



United Nations

MEETINGS COVERAGE

ELEVENTH EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION, 18TH & 19TH MEETINGS (AM & PM)

GA/12492
23 FEBRUARY 2023

Hours Before Ukraine Conflict Enters Second Year, General Assembly Adopts Resolution Demanding Russian Federation Withdraw Military Forces, Adjourning Emergency Session

Delegates Reject Two Draft Amendments Submitted by Belarus

The General Assembly adjourned its emergency special session on Ukraine today on the eve of the first anniversary of the Russian Federation's invasion of that country, adopting a resolution that underscored the need to urgently reach peace, demanded that the Russian Federation withdraw its military forces and emphasized the need to ensure accountability for crimes committed on Ukraine's territory.

The text — “Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine” — was adopted by a recorded vote of 141 in favour to 7 against (Belarus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Mali, Nicaragua, Russian Federation and Syria), with 32 abstentions.

By its terms, the General Assembly underscored the need to reach — as soon as possible — a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, also calling on Member States and international organizations to redouble support for diplomatic efforts towards this end. Further, reaffirming its commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders — extending to its territorial waters — the Assembly reiterated its demand that the Russian Federation immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its military forces from Ukraine's territory and called for a cessation of hostilities.

The Assembly also demanded that the treatment by the parties to the armed

conflict of all prisoners of war be in accordance with certain international conventions, and called for the complete exchange of such prisoners, the release of all unlawfully detained persons and the return of all internees and civilians forcibly transferred and deported. Through the text, the Assembly called for full adherence by such parties to their obligations under international humanitarian law to spare the civilian population and civilian objects; to ensure safe, unhindered humanitarian access to those in need; and to immediately cease attacks on Ukraine's critical infrastructure.

The resolution also saw the Assembly emphasize the need to ensure accountability for the most serious crimes under international law committed on Ukraine's territory through appropriate, fair and independent investigations and prosecutions at the national or international level. Further, it urged all Member States to cooperate to address the war's global impact on food security, energy, finance, the environment and nuclear security and safety.

Prior to adopting the resolution, the Assembly, by recorded vote, rejected two resolutions submitted by Belarus. Among other changes, such amendments would have replaced certain preambular language referencing "aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, including continuous attacks against critical infrastructure across Ukraine" with "hostilities in Ukraine". They also would have inserted new operative language to condemn statements made by certain leaders regarding their true intentions when devising the Minsk agreements as well to call on Member States to address the root causes of the conflict and to refrain from sending weapons into the conflict zone.

Before the General Assembly took action on those texts, Member States delivered statements in continuation of the debate that began on 22 February (for background, see [GA/12491](#)).

"We did not want this war," said Hadja Lahbib, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, underscoring that "this is not a war of the West against Russia". Ukraine was attacked on its sovereign territory, and its very existence is being threatened. Stressing that the misinformation and false equivalencies spread by the Russian Federation for almost a year are not backed up by facts, she said that "justice will find the right word" to describe the suffering of Ukrainian children and the cities forever marked by horror.

Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark, also speaking for Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, held up a copy of the Charter of the United Nations and said that the instrument clearly prohibits aggression and wars of conquest — like the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine. Stating that today's vote provides an opportunity to vote for peace, he added: "let us not miss this opportunity".

Iran's representative, however, said the text neither comprehensively and impartially addresses the issue nor acknowledges the provocations that have contributed to this crisis. All parties involved must abandon their military ambitions, and he called for an immediate ceasefire. Further, he urged the United Nations to establish a cross-regional group of impartial countries to facilitate constructive dialogue and identify solutions to the current impasse.

Péter Szijjártó, Hungary's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, also called on the international community to focus on establishing an immediate ceasefire and

helping to launch peace talks as soon as possible. The most-important duty is to save lives, which is accomplished neither through the delivery of weapons nor the imposition of sanctions. He added that wherever there is a conflict between East and West, “we in Central Europe have always lost”, calling for connectivity and cooperation instead of blocs.

The speaker for China, similarly, stressed that the international community’s top priority should be to facilitate a ceasefire and a cessation of hostilities without delay as the longer the brutality continues, the greater the human suffering will be. He also observed that sending weapons will not bring peace and urged the countries concerned to stop abusing sanctions and act in a manner conducive to de-escalation. The parties must prevent this crisis from worsening, he said, underscoring that “nuclear weapons cannot be used and that nuclear war cannot be fought”.

On that point, Catherine Colonna, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, pointed out that no country other than the Russian Federation has used nuclear rhetoric. Joining other delegations in stressing that this war is everybody’s business, she said that it denies the existence of borders. Neutrality is therefore not a possibility, and letting Moscow dictate the terms would represent a failure of the international order.

Yoshimasa Hayashi, Japan’s Minister for Foreign Affairs echoed that, stating that it would be a victory for the aggressor if its actions were tolerated. Peace must be based on principles, he pointed out, adding that while hostilities must immediately stop, this will not necessarily produce a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. “What if a permanent member of the Security Council launched an aggression against your homeland, grabbed your territory, and then ceased hostilities, calling for peace?” he asked, calling such a peace unjust.

Annalena Baerbock, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, spotlighted “the peace plan right here in front of us — called the Charter of the United Nations”. Moscow must withdraw its troops from Ukraine, stop its bombing and return to the Charter, as there is no peace if an aggressor is rewarded for its ruthless violence. Echoing others that “we did not choose this war”, she said that the international community would rather focus its energy on fixing schools, fighting the climate crisis and strengthening social justice.

Gabrielius Landsbergis, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, noted that his country’s citizens have donated over €40 million in support of Ukraine’s defensive efforts and that its Government has provided protection and humanitarian relief to tens of thousands of Ukrainians. “But none of that is sufficient to stop Russia’s war,” he stressed, noting that Moscow continues its aggression because it enjoys impunity. The Security Council is paralyzed because the Russian Federation wields veto power in that organ and, therefore, the role of the General Assembly becomes more important. As such, he called on Member States to rise to the occasion and support Ukraine’s peace formula.

Following the morning’s statements, several delegations offered explanations of vote both before and after the Assembly adopted the resolution. Some representatives — like those of Nigeria and Angola — objected to language in the text pertaining to ensuring accountability for crimes committed on Ukraine’s territory. Others, such as the speakers for South Africa, Lesotho and India, stressed that the resolution does not serve to bring the parties closer to peace.

The representative of South Sudan, noting that his Government has continuously abstained on this issue over the past year, said that it voted in favour today for the sole reason that the conflict must stop.

Also speaking during the morning's debate were Ministers and representatives of Albania, Slovakia, Croatia, Poland, Czech Republic, North Macedonia, Netherlands, Latvia, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Ireland, Finland, Colombia, Uruguay and Romania, along with an observer for the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Also delivering explanations of vote were representatives of Djibouti, Nepal, Thailand, Brazil, Malaysia, United Kingdom, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia and Pakistan.

The representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea spoke in exercise of the right of reply.

Pursuant to the adopted resolution, the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly temporarily adjourned, with its President authorized to resume its meetings upon request from Member States.

Statements

LARS LØKKE RASMUSSEN, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark, also speaking for Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, pointed out that the Russian Federation is waging a brutal war that includes systematic violations of international law, inhumane attacks on civilians and critical infrastructure, sexual violence and forced deportation and adoption. Underlining the international community's joint responsibility to stand up against all violations of international law, he stressed the need to ensure that war crimes and other atrocities are investigated, and their perpetrators held to account. He noted that, today, "a resolution for peace will be put before us", which asks Member States to denounce this brutal aggression; support comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on the Charter of the United Nations; and demand that the Russian Federation immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. It also urges cooperation to address the war's global impact.

Holding up a copy of the Charter, he said that the instrument clearly prohibits aggression and wars of conquest — like the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine. Urging those present "to be honest about the issue before us", he said that today's vote is about standing up for international law, the Charter and peace and underscored that the countries for whom he speaks will not be neutral when asked to stand on the side of the Charter and the victim of aggression. Ukraine's right to protect itself is inherent in Article 51 of the Charter, while the Russian Federation's unprovoked aggression against Ukraine has no justification. This war must end, this violence must end, and respect for the Charter must be restored to ensure that similar horrors do not happen again. Reiterating that today's vote provides an opportunity to vote for peace, he added: "let us not miss this opportunity".

PÉTER SZIJJÁRTÓ, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, noting that his country is a direct neighbor of Ukraine, said it lives with the tragic consequences of this brutal war. Hungary is carrying out the largest humanitarian operation ever in its history, having received more than a million refugees who

have full and equal access to education and health care. It is heartbreaking to see the torn-apart families arriving to Hungary on a daily basis, he said, adding that this war has no winners, only losers. Stressing that the most important duty of the international community is to save lives, he said neither delivery of weapons nor sanctions save lives. Instead, they contribute to the prolongation and the risk of escalation of this war. He called on the international community to focus on establishing an immediate ceasefire and help launch peace talks as soon as possible.

If channels of communication are being cut, he added, then it means that the hope for peace is given up as well. Highlighting the role of the United Nations, he said it must serve as a platform for talks between the Russian Federation and the United States. In the neighborhood of the war, “we are in the twenty-fifth hour”, he said. Though Hungarian people are not responsible, they have already paid a high price for this war, and not just in skyrocketing inflation or high energy bills, but with the lives of those Hungarians in Ukraine who have died on the frontline. The big and strong countries have not lost any lives, he said, but in Central Europe, the lesson of history is clear. Whenever there is a conflict between East and West, “we in central Europe have always lost”, he said, calling for connectivity and cooperation instead of blocs.

OLTA XHAÇKA, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, said that those present “would do well to remember” that this war is occurring for no other reason than the choice of the President of the Russian Federation. Ukraine neither attacked nor threatened that country, and she stressed that assertions to this end “are just as ludicrous today — when the whole world has seen the weakness of the Russian army — as they were last year, when the world expected the Russian army to succeed in a manner of days”. And it is not just the global evaluation of the military capacity of that army that has changed over the past year — the brutality of this force has now become apparent to all. Noting the war crimes that have been committed in Ukraine over the past year — including indiscriminate bombings, rape and executions — she said that such acts are “perhaps the best indictment of the true nature of Russia’s war”.

She went on to stress that, while this war has had dramatic consequences for the entire world, “what we have seen until now is nothing compared to what we will see if Russia is allowed to prevail in this conflict”. No country will be safer if the Charter of the United Nations and international law are allowed to be trampled upon in the manner Moscow has, and a world where “might makes right” will not benefit anyone. “This practically would mean going back to the logic of the 1930s,” she stressed. Therefore, Albania fully supports today’s resolution, and the General Assembly must do the same. She also opposed the “hostile” amendments proposed by Belarus as attempts to shield the aggressor, calling on all to vote against the same and noting that her country requests a recorded vote thereon.

CATHERINE COLONNA, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, said that the Russian Federation’s brutal war violates the most fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter as well as its own commitments. This has been a year of war marked by successive abuses and crimes so serious and systematic that the International Criminal Court has launched investigations into war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, she said. The international community must not turn a blind eye to executions, torture, sexual violence as a weapon of war, kidnappings and deportations of children. Highlighting the admirable resistance of Ukraine, she expressed her country’s absolute determination to

support that country's right to defend itself.

Stressing that this war is everybody's business, she said it denies the existence of borders. Neutrality is not a possibility; letting the Russian Federation dictate the terms would represent a failure of the international order. "None of us would be able to sleep easy in such a world," she said, adding that the war poses a risk to food security in vulnerable countries. No other country has used nuclear rhetoric, she pointed out, noting the International Court of Justice's demand for an end to the aggression last March. The current draft marks a clear desire for a just and lasting peace.

RASTISLAV KÁČER, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia, aligning himself with the European Union, observed that effective multilateralism is falling apart, while one Member State is blatantly violating the fundamental principles and values of the United Nations. Condemning the Russian Federation's ongoing, unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine, he demanded the unconditional withdrawal of all Russian troops from the whole territory of Ukraine. Further, while Moscow continues with its misleading rhetoric, propaganda and distortion of facts on the ground, the international community must take a fierce stand against the spreading of lies and deceptive narratives.

Noting that more than 100,000 Ukrainians have found temporary refuge in Slovakia, he said that the international community has gathered in New York with one goal — to reaffirm steadfast commitment to the values and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. "Russia's ignorant attempt at redrawing the internationally recognized borders of a sovereign country presents a grave threat not only to Europe," he underscored. This conflict is not only about Ukraine — tomorrow, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of any country might be at stake. Underlining the duty to protect effective multilateralism — which is under severe threat — he urged those present to vote in favour of today's resolution.

GORDAN GRLIĆ-RADMAN, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Croatia, noting that it has been a year since the Russian Federation began to carry out its "special military operation", which is in fact a brutal aggression against Ukraine, said this can also be seen as an escalation which started in 2014 with the illegal annexation of Crimea. The Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine is a blatant violation of international law and the Charter by a permanent member of the Security Council and a nuclear-weapon State no less. Stressing that its logic of war and impunity has brought about immense human suffering, death and injury of hundreds of thousands as well as mass displacement of people, he also pointed to the targeted destruction of civilian infrastructure. It has also impacted livelihoods around the globe, as it disrupted the global economic flows, and instigated worldwide energy and food insecurity, he pointed out.

"We must not stand silent," he said, in the face of those who destroy and violate the most fundamental human and sovereign rights of States. Voicing support for efforts to establish accountability for crimes committed in Ukraine, he welcomed the International Court of Justice's Order seeking the Russian Federation to immediately suspend its so-called "military operation". By standing with Ukraine, the international community is standing in defense of the pillars of its system and demonstrating resolve to protect the Charter. The draft resolution is a further demonstration of that resolve, he said.

ZBIGNIEW RAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, stating that “we gather here to call for peace”, said that today’s resolution defines the steps needed to achieve it. A comprehensive, just and lasting peace is the only acceptable option to end the war in Ukraine, and this is possible only when that country’s sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity are reconfirmed. The Russian Federation must therefore withdraw its forces from Ukraine’s territory and, further, Moscow must be held accountable for the crimes it has committed in Ukraine. In light of the Russian Federation’s total disregard for international law and United Nations principles, the international community must reaffirm its commitment to the basic rules of international order.

Pointing out that Ukrainians, in standing up to the Russian Federation, are defending the rules-based international order, he stressed that the “brave Ukrainian nation” deserves compassion, support and solidarity. For its part, Poland will continue to assist Ukraine for as long as it takes, and will continue as the main support gateway for that country as long as needed. For the Russian Federation, this war is about imperial ambition and desire. For Ukraine, it is about defending the inalienable right to sovereignty and territorial integrity. “For all of us gathered here, this war is about the most fundamental United Nations principles,” he added, urging those present to “not render them irrelevant”.

HAYASHI YOSHIMASA, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, stressed that the draft resolution is about peace. Peace must be based on principles, he pointed out, adding that while hostilities must immediately stop, this would not necessarily produce a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. “What if a permanent member of the Security Council launched an aggression against your homeland, grabbed your territory, and then ceased hostilities, calling for peace?” he asked, calling such a peace unjust. It would be a victory for the aggressor if such actions were tolerated and would set a terrible precedent for the rest of the planet, he said, adding that the world would revert to the jungle, whether on land or at sea. Calling on the Russian Federation to withdraw its troops immediately and unconditionally from Ukraine, he noted that the General Assembly has demanded it, as has the Secretary-General and the International Court of Justice.

Unfortunately, he added, “Russia seemingly cannot care less about the General Assembly resolutions and the International Court of Justice orders, as if they were just pieces of wastepaper,” he said, highlighting also its abuse of the veto power and its irresponsible rhetoric as a nuclear weapon State. Other Member States should also refrain from supporting the aggression either directly or indirectly, he said, adding that the proposed amendments by Belarus are an attempt to distract the attention of the Member States from the fact that the Russian Federation’s aggression is in violation of the very principles of the United Nations Charter.

Also stressing that it is essential to restore trust in the United Nations, he called for reform of the Security Council, and enhanced roles for the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the Economic and Social Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, and other bodies of the United Nations.

HADJA LAHBIB, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, stressed that “we did not want this war — we wanted to live in peace”. All Member States made a commitment under Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations to respect territorial integrity and to settle disputes peacefully — all of which was flouted by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022. Underscoring that “this is not a war of the West against Russia”, she pointed out that Ukraine was attacked on its territory and that its very existence is threatened. Further, Moscow’s aggression

undermines the international order; impacts food, financial and energy security; sows doubt; increases nuclear risk; and negatively affects the environment. Against that backdrop, she expressed hope that today's resolution "will bring us even closer together tomorrow", emphasizing that Member States do not want a world where uncertainty, danger and threats are the norm.

Underscoring that the misinformation and false equivalencies spread by the Russian Federation for almost a year are not backed up by facts, she said that "justice will find the right word" to describe the suffering of Ukrainian children and the cities forever marked by horror. These crimes cannot go unpunished, and she supported investigation by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, calling for a world where the rule of law prevails over the principle of "might makes right". She also supported today's resolution — which was drafted in an inclusive, transparent manner — and joined those calling for a complete withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukrainian territory. She added that until peace is attained, Belgium will support Ukraine for as long as is necessary to preserve the full meaning of the term "collective security", which lies at the heart of the Charter and peace.

JAN LIPAVSKÝ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, expressing support for the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the United Nations efforts to achieve its extension in March 2023, voiced appreciation for the Peace Formula presented by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. He drew attention to the tragic experience of the Central Europe region with the imperial policy of the Russian Federation and underscored the importance of saying "no" to that country's "imperialist scheme". Expressing concerns about the continued attacks of the Russian Federation's armed forces around Ukrainian nuclear sites and the illegal seizure of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, he called for full accountability for war crimes and the crime of aggression. In this regard, he supported creation of a special tribunal, calling on the United Nations to ensure maximum legitimacy.

Recognizing the heartbreaking humanitarian toll of the war, he said that the Russian Federation's "barbaric full-scale war brings back horrors of the Second World War". Recalling that the war forced over 8 million Ukrainians to flee abroad, he said that the Czech Republic granted temporary protection to more than 500,000 Ukrainians, most of them women and children, and remains the country hosting the highest number of Ukrainian refugees per capita. "Even though it brings some challenges for the State and our citizens, especially at the time of economic and energy crises, our country and people have demonstrated an unprecedented wave of solidarity," he said, adding that it also has provided in-kind and material support so that people affected by the war in freezing temperatures have access to health care, drinking water, electricity and heating.

He strongly supported the draft resolution. Appealing to "all those who might be tempted today to take a "neutral" stance and to those who believe that it is not "their" war, he said: "If we don't act now, we are accepting a new international order based on use of brutal force, based on colonialism."

GABRIELIUS LANDSBERGIS, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, noting that this is not the first time the Russian Federation has attacked its neighbours, said that Moscow's crime of aggression against Ukraine was followed by war crimes and violations of international law that have caused far-reaching crises across the globe. Lithuania is appalled by mounting evidence of genocide committed by the armed forces and mercenaries of the Russian Federation, and these brutal atrocities are a clear expression of that country's total disregard for the principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty, human rights and international humanitarian

law. Applauding Ukraine's heroic defensive efforts, he said that Lithuania's citizens have donated over €40 million in support of such efforts and that the Government has provided protection and humanitarian relief to tens of thousands of Ukrainians.

"But none of that is sufficient to stop Russia's war," he stressed, noting that, while Moscow engages in blame games, its real objective is to create spheres of influence and domination that harken back to colonial times. It continues its aggression because it enjoys impunity — the Security Council is paralyzed because the Russian Federation wields veto power in that organ. The role of the General Assembly, therefore, becomes more important, and Member States should rise to this challenge and support Ukraine's peace formula. He therefore urged those present to demand the full withdrawal of the Russian Federation's forces, seek full accountability for the perpetrators of atrocities and explore all means to ensure that Russian assets are used to compensate for all material damages caused by Moscow's aggression.

BUJAR OSMANI, Minister for Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia, reiterated that his country cannot allow or admit territorial conquest and changes of borders caused by war, neither can it accept the return of spheres of influence and rule of force. He, thus, urged the Russian Federation to end the war and withdraw its troops from Ukraine. Pointing out that food and energy insecurity worldwide are only some of the direct consequences of the aggression, he emphasized that a bigger danger lies in challenging the rules-based international order. In this regard, expressing support for the investigation of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Ukraine, he pointed out that the international human rights mechanism should be implemented in fighting impunity and holding accountable the ones responsible for the war crimes and other violations.

Recalling that North Macedonia is one of the initial co-sponsors of the resolution, he said that "a vision of a world we want to live in is at stake", calling on Member States to ensure peaceful coexistence and cooperation among nations, free from menaces of war and aggression. "It's up to each and every one present in this august Assembly to decide on behalf of the nations we represent," he stressed.

Noting North Macedonia assumed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairpersonship on 1 January, he said the Russian Federation's aggression erodes OSCE's foundations by violating the Helsinki Final Act. During his recent visit as OSCE Chair to Ukraine, he witnessed the war's devastating consequences on the displaced population in Borodyanka, near Kyiv. "What is the sense of our political actions, nationally and internationally, if we stay idle in front of human sufferings, caused not by natural disasters, but by deliberate war of aggression?" he asked, stressing: "Accountability today is a moral imperative as it is the most to avoid this happening again, in another place, to another sovereign State, to another people."

WOPKE HOEKSTRA, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, said that the war is not only an attack on Ukraine, but an attack on the principle of sovereignty and on the Charter; an attack on what the international community stands for despite all the differences. Turning a blind eye to the Russian Federation's aggression will not only allow it to trample on the United Nations Charter, but will also cause more hardship, instability and suffering, he stressed. He went on to say that the only way forward is to commit to the agreements made, ensuring that Ukraine survives as a State within its internationally recognized borders, and to work to achieve a lasting peace. In this regard, he outlined that the Netherlands is taking on a leading role in supporting Ukraine with humanitarian aid, sanctions

against the aggressor, weapons and training. “We will do everything in our power to ensure that Russia is held to account and that justice will be done,” he said.

Expressing support for the Ukrainian Prosecutor General and the International Criminal Court, he said that his country will be sending two more forensic investigation teams in 2023 and will host the new International Center for the Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression and the Damages Register in The Hague. Noting that the road to peace is simple, he said that “this war can end today if Russia sends its soldiers home”.

EDGARS RINKĒVIČS, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Latvia, pointing out that the actions of the Russian Federation are driven by its imperial and colonial ambitions, noted that country recently suspended its participation in the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Underscoring that Latvia’s assistance to Ukraine has exceeded 1 per cent of his country’s gross domestic product (GDP), he said that the provided support will set the pace for further reconstruction process, adding that his country is involved in the reconstruction of Chernihiv region. Condemning the illegal deportation of Ukrainian civilians to the Russian Federation; forced illegal adoption of Ukrainian children; the forcing of Ukrainians to obtain Russian passports; and forced conscription of the Ukrainian citizens into the armed forces of the Russian Federation, he commended efforts of the International Court of Justice to investigate atrocity crimes.

Noting that the International Criminal Court and national judicial systems cannot exercise jurisdiction to prosecute the crime of aggression, he called for establishment of an ad hoc international tribunal under the auspices of the United Nations. Highlighting the importance of resisting disinformation and propaganda, he reiterated Latvia’s support for independent media. Commending the Black Sea Grain Initiative and expressing support to the World Food Programme (WFP), he recalled that in 2022 the Government decided to unblock fertilizers from the Russian Federation at Latvian ports and donate them to countries of the Global South. Welcoming Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s 10-point peace formula, he reiterated support to the Ukrainian leader’s vision of peace.

IGNAZIO CASSIS, Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, said the human cost of this disastrous war is impossible to quantify. In addition to the thousands of dead, wounded and missing on the ground, more than 8 million people have had to flee their homes. That figure represents the entire population of his country, he said, adding that last year, he saw with his own eyes the destruction and suffering in and around Kyiv. The inhumane images of the war are on everyone’s minds, he said, adding that such horrors are taking place just as the international community is about to commemorate the 75 years of the Geneva Conventions next year. “With these Conventions we wanted to raise the law above barbarism”, he said, adding that the General Assembly has repeatedly stated that war must never happen again. Yet, the Russian Federation’s military aggression against Ukraine “shows us once again that we are not safe”, he said.

Turning to the draft resolution, he said it is a strong message of peace and respect for international law. Strongly condemning the serious violations of humanitarian and human rights law committed in Ukraine, he said that Ukrainians have the right to live in peace. Such a peace must be built on the fundamental principles of international law such as the prohibition of the use of force, territorial integrity and national sovereignty. Reaffirming his country’s commitment to

playing its part, he said the international community must show respect for the importance of the United Nations Charter. Major challenges require urgent global solutions, he said, also pointing to the problems posed by energy shortages, food insecurity, inflation, climate change and migration.

KOSTADIN KODZHABASHEV, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, aligning himself with the European Union, called on Member States to continue to fiercely defend the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the rules-based order “because they are our only guarantee for peace”. Bulgaria will not recognize the Russian Federation’s attempted annexations and illegal referendum and is deeply concerned over the continued worsening humanitarian situation. It has kept and will continue to keep its borders open to everyone fleeing the war in Ukraine without any discrimination. He welcomed the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the leadership of the Secretary-General in restoring the grain exports from Ukraine’s Black Sea ports, calling for the renewal of the former in March and for its unimpeded implementation.

The Russian Federation bares full responsibility for this aggression and all the destruction and loss of life, and it must and will be held accountable in accordance with international law. Only through ensuring justice for all victims, will the international community stand a chance to prevent such crimes in the future. Citing the historic responsibility of the General Assembly to stand for peace, he noted Bulgaria is proud to have co-sponsored the draft resolution “Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine”. Stressing its purpose is to help bring this conflict to an end and to reaffirm collective support for the international principles upon which a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace must be based, he urged all Member States to vote in favour of the text.

PETER BURKE, Minister for European Affairs of Ireland, aligning himself with the European Union, underscored that “this invasion was unprovoked and entirely of Russia’s making” and that Ireland will continue to stand fully with Ukraine and its people amidst this brutal aggression. Detailing the war’s negative effects on the Ukrainian people, he also observed that it has “seen a generation of Russian youth sacrificed to President Putin’s imperialist fantasies”. The Russian Federation’s war is also having a global impact, as its actions have seen the world’s most vulnerable suffer from increased food and economic insecurity, along with rising costs for energy and commodities. Ireland and the European Union are responding to these global effects, including through “Solidarity Lanes” and the “Team Europe” response to global food insecurity.

He went on to note that the war has seen reckless Russian attacks on Ukrainian nuclear facilities, along with Moscow’s threats to use nuclear weapons on those that might come to Ukraine’s aid. As such, it is worrying that the Russian Federation has now chosen to suspend its participation in a nuclear-arms-reduction treaty with the United States. Calling on the Russian Federation to refrain from further threats or the use of force of any kind — including nuclear weapons — against Ukraine or any other Member State, he stressed that Moscow’s actions are not just a threat to Ukraine, but to the entirety of the United Nations membership. Today’s resolution calls for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, he said, urging all Member States to support the text.

JOHANNA SUMUVUOR, State Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, aligning herself with the European Union and the Nordic countries,

reminded all that war and destruction were the Russian Federation's choice. Instead of upholding its obligations for maintaining peace and security as a permanent Council member, Moscow is flagrantly violating international law, most notably the laws of war. That Government has targeted Ukrainian civilians and infrastructure, causing immeasurable damage and suffering. Testimonies from Ukraine and the areas liberated from the Russian Federation's occupation tell the gruesome tale of torture, extrajudicial executions and sexual violence, she noted. While the transfer of civilians including children by force has been a devastating tragedy for Ukrainian families, for Moscow, these are just part of the attempts to deny Ukraine a national identity.

Perpetrators of the most serious international crimes must be held accountable for their actions, she stressed, underscoring that justice for Ukraine is justice for the whole world. When the rules-based international order comes under attack, it is the Assembly's duty to defend it together, she emphasized. To achieve comprehensive, lasting and just peace, the Russian Federation must immediately end its brutal and illegal invasion, respect Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity, stop the missile strikes on that country's cities and withdraw its forces, she said.

ARLENE BETH TICKNER (Colombia) rejected the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country, which violates both international law and the Charter of the United Nations. She also rejected any unprovoked aggression by one State against another, as this only entails adverse consequences for the civilian population, including loss of life, material damage, food and energy shortages and rising poverty. In line with Colombia's "total peace" policy, she called on the parties to seek a negotiated, peaceful and lasting settlement to the conflict in Ukraine and stated that her country stands with the victims claimed by this conflict.

CARLOS AMORÍN (Uruguay), joining his voice to that of numerous delegates that have made calls for an end to the hostilities, condemned the military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation as a clear violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter. All Member States must not only respect but also comply with and enforce that document, he said, urging the Russian Federation to cease its military operations and stop the aggression against Ukraine. Further, both parties to the conflict must make their utmost efforts to return to the negotiating table in order to resolve their differences peacefully, he said, underscoring that it is illegal to acquire territory through the use of force or other mechanisms. This rule of international law is in the Charter and endorsed by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice, he pointed out, expressing support for peaceful settlement of disputes.

DAI BING (China) noted that his country's policy towards this conflict has been consistent and clear — namely, that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries should be respected, that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be observed and that the legitimate security concerns of all countries should be taken seriously. The top priority is to facilitate a ceasefire and a cessation of hostilities without delay, as the longer the brutality continues, the greater the human suffering will be. He therefore called on the parties to prevent this crisis from worsening, also underscoring that "nuclear weapons cannot be used and that nuclear war cannot be fought". Dialogue and negotiation are the only viable ways to resolve the Ukraine crisis and, noting that peace talks have stalled, he urged that "the reason behind this warrants deep

reflection". The international community should jointly work to facilitate peace talks as — one year into the Ukraine crisis — brutal facts offer ample proof that sending weapons will not bring peace. Urging the countries concerned to stop abusing unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction, he called on the same to act in a way conducive to de-escalation. He added that China stands on the side of peace and dialogue, and will soon issue a position paper on a political solution for the Ukraine crisis.

AMIR SAEID IRAVANI ([Iran](#)), expressing commitment to a peaceful resolution and lasting peace in Ukraine, said this must be done in accordance with the principles outlined in the Charter of the United Nations, including those of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States. Urging all parties to fully comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the need to take constant precautions to protect civilians and critical infrastructure, he said it is crucial for all parties involved to abandon their military ambitions and prioritize finding a peaceful and diplomatic solution. In order to do so, the United Nations must leverage the Secretary-General's role and establish a cross-regional group of impartial countries to facilitate constructive dialogue and assist in identifying solutions to the current impasse. Calling for an immediate ceasefire coupled with access to humanitarian aid for those in need, he said the draft under consideration falls short of comprehensively and impartially addressing the issue. Further, it does not acknowledge the provocations that have contributed to this crisis, he said, adding that his delegation will abstain from voting on this draft.

BOGDAN LUCIAN AURESCU, Minister for Foreign Affairs of [Romania](#), aligning himself with the European Union, cited the human rights and humanitarian consequences of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, including the continuous attacks against its critical infrastructure. The hybrid war proliferated by the Russian Federation — even more intense through fake news, disinformation and malign interference — aims not only to destabilize the region and the most vulnerable States but also to undermine unity, mutual trust and solidarity. The Russian Federation is testing the resolve of the world to stand up for its norms and values, requiring the full force, determination and legitimacy of the General Assembly to reaffirm that international law and the Charter of the United Nations matter.

Romania, he noted, is fully engaged in international efforts to end the Russian Federation's impunity. A multidimensional effort has been ongoing the past year to accelerate the transfer of some 13 million tons of Ukrainian grain through Romanian territory, reaching countries in the Global South that have been greatly impacted by food insecurity. Approximately 3.6 million Ukrainian citizens have entered Romania; among these, over 110,000 remain in the country, receiving humanitarian aid. Calling for a peace based on the principles of the Charter, with negotiations starting only when Ukraine is ready, he demanded that the Russian Federation reverse its illegal actions and unconditionally withdraw its military forces from territory of Ukraine. He called on the entire United Nations membership to vote in favour of the resolution.

AMANDA PIRUTTI SOUREK, observer for the [International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance](#), urged the Russian Federation to immediately and unequivocally withdraw from Ukraine's territory; until then, she welcomed the international community's adoption, enforcement and continued escalation of sanctions against Moscow. She also encouraged the Secretary-General to continue working to advance ceasefire talks and to support increased humanitarian access to civilians in areas affected by the war. Noting that today's

resolution calls for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, she stressed that this objective is inextricably linked to the democratic ambitions of the Ukrainian people. “This conflict is about democracy as much as it is about sovereignty,” she observed, stating that, over many years and despite many obstacles, Ukrainians have repeatedly affirmed their commitment to democratic values. The result has been a steady improvement across a variety of indicators but, today, hard-won progress hangs in the balance. Underscoring that Ukraine has chosen democracy, she added that “a democratic Russia would not have unleashed this tragedy”.

ANNALENA BAERBOCK, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, noted it takes 45 seconds for Russian missiles to hit the city of Kharkiv after the air-raid sirens are heard. The Russian Federation’s war of aggression has not only brought terrible suffering to the people of Ukraine, but has slashed gaping wounds across the world, with families on all continents unable to make ends meet because of rising food and energy prices. In ending the year, she cited “the peace plan right here in front of us — called the Charter of the United Nations”. Moscow must withdraw its troops from Ukraine, stop the bombing and return to the Charter, as there is no peace if an aggressor is rewarded for its ruthless violence.

Noting that some speakers have stated that by arming Ukraine, “we are pouring oil into the fire”, she affirmed: “We did not choose this war.” The international community would rather focus its energy and money on fixing schools, fighting the climate crisis, and strengthening social justice. But the truth is if the Russian Federation stops fighting, this war ends, while “if Ukraine stops fighting, Ukraine ends”. The human suffering would continue: abduction, rape, torture, with children counting to 45 every single day to save their lives. The war’s global trail of devastation would continue: inflation, energy shortages and hunger. “That’s why today’s vote is about all our future,” she stressed: “to stand isolated with the oppressor or to unite for peace”.

Action

Speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, the representative of Djibouti expressed concern about the continuing deterioration in the security situation and the increasing violence, warlike rhetoric and threat of use of nuclear weapons. Stressing the importance of a just and lasting peace, and reaffirming the need for peaceful settlement of disputes, he expressed support for the draft resolution.

The representative of Nigeria expressed reservations about operative paragraph 9. Recognizing that mechanisms for investigation and prosecution are unclear in the text, he expressed concern as to how the General Assembly would be distinguishing which kinds of aggression should be treated in the same manner, and which ones should be prioritized. Notwithstanding its reservations regarding this paragraph, his delegation will support the resolution, he said.

The representative of Nepal, recognizing that the draft resolution is aimed at protecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine and bringing peace, said that his delegation will support the text.

The representative of South Africa, expressing regret at the loss of life and displacement caused by the war, said its impact has resonated around the globe, heightening the food and fuel crisis. Reaffirming the need for urgent actions to end the war, she added that the international community has been unable to

come up with concrete proposals to do the same. The current draft comes amidst an influx of arms to the region, she said, also noting the threat of nuclear war. While expressing support for the draft's focus on the principles of the Charter, she noted that it does not bring the international community closer to a sustainable peace.

The representative of [Thailand](#), urging the United Nations to dispense its effort in preventive diplomacy, called on all parties to step up diplomatic effort and engage in dialogue to stop the Ukraine conflict. Pointing out that wars can only be settled by engagement, dialogue and pragmatism, and not by the winner-take-all mindset, he stressed that "it is now time for all nations to come and reason together".

The representative of [Angola](#) said that today's resolution represents progress, in that the international community is demonstrating support for the process of seeking a peaceful solution to the conflict. However, she said that her country will abstain, as operative paragraph 9 is not conducive to creating an environment conducive to the start of peaceful negotiations.

The representative of [Brazil](#) said that his delegation will vote in favour of the resolution, as the General Assembly must uphold the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Stressing that the most important element of the text is its call for the international community to redouble efforts to achieve just, lasting peace in Ukraine, he said that his country considers the call for a cessation of hostilities in operative paragraph 5 an appeal to both sides to halt the violence without preconditions.

The representative of [Malaysia](#), pointing to the suffering of civilians, urged all parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law. Noting the complex geopolitical context, he called for dialogue and peaceful means of dispute settlement. His delegation will vote in favour of the resolution, he said, expressing regret at the Council's unwillingness to discharge its primary responsibility.

The representative of the [United Kingdom](#) said the amendments proposed have been put forward by a State that supported the Russian Federation's invasion. They attempt to create false equivalence between the Russian Federation's aggression and Ukraine's self-defence, she said. They were not proposed in good faith, she said, urging States to vote against the amendments and in favour of the draft resolution.

Before the vote, the General Assembly decided by consensus that a two thirds majority of members present and voting was required for the adoption of the draft resolution entitled "Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine" (document [A/ES-11/L.7](#)), as well as the draft amendments thereto (documents [A/ES-11/L.8](#) and [A/ES-11/L.9](#)).

The Assembly rejected the draft amendments "L.8" and "L.9" by recorded votes of, respectively, 11 in favour to 94 against, with 56 abstentions, and 15 in favour to 91 against, with 52 abstentions.

The Assembly then adopted the draft resolution by a recorded vote of 141 in favour to 7 against (Belarus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Mali, Nicaragua, Russian Federation and Syria), with 32 abstentions.

The representative of Cuba, pointing to the United States increasingly offensive military doctrine, noted that in Ukraine today, rather than a decrease in tensions, confrontation is exacerbated on the ground with the increasing movement of weapons, aggressive rhetoric and unilateral sanctions. His delegation abstained from voting as it does not contribute to dialogue or negotiation with the participation of all parties involved, he said. He rejected any future attempts to manipulate the text as a legal basis to justify the possible creation of tribunals aimed at carrying out judgments at the national or international levels, stressing that the Assembly has no such mandate. Cuba will continue to tirelessly advocate for a diplomatic solution, which is constructive, serious and realistic.

The representative of Egypt said his delegation voted in favour of the resolution in its commitment to the principles of the Charter. Developing countries particularly, including his own, are suffering because of the ongoing crisis. Unfortunately, the international community continues to be lax in addressing the economic and social challenges posed by the crisis to developing countries. His delegation had hoped that the resolution would have proposed an appropriate mechanism to resolve the crisis, he said, urging all relevant parties to arrive at such a mechanism and expeditiously resume negotiations in a manner that addresses the root cause of the crisis and the security concerns of the parties in a fair and sustainable manner.

The representative of South Sudan, noting that his Government has continuously cast an abstain vote over the past year, said that it voted in favour for the sole reason that the conflict must stop. South Sudan, he reminded, emerged from the longest civil war in the African continent and is implementing a peace agreement which many in the Organization helped to deliver. There is no military solution to the conflict, he emphasized, calling for its peaceful and speedily settlement.

The representative of Indonesia explained that his country voted in favour because it believes in upholding the principle of the United Nations Charter and international law. However, his Government deeply regretted that the elements it had suggested were missing from the final draft. The resolution, he pointed out, is missing the spirit for realizing peace; does not call on the international community to create conducive conditions to end the war; and lacks a call for the parties to pursue dialogue and enter into direct peace negotiations. Assembly resolutions are not social media content, he said, emphasizing that the institution's credibility is put on the line if a resolution it puts forward spins factual information. Today's adopted resolution was leaning very close to this direction, he observed.

The representative of Lesotho, stressing that the pursuit of international peace is the paramount goal of the international community, said his delegation dissociated from preambular paragraph 7 and operative paragraph 5 of the resolutions just adopted. The manner in which the text is framed does not indicate any immediate steps for a diplomatic solution, he said, reiterating that the international community must support the parties in the search for peace.

The representative of India, reiterating concern about the situation in Ukraine and its ramifications on civilians, said escalation of hostilities is in no one's interest. Urging a return to the path of diplomacy, she said that her country will continue with its people-centered approach to this situation. While the overall objective of today's resolution is understandable, she asked: "are we anywhere near a possible solution acceptable to both sides?" Voicing doubt that a process that does not involve both sides can lead to a meaningful resolution, she also

questioned the effectiveness of a Council based on a 1945 world. Due to the inherent limitations of the resolution, her delegation was constrained to abstain from voting for it, she said.

The representative of Pakistan said his delegation abstained on “L.7” despite effort by the co-sponsors to moderate its tone. While expressing support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-acquisition of territory by use of force, he regretted those principles are not universally applied, as in the foreign occupation and illegal forcible annexation of Jammu and Kashmir. He called for redoubled efforts towards peace in Ukraine. His delegation also abstained on the amendments proposed by Belarus.

Right of Reply

The representative of Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, categorically rejected the provocative and outrageous outburst made by the Republic of Korea yesterday, which merits no comment. He reiterated that his country has never recognized the United Nations sanctions resolution against it, cooked up by the United States and its vassal forces. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has never had any arms dealings with the Russian Federation and has no plans to do so. The Republic of Korea’s remark was aimed to tarnish his country’s reputation. Had the United States not infringed on the security interests of the Russian Federation and ceased the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the present situation in Ukraine would not have occurred. The United States and other countries are wrecking global and regional peace and security, he stressed, and it is an open secret that the Republic of Korea is seeking to supply ammunition and weapons to Ukraine under pressure from Washington, D.C. He warned that if Seoul continues to provoke Pyongyang, it will face an extreme security crisis.

The representative of India, choosing not to respond to Pakistan’s provocations, encouraged it to refer to numerous rights of reply exercised in the past, pointing out that “Pakistan has only to look at itself and its track record as a State that harbors and provides safe heavens to terrorists and does so with impunity”. He underscored that the path of peace can be the only way forward to resolve conflict and discord.

The representative of Pakistan pointed out that India continues to perpetrate an incorrect position, as Jammu and Kashmir are internationally recognized disputed territories and not an integral part of India, as it has been claimed. Repeating the wrong position would not make it acceptable at any point, he added, recalling that the focus of the debate is on people and on the crisis at hand.

The representative of the Republic of Korea, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said all representatives present know which Member State is violating its duties under the Charter, and that is the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Any arms trade with that country constitutes a blatant violation of Security Council resolutions, he added.

The representative of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, speaking again in exercise of the right of reply, condemned the Republic of Korea’s attempt to incite confrontation in the august forum. He also condemned that the Council is being transformed into a tool for implementing the hostile policy of the United

States and the Republic of Korea and other vassal forces, without mentioning a single word about those countries' joint military exercises, which are now taking place around the Korean Peninsula and encroaching upon the security interests of his country. The Republic of Korea must bear in mind that continued submission to the United States will lead it to self-destruction, he warned.

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