuel but may entail more sophisticated, high-end military technology, material and equipment in support of Pyongyang's military objectives.

In addition, Russia's Foreign Minister recently asserted that North Korea's denuclearization is a closed issue. If Russia abandons its long-held official position in favour of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, it will undermine the very foundation of the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The consequences of losing the hard-earned non-proliferation regime will be felt by everyone, including Russia itself. Russia has already dissolved the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) in order to hide its own illegal activities. The subsequent acceleration of military cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang further endangers peace and stability in the wider region.

Russia must end its unprovoked war, immediately withdraw its troops from Ukraine and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, in line with the Charter. Russia's desperate situation, revealed by bringing in foreign troops and munitions from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is one of its own creation. A permanent member of the Security Council must at least stick to the bare minimum of international norms. The Republic of Korea, in close cooperation with the international community, will respond resolutely to the unlawful military cooperation between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and will take corresponding measures commensurate with future developments.

**Mr. Žbogar** (Slovenia): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his briefing on this matter.

We find ourselves in dangerous territory. We have witnessed the escalation of this war throughout the past months, which has resulted in the unparalleled destruction of critical civilian infrastructure and the tremendous suffering of the civilian population. In the spring, Russia virtually eliminated Ukraine's energy-generation capacities and related infrastructure. The outcome is already visible and will further aggravate

the humanitarian situation for millions of Ukrainians during the coming winter months. At the same time, trends are indicating considerably higher civilian casualties, making September, with more than 1,400 civilian casualties, the bloodiest month this year. The most horrible war that Europe has seen in decades, together with two other major conflicts in Africa and the Middle East, tends to make us immune to surprises, no matter the developments we see every day.

However, even in those grim circumstances, no one could have prepared us for the next step, which is the deployment of the North Korean army to fight in Europe to participate in a war of aggression against Ukraine. Let that sink in: the North Korean army is fighting in Europe for someone else's interests. That comes on top of the growing evidence of missile transfers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to Russia, their use in Ukraine and the deeply concerning statements by the Russian leadership about the nuclear status of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which are clearly undermining the global non-proliferation regime. The ongoing military cooperation and arms transfers between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must cease immediately. Security Council resolutions are binding and must be respected. We condemn the escalation, as it represents a particularly dark turn of events, with dangerous consequences for the state of international peace and security.

As a Security Council member of the region in which the war is unfolding, we find ourselves in a formidable position. We are part of the most powerful organ in the world, tasked with upholding international peace and security, which is evidently unable to do anything to end the suffering of civilians and unable to do anything about the implications for regional and global security. I will not ask the Council to reflect on the trajectory that the war has taken; we are already past that point. The time has come for the Council to ask itself how much of the international security architecture, based on the Charter of the United Nations, we are willing to sacrifice for allowing the war to drag on. The integrity of the United Nations and global peace and security are at stake. Silence is assent. Slovenia will not stay silent. We will concentrate our efforts on preventing further escalation and achieving a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in line with the Charter.

**Dame Barbara Woodward** (United Kingdom): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his briefing.

When Russia invaded Ukraine almost 1,000 days ago, the General Assembly was clear in its condemnation. It deplored Russia's aggression in the strongest terms, demanded its full withdrawal and declared Russia's invasion to be in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Only five countries voted against General Assembly resolution ES-11/1, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Today the support of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for Russia goes even further. Pyongyang provides significant support to Russia by supplying munitions, arms and other materiel, and now 10,000 troops have arrived in Russia, with a significant number believed to be deploying to Kursk. In addition to aiding Russia's ongoing violation of the Charter and a United Nations Member State's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the cooperation between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a direct violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. Russia voted in favour of those resolutions. Now it violates them. That undermines not only international peace and security but also the Security Council itself. Council members have repeatedly condemned the violations. Yet the transfers continue.

The latest development — Russia's training and deployment of troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — is a significant step further for both countries. Russia has suffered more than 600,000 casualties. Instead of sending other countries' sons to die for the imperialistic whims of one man, they should end the war now. Russia is not just paying for the invasion in the lives of young men. Defence and security will consume more than 40 per cent of State spending next year. We can be sure that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will be extracting a high price from Russia in return for the transfer of its troops, including military assistance. That risks further raising tensions on the Korean peninsula and undermining regional security in the Indo-Pacific region. A Democratic People's Republic of Korea with improved military technology and enhanced capacity to export weapons could fuel instability in vulnerable conflict areas around the world. An escalation of violence and the expansion of the battlefield are in no one's interest. It is clear that a desperate and impoverished Russia needs external support for the war to continue. Any country providing

assistance to Russia's aggression is thereby prolonging Russia's illegal war. But Russia's desperation will not deter our resolve to support Ukraine to exercise its right to self-defence in line with the Charter and protect its people and sovereignty.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his briefing.

For 979 days, Russia has waged a brutal full-scale war against a fellow United Nations Member State and its people, and with each passing day, as Russia suffers immense losses, the Kremlin has grown increasingly desperate. Inviting North Korea to join its war would be a brazen escalation of Russia's aggression and a threat to global safety and security. The United States has seen additional reporting indicating that North Korean soldiers have started arriving in western Russia. We believe that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has sent around 10,000 soldiers to train in eastern Russia and that they will probably augment Russian forces near Ukraine in the next several weeks. A portion of those soldiers have already moved closer to Ukraine. We are increasingly concerned that Russia intends to use those soldiers in combat or to support combat operations against Ukrainian forces in Russia's Kursk oblast, near the border with Ukraine. We are watching closely for such indications and consulting with our Ukrainian partners. We urge Russia not to take those steps. Should soldiers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea be used on the battlefield, it would mark a further and serious escalation of the conflict.

The decision to deploy North Korean soldiers would also be an inescapably clear demonstration that Russia is growing more desperate, having already suffered more than half a million casualties. Russia knows that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a threat to peace and security in the region. The Kremlin knows that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unlawful ballistic-missile and nuclear-weapon programmes undermine the non-proliferation regime that has helped to keep the world safe from nuclear war for decades. Russia knows that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a pariah, with one of the world's worst human rights records. Russia would not turn to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for a military alliance unless it was desperate and had run out of options.

Just a few years ago, Russia supported multiple Security Council resolutions prohibiting both arms

transfers involving North Korea and the provision of military assistance to North Korea. Russia's training of soldiers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea involving arms or related materiel is a violation of resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009) and 2270 (2016). Each of those resolutions imposed restrictions on military cooperation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, because its actions — including its unlawful nuclear-weapon and ballistic-missile programmes — threaten peace and security. Now, Moscow is not only engaging in both of those activities to support its unprovoked war but has signed a mutual defence agreement with Pyongyang.

The members of the Security Council, including the Russian Federation, also imposed arms embargoes on Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to deter those countries' unlawful programmes of weapons of mass destruction. We question what Russia must be giving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran in return for their assistance. At a minimum, we know that Russia is blocking the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), the relevant Sanctions Committee, from operating. The Committee is a safeguard against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's development of nuclear weapons. Russia's increasing military dependence on Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is endangering the world, particularly by increasing the ability of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran to threaten the Indo-Pacific and the Middle East on a catastrophic level. Russia must stop. It is not too late for Russia to reverse its illegal and dangerous course and end the war. It is not too late for Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine, rejoin the world community and begin to repair its global standing.

In the absence of Russia's will, the international community must act to protect Ukraine from Russia and North Korea. A North Korean-backed Russian victory in Ukraine — even a partial one — would dangerously destabilize the world. I therefore want to make it clear that even with the addition of North Korean troops, Russian forces will not prevail against Ukraine. We will stand with Ukraine. We will stand with the Charter of the United Nations. We will stand with the rules-based system and the principles that keep us safe. We will protect them, whatever it takes. Our resolve is firm, there should be no doubt. There is only one safe solution to Russia's aggression, which is its complete withdrawal from Ukraine.

**Ms. Gatt** (Malta): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his briefing.

Malta has joined other Council members in supporting Ukraine's call for today's meeting because we too are deeply worried, for various reasons, about the recent potential deployment of around 12,000 North Korean soldiers to the Russian Federation.

First, such military cooperation represents a dangerous escalation and is a serious threat to the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific. Secondly, it constitutes a violation of Security Council resolutions. And thirdly, it adds yet another dimension to a conflict that has already been going on for two and a half years, widening it further. Such reckless and provocative actions are just the latest in a long string of decisions that have emboldened the aggressor, prolonged the conflict and compounded the suffering of the Ukrainian population. Let us not forget the recent transfers of weapons and ammunition from Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Russian Federation, some of which were also in breach of Security Council resolutions. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other States to stop supporting and enabling Russia's illegal war of aggression and to refrain from any measures aimed at further fuelling the conflict.

Over the past few months, we have also witnessed a significant increase in missile and drone attacks on Ukrainian cities. Those strikes have led to more civilian deaths and injuries and have added more pressure to an already dire humanitarian situation. Ensuring the protection of humanitarian space across Ukraine is essential. We are concerned about the incidents of violence against humanitarian workers and damage to humanitarian hubs and assets in the vicinity of the front line. We again call on all parties to ensure the safety and security of all United Nations and humanitarian personnel and to facilitate their life-saving operations. The situation of children in the temporarily controlled or occupied territories of Ukraine remains dire and is in need of more humanitarian support. Moreover, the unrelenting attacks on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure, particularly energy infrastructure, have continued to have a direct impact on Ukraine's social and economic development and on preparations for the upcoming winter months. We reiterate in no uncertain terms that all parties to the conflict must uphold international humanitarian law and the principles of distinction and proportionality.

The world cannot afford to lose sight of the conflict in Ukraine. Wars of aggression constitute a serious violation of the Charter of the United Nations. They are an affront to the principles and values that unite us. They must never be normalized, justified or rationalized. A world in which might is right is something that we can never accept. We must therefore focus our energies on reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine. This senseless and unjustified war must be brought to an end. The Russian Federation must withdraw all its troops from the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine, and Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity must be restored. Until that day comes, Ukraine has a right to defend itself in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter.

**Mr. Fernandes** (Mozambique): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his valuable insights. I also acknowledge the presence of the Permanent Representative of Ukraine at this meeting.

The concurrent meetings before us today and tomorrow reflect the concerning pattern of the escalation that has come to characterize not only this conflict but also our deliberations in this Chamber, edging us dangerously closer to a profound global division. Despite global appeals for peace, we are witnessing a continued intensification of the hostilities, exposing an alarming trend towards confrontation rather than a resolution of the conflict.

Since the conflict emerged, Mozambique has consistently urged all parties, including their allies, to refrain from aggressive posturing predicated on an assumption of unilateral advantage. Historical evidence consistently demonstrates that pursuing peace through military escalation rarely achieves lasting stability. Past conflicts show that sustained military-focused strategies only deepen hostilities, amplify human suffering and render diplomatic solutions ever more elusive. History, especially Europe's own conflict-laden past, clearly demonstrates that conflicts driven by sequential retaliations, such as the fortification of alliances and third-party military involvement, often spiral beyond the control or original intention of the warring parties. While international law does indeed recognize the sovereign prerogative of States to forge alliances and partnerships, that right must nevertheless be exercised in accordance with the foundational pledge in the Charter of the United Nations to shield future generations from warfare's devastation,



serving to reinforce international stability rather than compromise it.

This conflict stands at a critical crossroads and shows alarming indications of expansion beyond Ukraine's borders, thereby endangering both regional and global stability. The alleged deployment of third-party forces marks a dangerous inflection point, heightening tensions and raising the stakes for all parties involved.

We are reminded of Sun Tzu's timeless wisdom that "the greatest victory is that which requires no battle". It is a principle that emphasizes the paramount importance of diplomatic engagement and strategic restraint over military escalation. If there should be a "battle", it should be for preserving pathways to sustainable peace. Mozambique therefore calls upon all parties to commit to immediate de-escalation.

In accordance with the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, Mozambique firmly advocates for a negotiated resolution to this conflict. We call for an immediate ceasefire and the swift resumption of direct dialogue, conducted in good faith, to pave the way for enduring peace. The long-suffering populations and future generations deserve that mark of respect.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): When we learned about the request for today's Security Council briefing, quite frankly we were taken aback by the cynicism and brazenness of our Western colleagues and their egregious double standards.

We understand perfectly well that the situation on the front line is catastrophic for the Zelenskyy regime, especially after his inglorious adventure in Kursk, which triggered the collapse of the Ukrainian Armed Forces' positions in Donbas. We also understand that because of that, Zelenskyy's Western patrons are now faced with the task of obscuring those unfavourable developments at any cost, as they could affect the opinions of voters in their countries. They have long been shamelessly providing evidence in the spirit of "highly likely". Nonetheless, we believed that even for them there would be some limits when it comes to spreading blatant disinformation. But as it turns out, they know no such limits, and Washington, London and company have reached a new low today. It was said at one time here in the Chamber that we were dismantling washing machines and other household appliances to obtain microchips, because we had missiles only "for one or two days". Then they tried to make the whole

world believe that we were raping babies with spoons and capturing people in the streets because no one wanted to go to war. Bucha, Kramatorsk, the Mariupol Drama Theatre and the Transfiguration Cathedral in Odesa were all barefaced lies to smear the Russian Armed Forces. Those examples will be inscribed in gold letters in textbooks on disinformation and propaganda, just as they have already become generic designations to dub the clumsy and unconvincing provocations of the West, carried out in an attempt to cover up the crimes of their accomplices in Kyiv.

I want to thank Ambassador Woodward for her touching concern about the Russian budget. She used the expression "impoverished Russia". I would like to invite the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to Russia so that she could find the evidence of what she just said. However, I am afraid that she will be disappointed by what she will see as her description is divorced from reality.

A series of similar allegations about the transfer of soldiers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Ukrainian front should not surprise anyone. Those cases have only one thing in common — they are mere assertions, and in the absence of any convincing evidence they are aimed only at shifting the focus away from the real problems that pose a threat to international peace and security. We are becoming increasingly convinced of that today, as we listen to the lamentations of the United States and its satellites. Today's show is being performed to achieve one goal only — to justify post factum their own decision to send NATO troops to shore up the regime of the expired Kyiv dictator. Concealing the presence of NATO soldiers and NATO specialists on the territory controlled by the Kyiv regime is simply no longer possible, no matter how disguised they may be and no matter what "legends" the regime may make up to hide that fact. Every day, foreigners are being killed by the dozens and hundreds. They are taken prisoner and appear in videos among Ukrainian soldiers. There are more and more obituaries of NATO top-brass or military specialists who are alleged to have tragically died while walking in the mountains or of a sudden heart attack, when in fact they were actually eliminated during targeted attacks on command posts, training bases and military factories on Ukrainian territory. We also note that the hysteria surrounding the North Korean issue miraculously "coincided" with Mr. Zelenskyy's signing a decree that authorizes foreign

citizens and stateless persons to serve in the Ukrainian Armed Forces in commanding positions.

I will not even talk about the incessant pumping of weapons and intelligence into the Kyiv regime, without which Zelenskyy and his criminal clique simply cannot fight. We will talk about that in detail tomorrow during a separate meeting. I would like to ask one very simple question. Even if we imagine that everything that our Western colleagues claim about military cooperation between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were true, why are the United States and its allies trying to impose on the whole world the flawed logic that they have the right to help the Zelenskyy regime by harnessing NATO's entire military and intelligence potential, while Russia's allies have no right to do take similar action? Where did they get this neo-colonial feeling of their own exceptionality and impunity and ungrounded belief that others are prohibited from doing what they do?

We know their misleading narrative, which has been compromised many times already. They say that Ukraine is the victim and Russia is the aggressor. That works only for those who have no idea at all about the background of the Ukrainian crisis or those who simply do not want to know anything about it. However, all of our reasonable, sensible colleagues understand perfectly well that our special military operation in Ukraine would never have happened if not for the Kyiv regime. It is the Kyiv regime that started a war against civilians in Donbas after the Maidan anti-constitutional coup orchestrated by the West. Then, after facing decent response, it sabotaged the implementation of the Minsk agreements endorsed by the Security Council.

The whole world saw what kind of "victim" Ukraine really is in August, when Zelenskyy's neo-Nazi gangs started an unprovoked attack on a peaceful Russian border region. The Internet is flooded with evidence that those "bandits in uniform" deliberately killed Russian civilians, sparing neither women, nor children, nor the elderly. They deliberately targeted civilian cars and ambulances. There is also evidence of rape, looting and destruction of houses and livestock. By the way, the share of foreign mercenaries among them, primarily from Poland, the United States and the United Kingdom, is off the charts. Are those the people they are now trying to present as the "victims of Russian aggression" who have the right to self-defence? We discussed those crimes in detail and presented evidence of them at the Arria Formula meeting on 25 October.

Representatives came with their prepared speeches and simply ignored the reality they were shown. That is the pinnacle of cynicism.

The payback for Zelenskyy's reckless and ill-fated Kursk adventure, which achieved none of its goals, has arrived. And it is high time for representatives to adapt their trite rhetoric and come up with something more sophisticated, because otherwise it is not convincing. And they will not be able to divert attention from the true face — or rather the "beastly grin" — of Zelenskyy's junta, which is now exposed to the whole world.

Regarding the issue of cooperation with Pyongyang, our position is honest and open. The Democratic People's Republic is our good neighbour and close partner, and we are developing cooperation with that country in various areas. Our interaction is transparent. We pay visits, sign international treaties and conclude business contracts in various areas of bilateral interaction. And it is our sovereign right to do so. I would like to underscore that Russia's cooperation with the Democratic People's Republic in military and other areas is in line with international law and not in violation of it. It is not pitted against third countries and poses no threat to other States of the region or to the international community. We intend to develop that cooperation in the future, and no one can stop us from doing that.

As members know, on 19 June, we signed the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the Russian Federation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That was a natural consequence of our traditionally close relations of fraternal friendship and comprehensive cooperation, which have now reached an unprecedentedly high level. It was also driven by geopolitical transformations, which require a quality update of the legal foundations of our bilateral cooperation to make it mutually beneficial for both countries. The Treaty is not a secret; the entire text has been published. It sets out the basic principles for the further development of Russian-Korean ties with a view to deepening partnership and strategic cooperation on a wide range of priority areas, as well as establishing a fair international system. Members can see that for themselves if they read the Treaty. Therefore, apart from the statements being made by our Western colleagues, there is no reason to characterize our cooperation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a threat to anyone.

We can see that today's Western spectacle in the Security Council is pursuing another objective. I believe it is no secret that, for more than two years, the Western collaborators of the Zelenskyy regime have been trying to cajole the leadership of the Republic of Korea into more active military and technical cooperation with the Kyiv regime and to provide and supply the much-needed lethal weapons. Here, the frenzied anti-Pyongyang rhetoric is very convenient for Washington, London and Brussels, because the Kyiv regime has almost exhausted their own reserves.

We hope that our South Korean colleagues will be wise enough not to fall for that trick. In any event, I can assure them that, despite the current difficult period, we are trying to safeguard the preconditions for the resumption of the traditionally good-neighbourly relations between Moscow and Seoul, and we value their restraint. We are also optimistic when we see the public opinion polls in their country, which show that an overwhelming majority of people in the Republic of Korea do not wish to become involved in the Ukrainian conflict.

**Mr. George** (Sierra Leone): I thank Mr. Miroslav Jenča, Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas, for his briefing. We welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Ukraine in this meeting.

Sierra Leone remains deeply concerned about the escalating conflict in Ukraine, which has persisted for more than two and a half years. The recent intensification in fighting has resulted in further occupation of Ukrainian villages and regained territory in the Kursk region. We take note of Ukraine's letter dated 25 October 2024 alleging the deployment of military personnel from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Ukraine has based its claim on intelligence reports and open-source information. While those reports are allegations at this stage, they serve as a stark reminder of the broader destabilizing impact that this conflict could have on regional and international peace. It is therefore important at this juncture to emphasize the need for parties to the conflict to abide by international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Having traversed its own path from conflict to peace, Sierra Leone values the importance of dialogue, diplomacy and adherence to international norms. We urge all parties to the conflict to exercise restraint and

to engage in constructive dialogue in order to prevent any further escalation of the current situation. The conflict in Ukraine has already caused tremendous civilian suffering and disrupted essential services. It is imperative that we prioritize humanitarian considerations and the protection of civilians, who invariably bear the brunt of this catastrophic conflict. Furthermore, we call on all Member States to recommit to their obligations under international law, ensuring that any actions taken are in full compliance with the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the peaceful resolution of disputes. In that regard, the role of multilateral forums and mechanisms for dialogue becomes ever more critical. We also note the importance of good offices and the role the United Nations can play to establish lines of engagement.

Sierra Leone also recognizes the importance of collaboration among nations to alleviate potential flashpoints. We encourage all stakeholders to engage in transparent communication and intelligence-sharing, fostering an environment of trust and cooperation. Such collaboration is essential to accurately assess situations that may have an impact on global security and stability. As we navigate these uncertain times, let us be guided by our shared commitment to peace and security. Sierra Leone stands ready to support efforts aimed at de-escalation and peaceful resolution, reaffirming our dedication to a world where diplomacy prevails over discord.

In conclusion, we further call for full respect of the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of both Ukraine and the Russian Federation within their internationally recognized borders and for the immediate cessation of hostilities. In doing so, we insistently call for good-faith diplomatic efforts to address the legitimate concerns of the involved parties. In the light of recent developments, it is crucial for the international community to promote dialogue in order to prevent any escalation that may further endanger the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine through diplomatic means, as was envisaged in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Mr. Montalvo Sosa** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his briefing.

Since the invasion of Ukraine began, we have witnessed the devastating consequences of the conflict. The numbers are shocking: thousands of civilian lives

lost, communities destroyed and a growing number of displaced persons who, as winter approaches, face an even more precarious and desperate situation. Likewise, this conflict continues to exacerbate global tensions and affect the world economy, at a time when the world should be focused on working together to address a number of common challenges. Unfortunately, the spiral of violence, fuelled by the geographic expansion of the conflict, continues to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable, including women, children, the elderly and persons with restricted mobility.

In various regions of Ukraine, critical infrastructure, including ports and power plants, and residential areas continue to be targeted, and the attacks have left a tragic toll of civilian casualties. Attacks against civilians and civilian objects are prohibited under international humanitarian law and must stop immediately.

Ecuador once again calls for unimpeded humanitarian access, especially in the most affected areas of eastern and southern Ukraine, and reiterates the importance of avoiding any action that would jeopardize the security of the nuclear facilities in Zaporizhzhya and Kursk. Recent public information about the alleged mobilization of North Korean troops to Russia for deployment in this conflict should be investigated, given that such mobilization, if confirmed, would constitute an alarming, dangerous and illegal development.

It is essential that the parties exercise maximum restraint and prioritize, first and foremost, the protection of the civilian population. My delegation reiterates its concern that, should the conflict continue on this course, we could be approaching a critical point of no return. The increase in nuclear rhetoric and the escalation of hostilities is of global concern, hence the need to support the efforts of the Secretary-General and international actors to put an end to this conflict. Dialogue and diplomacy cannot be considered to be red lines.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Ecuador's commitment to the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and the peaceful settlement of disputes. In that context, we support the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine, and we add our voice to those that demand that the Russian Federation suspend its military operations, which would allow

progress towards a negotiated solution leading to a just and sustainable peace that is underpinned by international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his briefing. I look forward to hearing from the representatives of Ukraine and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea later on.

The Ukraine crisis has entered its third year. The fighting on the ground is continuing, with heavy casualties among innocent civilians, massive infrastructure damage, an increasingly grave humanitarian crisis and ever more visible spillover effects. China considers that deeply deplorable and worrisome. We once again call on the parties to the conflict to remain rational and exercise restraint, earnestly abide by international humanitarian law, do their utmost to protect the safety and security of civilians and civilian infrastructure, refrain from causing more harm and damage and prevent the impact of the war on the region from becoming irreversible.

The restoration of peace as soon as possible and the promotion of a political solution to the Ukraine crisis are aspirations shared by the international community and the responsibility of every country in the world. We in this Chamber have continued to call on the parties to the conflict to demonstrate political will, meet each other halfway and start peace talks as soon as possible. We also call on the international community to actively provide assistance and create conditions conducive to that. The situation has now reached another critical moment. In the light of the increasingly severe and complex risks, we once again call on all the parties concerned to abide by the three principles of no expansion of the battlefield, no escalation of the fighting and no provocation by any party, with a view to quickly de-escalating the situation and preventing it from getting out of control.

China's position on the Ukraine issue is consistent and clear. We have always stood on the side of peace and dialogue. We have always been committed to promoting peace talks and finding a political solution. It is based on that position that China and Brazil have jointly issued their six common understandings on a political settlement of the Ukraine crisis. Together with the relevant countries of the global South, we have initiated the establishment of a Friends of Peace group

on the Ukraine crisis, in the hope of building a greater consensus for peace and consolidating the conditions for a political settlement. We will continue to maintain communication with the parties concerned and to play a constructive role in promoting a political settlement of the crisis.

Lastly, in their statements just now, some members mentioned the situation on the Korean Peninsula. We have repeatedly made our position clear in this Chamber in that regard. I want to reiterate that China has always believed that maintaining peace and stability on the Peninsula and promoting a political solution to the Peninsula issue serve the common interests of all the parties, and we hope that they will make constructive efforts to that end together.

**Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett** (Guyana): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his briefing.

Guyana is gravely concerned about the dangerous trajectory of this conflict. Every day we hear more harrowing reports of the death and destruction brought upon the innocent civilians who are bearing the brunt of the conflict. They did not ask for this war and have little means of escaping it. We share the Assistant Secretary-General Jenča's concern about the ramifications of any further escalation of the conflict and reiterate our call for an immediate end to the unrelenting violence and violations of international law. While the Council's meetings on Ukraine have become predictable and routine, we must resist attempts to normalize the conflict and the suffering of civilians. It is the Council's duty to live up to its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Bringing the war to an end must therefore be our foremost concern.

Two and a half years ago, on 23 February 2022, the Foreign Minister of Ukraine stood before the General Assembly, pleading for the United Nations to take swift, concrete and resolute action to "avert a new devastating catastrophe in Europe" (*A/76/PV.58, p. 3*). He sounded the alarm that day about Russian military forces amassed along the Ukrainian border and warned that every nation would become embroiled in the ensuing crisis if we failed to act. But there was no action from the Security Council. One day later, we all watched in disbelief as Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations was violated, and the most sacred tenets of international law trampled on.

Much has happened since then. Many more violations have been recorded on both sides of the front line. Homes, schools, hospitals and other critical civilian infrastructure became the targets of missiles, and innocent civilians their hapless victims. We, the members of the Security Council, receive reports of the latest atrocities almost in real time, and yet we have been unable to frontally address those violations. We often find ourselves mere spectators as the Chamber becomes a theatre for the latest public-relations spins. All the while, the death toll and list of casualties continue to climb. Men, women, children, parents, grandparents and babies — they have all been waiting for the Council to deliver swift, concrete and resolute action, to stop the war, stop the destruction and stop the suffering. Instead, we are witnessing lives cut short and futures lost or paused, while pain and suffering multiply.

We are often told that the war must be won militarily. We are not convinced that it is the only option. That is why we applaud the efforts of those who have decided to work for peace, develop peace plans and convene peace conferences. We understand that the plans may not individually offer the full spectrum of solutions being sought at this stage, but they are a step in the right direction. They represent an earnest desire on the part of the members of the international community to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

As a small developing country, Guyana will continue to use its voice and seat on the Council to support efforts aimed at ending the war and achieving lasting and sustainable peace. As an elected member, we came here with no illusions, but ready and prepared to work for peace. To be clear, our call for peace and dialogue by no means implies indifference to violations of international law. On the contrary, we affirm that respect for the legal obligations enshrined in the Charter and international law must be upheld, and that the acquisition of territory by force must never be condoned. We continue to call, as we do today, for full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and for the Russian Federation to withdraw its military forces from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine. We will also continue to demand that the Council live up to its responsibility and take action to bring about a peaceful end to the war. It is our duty to change the dangerous trajectory that the conflict is taking.

In conclusion, Madam President, as you know, the mural displayed behind you was gifted to the United

Nations by the Kingdom of Norway. I think it apt today to recall the words of the Norwegian Foreign Minister, who said that it was meant to inspire those working in the Chamber to carry out the core of the mandate of the United Nations. That is a responsibility that rests on our shoulders, one that we all chose and promised to uphold, and one that we cannot and must not abrogate.

**Mr. Merabet** (Algeria): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Miroslav Jenča for his briefing.

This is our second meeting in October (see S/PV.9755) to discuss the situation in Ukraine. Yet tomorrow we will have another meeting on the same question. That shows the importance that the international community, and the Council, attach to the issue, as well as the dangerous tensions that have marked the conflict, especially recently. The escalatory trend that has consistently governed our interactions related to the conflict has always been a source of deep concern for Algeria. From the very beginning of our term on the Security Council we have warned that escalation and polarization can lead only to worse scenarios, but those warnings have not been heeded.

Both parties have continued to strengthen their military capabilities, seeking a better position in a war that, like any other conflict, will have no winners. On the contrary, the conflict is causing more loss of lives, more destruction and more harm to both Ukraine and Russia every day. Furthermore, its political and economic consequences continue to be felt not only in the region but in the world at large, especially in developing countries. That negative trend must stop. Peace should be the only option, the top-priority objective and the unique leitmotiv. Peace should not be lost in the limbo of polarization, misinformation and disinformation, geopolitical calculations or miscalculations, mutual accusations and divergent perceptions.

The United Nations, including our Council, was built on a solid basis that includes: first, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations on which we all agree, as well as the norms of international law; secondly, the virtues of diplomacy, dialogue, cooperation and mutual understanding; and thirdly, the fairness and effectiveness of multilateralism as a privileged platform to overcome complex situations. Therefore, let us make good use of that structure to achieve just and lasting peace. Let us give diplomacy and genuine dialogue the opportunity to deliver. Let us give peace the chance to prevail.

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

I would like to start by thanking Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his statement — and I apologize for always mispronouncing his name.

The allegations that we just heard are deeply troubling and, if confirmed, would constitute not only violations of international law but also a development with potentially serious consequences for European, Asian and global security. Allow me to elaborate.

First, the legal aspect seems clear to us: such a deployment of armed forces troops by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, if confirmed, would add to the growing number of well-founded reports of illegal arms transfers to Russia. Indeed, any arms transaction with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea constitutes a violation of the Security Council's sanctions concerning the sale, purchase, import and export of weapons to or from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Under resolution 2270 (2016), the hosting of trainers, advisers or other officials for purposes related to military, paramilitary or police training is also prohibited. And while resolution 2397 (2017) called for the repatriation of all foreign workers of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it is inconceivable that the presence of thousands of troops could be reconciled with the letter, let alone the spirit, of those binding resolutions. One violation of international law would therefore support another — the violations of sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea support Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. In that context, Switzerland deeply regrets that the extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea failed owing to a Russian veto (see S/PV.9591), while the Panel was investigating allegations of illegal arms transfers between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Russia.

Secondly, like the vast majority of Member States, Switzerland condemns Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. It is appalling that, despite the clear and repeated calls from a very large number of members of the General Assembly and the International Court of Justice, Russia continues its military aggression. Sending armed forces to support it would run counter not only to those calls but also the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations itself. We call on the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea and all third parties to refrain from any action likely to fuel Russian military aggression, and we once again call on Russia to immediately cease all hostilities and withdraw its troops from the entire Ukrainian territory.

Thirdly and lastly, the solicitation of such military support in direct violation of Council resolutions would further undermine the non-proliferation architecture established half a century ago under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Indeed, as a depositary State, Russia is called upon to strengthen and not weaken the Treaty. The possible involvement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's armed forces in Russia's military aggression against Ukraine also raises the spectre of a supraregional expansion of hostilities. As a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia is called upon to maintain international peace and security and not to undermine them. Switzerland believes that the Security Council has a responsibility and a duty to respond to the widely shared call for a just and lasting peace in Ukraine. Switzerland continues to support the Secretary-General in seeking a peaceful solution and remains ready to contribute to all efforts to promote peace in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

**Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine):** I would have recognized here Putin's capo-regime in the permanent seat of the Soviet Union, but — as has become customary — he has already left the Chamber.

We requested this meeting to address another step taken by Moscow to further escalate its war against Ukraine. At the Security Council meeting on 21 October (see S/PV.9755), Ukraine and several other delegations raised the issue of the engagement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea troops in the Russian armed aggression against my country. Since then, the situation has been evolving in a menacing direction. According to the available information, Democratic People's Republic of Korea military personnel, consisting of up to 12,000 servicemen, are being trained at five training grounds in the Eastern Military District of the Russian Armed Forces. That contingent includes at least 500 officers of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea army, with at least three Generals from the General Staff.

Subsequently, there are plans to form at least five units or formations of military personnel from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, each consisting of 2,000 to 3,000 servicemen. One such unit is equivalent to that of a motorized rifle regiment. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea servicemen are supposed to wear Russian uniforms and use Russian small arms. They will also be provided with Russian identity documents. Notably, to conceal their presence, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea servicemen are expected to be integrated into the Russian units made up of representatives of ethnic minorities from the Asian part of Russia. Among them, for instance, is the Special Buryat Battalion of the eleventh Separate Air Assault Brigade of the Russian Airborne Forces.

According to available information, between 23 October and 28 October, at least seven aircraft carrying military personnel — up to 2,100 soldiers — flew from the Eastern Military District to Russia's border with Ukraine. The number of soldiers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expected to be transferred from Russia's Primorsky Krai region by the end of October may reach 4,500. It is also expected that in November, military personnel from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will begin directly participating in combat operations against Ukraine's defence forces. On 26 October, 400 Democratic People's Republic of Korea soldiers arrived in the western part of Russia's Kursk region. The area of their deployment was prepared by engineering units of the Moscow Military District of the Russian armed forces. Moreover, the preparatory work for the deployment of additional forces from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in that area is now under way. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea units I just mentioned will likely operate in the area of responsibility of the eleventh Separate Air Assault Brigade. According to the information at our disposal, an operational group of 40 Democratic People's Republic of Korea servicemen has been conducting reconnaissance in the area of responsibility of that Brigade since 20 October.

Even mice and cockroaches — but somehow not the Russian Ambassador in this Chamber — know that none of the countries that provide assistance to Ukraine are under Security Council sanctions. Yet Russia is still receiving assistance from North Korea, a country under full sanctions, which is a brazen violation of the Charter of the United Nations. It goes without saying that

sending troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to support Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is a flagrant violation of international law. Moreover, the Russian Federation's training of regular units from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea constitutes a violation of resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009) and 2270 (2016). In turn, when soldiers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are provided with or receive any training or other assistance related to the use of arms, including ballistic missiles, that is also a violation of those Council resolutions. Yet Russia continues to chip away at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's sanctions regime, and its final goal seems to be clear — dismantling the entire system of global deterrence against the Pyongyang regime. We call on the Security Council, and on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), to address the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation's non-compliance with the relevant resolutions of the Council.

The active involvement of troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine represents very bad news for the wider world. It is the most dangerous development in the recent period of the war in terms of its global implications. Building the interoperability of the armies of Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea armies constitutes a threat to Europe as well as to the Korean Peninsula, its neighbours and beyond. Some may assure themselves that Russia needs soldiers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea merely as cannon fodder to continue its meat-grinder assaults against Ukrainian forces. However, that is only part of the truth and not the main point. The Pyongyang regime is not merely supplying soldiers to Russia. It is pursuing its own interests and long-term goals. Those Democratic People's Republic of Korea servicemen, especially officers, who survive the Russia-Ukraine war will return to their region with exceptional experience of modern warfare. One may wonder how the Pyongyang regime plans to utilize those experienced units. The truth is that we all know the answer. When we say that the war is gradually expanding from the European theatre to the Far East, it is not solely because the entry and formation points for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea combat units are located there. It is also because they are likely to be used beyond Ukraine.

Actually, it speaks volumes that Putin himself, contrary to his usual practice of denying everything, has not denied either the presence of Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces or the far-reaching plans that both dictatorships have in that regard. Referring to the article on mutual military assistance in their recent bilateral agreement on a comprehensive strategic partnership, Putin openly threatened the world by stating that what they will do and how they will do it is their own business within the framework of the agreement. That is nothing more than bullying on a global scale by a criminal who is confident in his own impunity. That behaviour is a result of the comforting tolerance that Russia's mafia State enjoys in response to its irresponsible and destructive attitude towards the United Nations and the Security Council itself. During its more than 30 years on the Council, Russia has systematically and consistently undermined the Council's capability to maintain peace and security. What has happened regarding Ukraine is not unpredictable in any way. It is just another episode of the "RU-tflix" series that we have all been watching for many years, including in this Chamber and on the United Nations webcast.

Just recently, we condemned Russia for dismantling the monitoring mechanism of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea sanctions regime. Now the sanctions regime itself is under threat. The Council's leniency towards Russia has been stretched so far that it is broken. The Council is broken, and as the Secretary-General says, the system is not working for anyone. That is why we are calling for action. And if the Security Council is immobilized by Russia's presence, we must seek other formats and forms for such action. Every now and then we have heard that Russia would never cross this or that red line of the civilized world. But we have to open our eyes. Russia is not crossing red lines. It is walking down a red carpet — woven of weak responses, unfounded hopes and complacency. In truth, it is not a red carpet but a river of blood, one that began flowing the moment Russia was given the Soviet seat in this Chamber in 1991. Do I need to remind anyone whose blood flows in that river?

That is why I am sorry to have heard so much scepticism about whether Russia would go so far as to openly establish a military alliance with the world's most notorious rogue State. Why the disbelief? Did Ukraine not warn of the aggressive nature of the entity called the Russian Federation? Have Russia's other



neighbours, like the Baltic States, not given the same warnings? What more needs to happen for the world to finally accept the truth that Russia will not cease damaging the cornerstones of global security until they are dismantled or Russia is stopped? That is not an alarmist doomsday prediction from a pundit on a political talk show. It is simply a description of what is happening before the Council's eyes — the same “RU-tflix” series that we are all watching. Tomorrow there will be a new cheap episode here in the Council. Members will once again have to come and listen to Russia's absurdities about the so-called threats related to supplying weapons to Ukraine.

And what is most surprising is that even in the face of the evolving military alliance between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, there are still people who desperately want to believe that limiting Ukraine's ability to defend itself — now from two nuclear States — will somehow make those States more inclined to peace. That position is either infantile or cynical. Binding the hands of the defending State can provide only a few years of tranquillity at the expense of Ukraine, its people and its infrastructure. Ukraine will never agree to such a scenario, and I do not believe that other responsible nations will either.

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

**Mr. Ilgis** (Latvia): I am addressing the Security Council on behalf of the three Baltic States of Estonia, Lithuania and my own country, Latvia. We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

We thank Assistant Secretary-General Miroslav Jenča for his comprehensive briefing.

Since the beginning of its aggression against Ukraine, Russia has been boasting in this very Chamber about its inevitable victory. However, the situation on the ground is different. The Kremlin, grappling with ammunition shortages and huge manpower losses, has not only turned to Pyongyang for military supplies but now even for troop deployments. It is more than alarming that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has reportedly deployed 10,000 troops to Russia for further possible deployment to Ukraine. Russia has recruited a large number of interpreters, while training the soldiers of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to use Russian military equipment, including drones.

Putting boots on the ground from a third country on the battlefield marks a significant escalation in Russia's aggression against Ukraine. By joining Russia's war of aggression, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is violating the most basic rules of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations — the prohibition of the use of force and the obligation to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States. The Baltic States condemn that fact in the strongest possible terms. We demand that Russia immediately cease all military operations and withdraw all troops and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders.

Russia must also stop blatantly abusing its status as a permanent member of the Security Council. As mentioned by Council members, we clearly recall that in March Russia vetoed draft resolution S/2024/255 on the extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006). Recently Russia's Foreign Minister claimed that the nuclear disarmament of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a “closed issue”. Those developments highlight how Russia is willing to exploit its role as a permanent member of the Security Council and shield the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from accountability in exchange for the latter's military support. By pursuing such an opportunistic partnership, Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are posing grave security risks and destabilizing both Europe and Asia, with severe global repercussions. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as Belarus and Iran, to stop their assistance to Russia in waging its cruel war of aggression against Ukraine. The Baltic States also urge China, as a permanent member of the Security Council, to safeguard the principles enshrined in the Charter and exercise its influence on Russia in order to end its war of aggression against its sovereign neighbour.

Russia and all its accomplices must bear full legal and financial responsibility for their violations of international law. We must spare no effort to ensure comprehensive accountability for all crimes committed by Russia's leaders in Ukraine. The establishment of a special tribunal will serve to prosecute those responsible for the crime of aggression. We encourage other countries to support the proposal. Russia tries to rearrange the international system so that it only benefits aggressors. Russia tries to tear down what

has been built by all of us. We must ensure that the global rules-based order remains resilient in the face of those actions. The Baltic States support a just peace in Ukraine, based on Ukraine's peace formula, which is rooted in the principles of the Charter and international law. We encourage all States Members of the United Nations to endorse it.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the Baltic States strongly support Ukraine's exercise of its inherent right to self-defence and reaffirm their full solidarity with Ukraine in restoring its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

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

**Mr. Lambrinidis**: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia, as well as Monaco, align themselves with this statement.

I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Jenča for his important briefing.

Here we are once again, witnessing yet another deeply alarming escalation in Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. In direct violation of the Charter of the United Nations, there is now an expansion of military cooperation between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Russia, including through the deployment of the latter country's troops to potentially participate in Russia's illegal war of aggression. There must be unequivocal and universal condemnation of those developments, with no caveats. The participation of troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine would constitute an additional serious breach of international law, including the principles of the United Nations Charter. It would represent a unilateral hostile act by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, at the reckless invitation of Russia, with grave consequences for European and global peace and security. The European Union is ready to explore necessary actions as a response, in coordination with international partners. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must immediately stop providing support to Russia's illegal war efforts.

Just this past June, the Security Council discussed (see S/PV.9653) the illegal and destabilizing behaviour

of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as demonstrated by its continued pursuit of nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, as well as its deepening military cooperation with Russia, particularly through arms transfers, which openly violate Security Council resolutions and undermine peace and security in Europe and on the Korean peninsula. The ongoing support of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine illustrates how closely linked European security is to that of the Indo-Pacific region. With its disturbing shift of position on the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Russia has relinquished its key obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, including the obligation to prevent nuclear proliferation, and has violated multiple Security Council resolutions that were adopted with Russia's support. Russia's deepening military cooperation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea also sends a clear message — if one were needed — that it is not sincerely interested in a just, comprehensive and lasting peace. Instead, Russia is escalating its aggression by desperately seeking any help for its war, including from actors that are disrupting global peace and security. The EU strongly condemns third countries' continued support for Russia's war of aggression and urges them to cease all assistance. That includes not only direct military support but also the provision of dual-use goods and sensitive items that sustain Russia's military-industrial base.

Russia has once again requested that the Council meet tomorrow in an attempt to divert attention and resources from its aggression against Ukraine and the dramatic consequences for Ukraine and the world. It is an abuse of the United Nations system. Ukraine enjoys the inherent right to self-defence and regain full control of all of its territory, within its internationally recognized borders. Supporting Ukraine and its people to defend themselves from Russia's aggression is therefore legitimate and fully in line with international law and the Charter. We will continue to support Ukraine and defend the Charter in response to Russia's aggression, and we will do so for as long as it takes.

The European Union strongly supports a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, based on the United Nations Charter. Under the Charter, Russia, the aggressor, must withdraw all its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine. It must stop attempting to annex illegally occupied territories, stop targeting

civilians and destroying civilian infrastructure, and most certainly stop recruiting foreign troops to help it expand its war.

Any serious proposals for peace must be based on the Charter and international law, as clearly laid out by the General Assembly in its resolutions. All countries desiring a just, comprehensive and lasting peace should keep conveying this message of the United Nations loudly and clearly to Russia's leadership.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Kim Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Under the coercive demand of the United States and its followers, the Security Council has once again convened an unlawful meeting, which clearly runs counter to the fundamental spirit of the Charter of the United Nations to promote the development of friendly relations and cooperation among nations. I strongly condemn the United States and its followers for calling for this meeting to distort the reality of the situation as a result of their hostile policies and sordid political motives against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation.

If the Security Council has to convene a meeting, it should duly call into question the crimes against humanity of Israel and its accomplice, the United States. Israel has massacred tens of thousands of innocent Palestinian civilians, including women and children, using weapons of mass destruction provided by the United States. If the Security Council is to hold a meeting, it should naturally take issue with Ukraine's aggressive invasion of the Russian people's sacred territory of Kursk, killing civilians and destroying civilian infrastructure. The countries that called for this meeting, including the United States, are the main culprits in the destruction of peace, seriously harming global peace and security and staking their fate on aggression against sovereign States and interference in their internal affairs. The fact itself clearly demonstrates the unlawful nature of this meeting.

Today the Ukrainian situation is the leading crisis in the security environment of Europe. It has been caused by the United States and the West, which have infringed on the legitimate security interests of a sovereign State by pursuing NATO's reckless eastward advance and expansionist policy. Since the outbreak of the Ukrainian situation, the United States and the

West have escalated their supply of various lethal types of equipment to the Kyiv authorities, including battle tanks, fighter planes, cluster munitions and depleted uranium bombs. They have also given Ukraine a green light to use those weapons to strike Russian territory.

Thus emboldened, Ukraine launched missile strikes in June on the Russian territory of Sebastopol with United States-supplied American Army Tactical Missile Systems, resulting in more than 150 casualties among innocent civilians, including children. In August, it invaded Kursk, killing numerous civilians with indiscriminate missile and drone attacks. It is an open secret now that the United States and the West are systematically providing Ukraine with intelligence data from reconnaissance satellites, together with precision-guided weapons, and even sending mercenaries into the country. In their hopeless ambition to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia, NATO and the West, led by the United States, have pushed the Kyiv authorities to seek confrontation only to plunge the Ukrainian situation into a protracted war and bring the planet to the brink of a new world war. All the facts indisputably demonstrate that the hysterical reaction of the United States and the West in calling for today's meeting is designed to cover up their crime of encouraging the prolongation of the Ukrainian situation and diverting the focus of public opinion elsewhere.

The biggest threat to international peace and security right now is the acts of the United States and its allies against peace, obsessed as they are with their hegemonic ambitions to foment confrontation and conflicts among other countries while working frantically to strengthen their aggressive alliances and belligerent actions. For several decades, the United States has maintained hundreds of thousands of aggressive troops and the latest military hardware on and around the Korean Peninsula, the world's most dangerous hotspot, on the pretext of strengthening its alliances. And every year it stages dozens of war exercises of various kinds against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, posing a serious threat to peace and security in the region. In sharp contrast to the past, the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea has recently evolved into a nuclear-based military bloc and nuclear-war alliance in the true sense of the word. The nuclear threat against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea today has therefore become ever more actualized and maximized. That being the case, the United States brought together

its followers to call for convening this Security Council meeting targeting independent sovereign States. It is nothing but a mockery and an insult to the Charter.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation are entitled to develop overall bilateral relations in every area, including on the political, economic, military and cultural fronts, in full conformity with the recognized norms of international law and the comprehensive strategic partnership treaty concluded between their two countries. If Russia's sovereignty and security interests are exposed to and threatened by the continued dangerous attempts of the United States and the West, and if we judge that we should respond to them in some way, we will make the necessary decision. Pyongyang and Moscow maintain close contact with each other on mutual security and developments in the situation. The international community should never tolerate the high-handedness and arbitrariness of the United States and its followers in their attempt to impose hegemonic domination within a unipolar system. It will rather have to struggle courageously to safeguard genuine international justice and global peace and stability.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): The representative of the United States has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I need to take the floor to respond to the comments made by the representative of the Kim regime. I would like to remind everyone that it is a regime that has violated multiple Security Council resolutions with regard to its nuclear and ballistic-missile programmes. That is the important point here. The activities that it is carrying out in support of Russia's aggression in Ukraine, particularly through its deployment of troops to Russia, which we expect will be used in Ukraine, are a very dangerous escalation of the situation. The other troubling factor here is that its destabilizing activity has the support of two permanent members of the Security Council, and we all know which two countries I am referring to. Those activities are a major threat to peace and security not only in Europe but in the Indo-Pacific. Should troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea enter Ukraine in support of Russia, they will surely return in body bags. I would therefore advise Chairman Kim to think twice about engaging in such reckless and dangerous behaviour.

*The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.*