



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

9731st meeting

Tuesday, 24 September 2024, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Žbogar/Mr. Golob/Ms. Fajon (Slovenia)

Members:

Algeria	Mr. Attaf
China	Mr. Wang Yi
Ecuador	Mr. Barberis
France	Mr. Barrot
Guyana	Mr. Todd
Japan	Mr. Akahori
Malta	Mr. Borg
Mozambique	Mr. Gonçalves
Republic of Korea	Mr. Cho Tae-yul
Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
Sierra Leone	Mr. Kabba
Switzerland	Mr. Cassis
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Lammy
United States of America	Mr. Blinken

Agenda

Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0928 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a statement.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Before we begin this meeting, I wish to draw attention to a number of issues that are of fundamental importance for understanding procedural issues.

As is well known, from the beginning, the programme of work of the Slovenian presidency for the month of September included no high-level briefings on Ukraine. There was only one meeting during high-level week proposed by the presidency, on a unifying issue, namely, “leadership for peace”, which could have resulted in an interesting discussion building upon the question of enhancing the effectiveness of multilateral cooperation, which we raised during our presidency of the Security Council in July. That could have been the case. However, clearly, that will not be the case, because Western countries could not restrain themselves from poisoning the atmosphere, once again trying to fill airtime with the hackneyed Ukrainian issue, which the rest of the world sees as such. The only reason behind the convening of this meeting is to provide Volodymyr Zelenskyy with yet another concert stage at the United Nations, this time in the Chamber of the Security Council. For his chorus, a whole group of members of the European Union (EU) and NATO have gathered together, marching in lockstep every time they are called upon to travel to the Security Council to malign the Russian Federation.

This could have even been an interesting illustration of how, when it comes to their foreign policy agendas, those countries are dependent upon big brother in NATO, were it not at the same time yet another grim example of how, for the advancement of their geopolitical agendas, the collective West continues to deal blow after blow to the authority of the Security Council. And today the Slovenian presidency intends to allow an entire 11 delegations to participate in this meeting under rules 37 and 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, even though this format is not an open debate but a briefing, which, in accordance with

existing practice, does not provide for such a number of participants from among non-Council members.

What criteria was the presidency guided by when it convened this cheerleading squad? We understand why Ukraine and some European Union countries bordering it are invited to participate. But what about Lithuania, Germany, Denmark and Italy? What direct relationship do they have with what is happening? For them, this is just an opportunity to be seen on television screens and to engage in anti-Russia rhetoric. The Slovenian presidency is perfectly aware of that. From the very beginning of their term at the Security Council, they declared a commitment to enhancing the effectiveness of its work and promised to strictly adhere to the practice of this organ. However, all of those promises were empty promises, and Slovenia simply yielded to the pressure of its senior comrades from Brussels and other European capitals. We regret that this took place.

Ultimately, the Security Council will have to listen to the cookie-cutter, paste-and-cut statements drafted by Brussels for members of the EU and NATO, which provide no added value whatsoever to the discussion. I wish to say that, when it comes to listening to those hackneyed, cookie-cutter statements, we have no intention of wasting time.

The President: I take note of the issue raised by the representative of the Russian Federation.

I agree that, as a general principle, proportionality in numbers should be observed when the Security Council invites non-Council Member States to participate in Council meetings. As Council President for this month, we have been moderate as to the number of non-Council members invited to participate, including for today’s meeting.

Nonetheless, I wish to underline that the criterion for participation set out in rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure is based not on numbers, but rather that the interests of a State should be especially affected. Each of the non-members to be invited to today’s meeting has been invited to participate in various Security Council meetings on Ukraine prior to this one, and has therefore already been considered by the Council to meet the criterion of being especially affected. It is our view, therefore, that it is correct procedure for an invitation to participate to be extended to each of them again today. As for the open debate on the theme “leadership for peace”, it remains on the

agenda for tomorrow. And all Members of the United Nations are invited to participate.

I would like to warmly welcome the Secretary-General and the Presidents, Ministers and other high-level representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Türkiye and Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, to participate in this meeting.

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

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres.

The Secretary-General: Two days ago, in the newly agreed Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to international law and to the Charter of the United Nations. Our Organization is based on the principle of the sovereignty of all Member States within their internationally recognized borders. The Charter unequivocally stipulates that all States must refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other State and that international disputes must be settled by peaceful means. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, following the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and city of Sevastopol a decade ago, is a clear violation of those principles.

And civilian populations continue to pay the price. The death toll keeps rising. Nearly 10 million people have fled their homes. Systematic attacks against hospitals, schools and supermarkets are only adding pain and misery. Power cuts and infrastructure damage have left millions in the dark. I strongly condemn all attacks on civilians and civilian facilities, wherever they occur and whoever is responsible. They all must stop immediately. And I remain deeply concerned

about the safety, humanitarian needs and basic human rights of people residing in occupied areas.

Despite immense challenges, the United Nations remains fully engaged, as the largest international presence in Ukraine. This year alone, together with our partners, we have provided life-saving aid to more than 6.2 million people. But we need the support of the international community. Fifteen million people in Ukraine require humanitarian assistance, more than half of them women and girls. But, as winter is approaching, less than half of our 2024 humanitarian response plan is funded. I urge donors to help us to pursue our vital work on the ground.

We are also assisting the Government of Ukraine in its recovery and reconstruction efforts. That includes access to basic services and the restoration of Ukraine's energy production capacities. In recent weeks, we have seen a resurgence of inflammatory rhetoric and incidents around nuclear sites, particularly at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and, alarmingly, at the Kursk nuclear power plant in the Russian Federation. I commend the International Atomic Energy Agency, including its critical presence in Ukraine's nuclear sites, for helping to ensure nuclear safety and security. I urge all parties to act responsibly and avoid any declaration or action that could further destabilize an already incendiary situation.

(spoke in French)

Two and half years since the full-blown invasion of Ukraine, more than 11,000 civilians have been killed. The longer that tragic war continues, the greater the risk of escalation and spillover. That would not only have an impact on the region, but further deepen global tensions and divisions, at a time when our world desperately needs more cooperation and collective action. We must stop the suffering and break the cycle of violence for the sake of the people of Ukraine, the people of the Russian Federation and the world.

The Black Sea Grain Initiative and exchanges of prisoners of war serve as reminders that, when there is political will, diplomacy can succeed, even in the darkest hour. Today, although the prospects for peace may seem distant, I am inspired by the growing calls for dialogue. Let us therefore intensify our efforts to seek peace in Ukraine — a just, comprehensive and sustainable peace, in line with the United Nations Charter, international law and resolutions of the

General Assembly. The United Nations stands ready to support all efforts towards achieving that goal.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine.

President Zelenskyy: One day in this Chamber, it will surely be said that Russia's war against Ukraine has ended — not frozen, not paused, not forgotten, but truly ended. And that will happen not because someone got tired of the war, not because someone traded something with Putin. Russia's war against Ukraine will end because the Charter of the United Nations will work — it must work. Our Ukrainian right to self-defence must prevail, as must our cooperation with nations of the world that value life, as must our territorial integrity, our sovereignty and the independence of our country. We are defending what every nation would surely want to protect for itself and what the United Nations Charter grants to all.

It is Russia that always has to lie to justify its war, not us. Russia cannot refer to the United Nations Charter to explain what it is doing against us, against Ukraine, the Ukrainian people. In fact, in Russia's perverted way, in its crooked world, it does refer to the Charter, but that is simply insane. Russia stayed silent because it could not explain why a Russian missile recently struck a grain ship bound for an Egyptian port through the Black Sea. Russia either stays silent or lies about why its drones and missiles are found in the airspace of Poland, Moldova and Romania.

Every day, Ukrainians are wounded and killed — every day. Today once again, Russian bombs hit residential buildings. Even an ordinary bread factory became a target. What is so threatening to Russia about making bread? Putin has no answer, and Russia never has an honest answer when asked why its army kills children in Ukraine, destroys schools and hospitals, and fights not for justice, but for a blackout in a neighbouring nation.

Putin has nothing to say if you ask him why he tries to drag Belarus into the war, why his propagandists threaten nations in the Caucuses or Central Asia, or why Russia invests the most not in human development but in hatred. Russia has no legitimate reason, none at all, for making Iran and North Korea de facto accomplices in its criminal war in Europe, with their weapons killing

us, killing Ukrainians, and helping Putin steal our land from our people.

We know some in the world want to talk to Putin — to meet, to talk and to speak. But what could they possibly hear from him — that he is upset because we are exercising our right to defend our people, or that he wants to keep the war and terror going just so no one thinks he was wrong? That is insane too.

From the very first second of the war, Russia has been doing things that cannot possibly be justified under the United Nations Charter. Every destroyed Ukrainian city, every burned village — and there are already hundreds and hundreds — serves as proof that Russia is committing an international crime. And that is why the war cannot simply fade away. That is why the war cannot be calmed by talks. Action is needed, and I am grateful to all the nations that are truly helping in ways that save the lives of our people. Putin has broken so many international norms and rules, and he will not stop of his own accord. Russia can only be forced into peace, and that is exactly what is needed, forcing Russia into peace as the sole aggressor in this war, the sole violator of the Charter of the United Nations.

Now, as we near the third winter of the war, Russia is once again trying to destroy our energy system, and this fall it is being even more cynical. It is preparing to target our nuclear power plants — three of them. We have information and proof of that. If Russia is ready to go that far, it means that nothing that Council members value matters to Moscow. That kind of cynicism on Russia's part will keep striking if it is given any room in the world. The Charter leaves no room for that, and that is why the peace formula leaves no room either. When I proposed our peace formula in the midst of the war in 2022, I was proposing to uphold the Charter, to make everything that this institution was created for effective. Every point of the peace formula is rooted in the purposes and principles and norms of the Charter, in the rights that it grants nations and in the resolutions of the General Assembly that a majority of nations already support. We do not have different versions of the Charter of the United Nations for different parts of the world. We do not have regional quasi-charters. There is no separate charter for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa or for the Group of Seven. There is no separate Russian-Iranian charter, no separate Chinese-Brazilian charter. There is one Charter of the United Nations, which must unite everyone.

The path to a just peace is in the same — clear steps that everyone understands equally — and that is reflected in the peace formula. It represents the fulfilment of the Charter of the United Nations. If we look honestly at the situation and truly want to stop Russia's war, we all know what needs to be done. What is most important, of course, is that we must act together, in unity, without creating new and unnecessary divisions of the world into blocs or regional groups. Unity always works for peace.

We have to prepare a second peace summit to end the war altogether. I invite all principled nations to join us in that process, all nations that truly respect the Charter. We invite China. We invite Brazil. I have already invited India. We are working with African nations, with all of Latin America, the Middle East, Central Asia, Europe, the Pacific region and North America. All are equally important for peace — all, without exceptions — just as the Charter must work without exceptions. This is the process that will lead us to peace, a just peace, a real peace, a peace that will last. All of us already know how to achieve that. We have the peace formula. We have the Charter of the United Nations and we have all the strength we need to make it happen. What is needed is determination.

Glory to Ukraine.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Prime Minister of Slovenia.

I thank the Secretary-General for his insightful thoughts. I welcome the participation of President Zelenskyy in this meeting and I also appreciate the participation of other countries in the discussion.

The European countries are united in condemnation of this aggression, which violates every possible principle and law, including the Charter of the United Nations. My colleagues will elaborate more on that. I am generally frustrated to be sitting here in front of the Security Council, together with the most powerful countries in the world, whose sole responsibility is to ensure peace and security across the globe — and yet we are unable to do anything about the most extensive conventional war that the world has seen in decades and we are powerless to bring peace to the citizens of Ukraine. It is a good opportunity to accept some sobering truths and acknowledge that the Council has failed the people of Ukraine.

However, please allow me to shine a slightly different light on the Ukrainian case. Even in this dire situation, while Ukrainian civilian casualties are on the rise, critical civilian infrastructure is collapsing and battlefields keep expanding, Ukraine has not failed the international community — far from it. Even in the darkest moments of the ongoing aggression, Ukraine has remained an active member of the United Nations and has stood in solidarity with other countries.

I can personally attest to that. One year ago, Slovenia experienced unprecedented floods of catastrophic dimensions. Rivers were overflowing, families' homes were buried under heaps of earth and people were drowning. It was a disaster of proportions that my country had never seen before. And during all of that, Ukraine made a gesture that Slovenians will never forget. During the war, while missiles and drones were hitting Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities, Ukraine sent a whole aid convoy and more than 50 members of its national emergency team to help deal with the aftermath of the floods in our country. Usually, we would all say that we stand with Ukraine, but when it really mattered to us Slovenians, it was Ukraine that stood with Slovenia. While Ukrainian ports and ships are under a constant barrage and the Ukrainian civilian population is suffering, Ukraine has done its utmost to show solidarity with the rest of the world. With its Grain from Ukraine initiative, it has ensured that tens of thousands of tons of grain reach those who need it most. Even in the midst of an existential war, Ukraine stands with the international community and Member States when they need it.

For Slovenia, the case is clear. A lot is at stake in this war. If Russia wins, its trampling on international humanitarian law and its gross violations of the Charter will win as well. If Putin prevails, the whole world, not Europe alone, will become less safe and less stable. The United Nations was created to prevent bigger countries from imposing their will on their neighbours. We should not allow its Members to violate rules and the Charter with impunity just because they believe they can. If they go unchallenged, each one of us will pay the price. That is not a world that Slovenia wants to be part of. We will do everything in our power to prevent this from becoming a new normal and to preserve the integrity of the Charter and international law — not just in Ukraine but also in Palestine and the rest of the Middle East.

The process of restoring European security and healing the rifts in international relationships can begin

only when peace in Ukraine is achieved. Until then, we will keep pressing for peace. Only a just peace will give generations of Ukrainians a brighter future and only a lasting peace will allow them to grow and flourish. That peace cannot come at the expense of the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for territorial integrity, and that vision is worth believing in and acting on. Slovenia will continue to stand by Ukraine until it achieves that vision of a just peace, and I know that Ukraine will stand with us if and when we need it.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Malta.

Mr. Borg (Malta): I would like to begin by thanking the Slovenian presidency for convening today's meeting and the Secretary-General for his important briefing and sobering remarks. I also welcome the participation of President Zelenskyy.

Malta remains gravely concerned about the security and humanitarian situation in Ukraine. We are also deeply worried about the negative repercussions that this war is having and will continue to have on the multilateral system. By invading its sovereign neighbour, in violation of international law, Russia also launched a direct affront to the Charter of the United Nations. The international community cannot and must not look the other way. This war, which has now been going on for two and a half years, is having devastating consequences for the region and beyond. Ukraine, like every other country, has a right to live in peace and security within its internationally recognized borders. It has been denied that right for far too long, and that is why we have joined others in calling for this meeting.

Over the past two months we have witnessed an intensification of attacks on Ukraine. Missiles and drones have affected civilians and continue to increase the death toll. They have also targeted critical infrastructure in Ukraine, in particular energy infrastructure. Coordinated attacks on Ukraine's electric power system have damaged or destroyed numerous power generation and distribution facilities. The effects on the civilian population will last for years and will require significant resources to repair. The impact that explosive remnants of war will have on future generations also merits our full attention.

In the shorter term, the people of Ukraine will have to contend with an electricity deficit and limited heating during the harsh winter months. Such attacks unnecessarily endanger lives in the upcoming cold winter months. The Security Council cannot let violations of international humanitarian law go unchecked. Critical infrastructure, hospitals and schools must never be a target, and most of all, civilians and children must never be a target. We must continue our efforts to ensure that all the perpetrators of such crimes are held accountable. It is imperative that we ensure the safety of Ukraine's nuclear power plants and that we uphold the International Atomic Energy Agency's seven pillars of nuclear safety.

On numerous occasions, Malta has called on all the parties to respect international humanitarian law and uphold the fundamental principles of distinction and proportionality, which are non-negotiable. This war is also having a disproportionate impact on women and children. It has created the largest displacement crisis in decades, with more than 4 million people internally displaced and 6 million living as refugees abroad. Malta strongly emphasizes the importance of providing humanitarian access for all aid workers operating in Ukraine and allowing the United Nations and the relevant agencies to carry out their duties unhindered. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 14.6 million Ukrainians are in need of humanitarian aid. We must make sure that their needs are met.

Malta is also deeply concerned about the possible escalation of this conflict owing to the transfer of weapons and related materials to the Russian Federation from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran. The Council needs to ensure that all weapons transfers are made in accordance with international law and in line with Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, there are disarmament treaties that ban whole categories of weapons that should not be used on the battlefield.

At the end of October last year, we hosted talks in Malta on Ukraine's 10-point plan for peace, with the participation of more than 65 countries and international organizations. Malta remains committed to assisting Ukraine so as to achieve a comprehensive framework that will lead to a just and lasting peace for the people of Ukraine. On this occasion, we again call on the Russian Federation to cease all hostilities and withdraw its forces from the entire territory of Ukraine

within its internationally recognized borders. The international community requires a lasting solution to this conflict, a peace that respects borders, human rights and the Charter of the United Nations. Until that day comes, Ukraine has a right to defend itself from this aggression, in line with Article 51 of the Charter.

The President: I now call on the Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Wang Yi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Thank you, Mr. President, for presiding over today's meeting. I thank Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing, and I have noted the position that President Zelenskyy has stated.

The Ukraine crisis is now in its third year. The conflict and fighting continue to spread, the numbers of civilian casualties continue to rise and spillovers continue to intensify. But any prospects for peace are still far off. Every day that the crisis drags on means more suffering for the people, more destruction for the region and more volatility for the world. The situation is not sustainable and must be turned around. All parties should see peace and the people's welfare as the priorities and be genuinely committed to promoting peace talks. To that end, China has the following propositions.

First, we should have a greater sense of crisis and work to cool down the situation. The immediate priority is to observe the three principles of no expansion of the battlefield, no escalation of the fighting and no provocation by any party. In particular, weapons of mass destruction must not be used and nuclear power plants and other peaceful nuclear facilities must not be attacked. Civilians and civilian facilities must not be attacked. The more weapons that are sent to the battlefield, the more difficult it is to achieve the goal of a ceasefire. That is the reality that we must face up to. All parties must abandon the mentality of cold-war confrontation and play a constructive role to calm the situation and create the conditions needed to achieve a ceasefire as soon as possible.

Secondly, we should have a greater sense of responsibility for promoting peace talks. Dialogue and negotiation are the only viable way to settle the Ukraine crisis. If peace talks fail to be launched day after day, misjudgments and miscalculations will build, leading to an even greater crisis. There have recently been more calls for peace on the international stage. A

growing number of countries in the global South have come together to support peace and work to create an atmosphere and conditions conducive to a peaceful settlement of the Ukraine crisis. The international community should seize the opportunities before us and build synergy for promoting peace talks.

Thirdly, we should have a greater sense of urgency in managing spillovers. The spillover of the Ukraine crisis has further encumbered the global economy. The many countries of the global South have been severely affected, and that makes it more difficult for them to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. No party should make the crisis an excuse to abuse unlawful unilateral sanctions or suppress normal business activities, still less to divide the world by creating various exclusive groups. China calls on the international community to strengthen cooperation on energy, finance, trade and food security, as well as the protection of oil and gas pipelines and other critical infrastructure. We also urge for jointly keeping global industrial and supply chains stable and running smoothly and for protecting the legitimate rights, interests and development space of developing countries.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. On the Ukraine issue, the Security Council should bridge differences, advocate commonality and the shelving of differences, uphold common security and build a lasting peace. We hope that Council members will keep in mind the big picture and the long term and do more to foster reconciliation and peace rather than the opposite.

China's position on the Ukraine issue is consistent and clear. President Xi Jinping has solemnly emphasized that all countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity should be respected, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations observed, the legitimate security concerns of all countries taken seriously and all efforts conducive to a peaceful settlement of the crisis supported. That is the authoritative and fundamental position of China on the Ukraine issue. China is not a creator of the Ukraine crisis, nor are we a party to it. China has always stood on the side of peace. We continue our engagement with all relevant parties, including Russia and Ukraine, relentlessly pursue peace talks and actively carry out shuttle diplomacy, and our efforts have received wide recognition and support from the international community. China has released the document "China's position on the political

settlement of the Ukraine crisis” and, together with Brazil, released the six-point consensus. We have played our due role in building consensus and promoting the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis. I also wish to make it clear that, on the Ukraine issue, any move to shift responsibility onto China or to attack or smear China is irresponsible and will lead nowhere.

The world we are in is full of changes and transformation, and humankind faces challenges and risks like never before. Working towards the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis and building a safer world is the common aspiration of the international community and a common responsibility of countries around the world. China calls on the international community to join hands in practicing a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable vision of security and to build more consensus for a ceasefire at an early date, to send out more rational voices in favour of a political settlement and to make more common efforts for lasting peace and the security of the region.

The President: I now call on the Secretary of State of the United States.

Mr. Blinken (United States of America): I welcome President Zelenskyy.

We meet more than two and a half years since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, shredding the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations — sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. Every day since, Russia has waged a war of aggression — the textbook example of a threat to international peace and security that the Security Council was created to prevent and address. The question before us today is not what Russia will do. We already know that — Putin will continue to wage his unjust war. The question before us is how we, members of the Council, can end Putin’s war and reinforce the international rules and rights that make all our nations safer and more secure.

There are two immediate and interrelated steps that we must take.

First, we must address Russia’s growing cooperation with North Korea and Iran. Iran has been providing armed drones to the Kremlin since 2022. It built a drone factory in Russia. Just a few weeks ago, it transferred hundreds of short-range ballistic missiles to Russia, and Tehran has trained Russian military personnel in Iran in how to operate those weapons.

Meanwhile, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has delivered trainloads of weapons and ammunition to Russia, including ballistic missiles, launchers and millions of artillery rounds. Support from Tehran and Pyongyang is helping Putin to inflict carnage, suffering and ruin on innocent Ukrainian men, women and children, demolish Ukrainian apartment buildings, grain silos and ports and ravage Ukrainian power plants, heating and natural gas facilities, just as freezing temperatures are setting in. Those actions by Iran, North Korea and Russia have violated multiple Security Council resolutions — resolutions that Russia voted in favour of and, as a permanent member, has a special responsibility to enforce.

It is also not a one-way street. The more Russia relies on their support, the more Iran and North Korea extract in return. And the more Putin gives to Pyongyang and Tehran, the more he exacerbates threats to peace and security, not just in Europe, but also in the Indo-Pacific, in the Middle East, all around the globe. As North Korea ramps up its military support for Russia, Putin has reciprocated with military commitments and money. The two countries recently revived a treaty pledging to provide military assistance if either is invaded. In March, Russia used its veto to end the work of the Panel of Experts on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (see S/PV.9591), which, for 14 years, had monitored the regime’s nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. Russia’s banks are helping North Korea to evade sanctions, freeing up more funds for its unlawful weapons programmes. All that for a regime that has carried out more than 150 ballistic missile tests since 2022 and whose leader routinely threatens to obliterate South Korea, Japan and other countries.

Meanwhile, as Tehran provides Putin with drones, ballistic missiles and training, Russia is sharing technology with Iran on nuclear issues, as well as space information. The two countries have accelerated negotiations on a comprehensive strategic partnership. Last year, Russia announced plans to send Iran advanced fighter aircraft and attack helicopters, as Iran continued to arm, train and fund proxies in the Middle East to carry out terrorist attacks across the region and beyond, including Hamas, whose appalling 7 October 2023 attacks killed civilians from more than a dozen Member States, and including the Houthis, whose attacks on international shipping have driven up the cost of food, medicine and other supplies for people

around the world and have added to the suffering of the Yemeni people.

North Korea and Iran are not the only ones aiding and abetting Russia. China, another permanent member of the Council, is the top provider of machine tools, microelectronics and other items that Russia is using to rebuild, restock and ramp up its war machine and sustain its brutal aggression.

Now, some may ask how the United States or any other country helping Ukraine to defend itself can criticize countries for providing military support to Russia. There is a profound difference: Russia is the aggressor, Ukraine the victim. Russia fights for conquest, Ukraine fights for survival. If countries stopped supporting Russia, Putin's invasion would soon come to an end. If countries stopped supporting Ukraine, Ukraine could soon come to an end.

That brings me to the second step that members of the Council can take. One of the Council's primary responsibilities is to seek to peacefully resolve conflicts. As President Zelenskyy has said, no one wants peace more than Ukraine. The United States also wants to end the conflict, and before Putin launched his full invasion, we used every tool we could to try to prevent it, including right here at the Security Council. But the way the Council seeks to end the conflict matters. The Charter of the United Nations is crystal clear on that point. When fulfilling its responsibilities, the Security Council "shall act in accordance with the purpose and principles of the United Nations" (*Article 24, para. 2*). In other words, we must seek a peace that upholds, rather than undermines, the core tenets of the United Nations. That is why all of us here have a responsibility to support Ukraine's call for a just and lasting peace to end Russia's war of aggression. A just and lasting peace must affirm the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. A just and lasting peace must preserve Ukraine's right to choose its own path, its own allies, its own future. A just and lasting peace requires Ukraine's full participation and assent. A just and lasting peace must support Ukraine's reconstruction and recovery, with Russia paying to fix the damage it has caused. A just and lasting peace must address both accountability and reconciliation.

The United States is ready and willing to work with any party dedicated to supporting peace based on those principles. Ukraine has said multiple times that diplomacy is the only way to end this war, and that it is

prepared to engage in negotiations. Putin, on the other hand, has no interest in such a peace, recently declaring that Russia would return to the negotiating table only when Ukraine withdraws its troops from Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, in other words, when Ukraine withdraws from its own territory. Putin continues to claim, falsely, that Ukraine is not a real State. He continues to deny that the Ukrainian people have their own identity. In Putin's eyes, the Ukrainian people, like Ukraine itself, do not exist.

Other countries have put forward their own proposals, some of which make no mention of the United Nations Charter or its principles, fail to distinguish between the aggressor and the aggressed and call on all sides to de-escalate. A proposal along those lines would reward Putin's aggression, allow him to rest, rearm and reinvade Ukraine, as he has done time and again. It would also embolden would-be aggressors everywhere around the world.

As history teaches us, peace without principle is prologue to more conflict, more suffering and more instability. To all nations that want this conflict to end in an enduring way, the quickest way forward is simple — stop those who are enabling and fuelling Putin's aggression and demand a just peace that upholds the principles of the United Nations Charter.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France.

Mr. Barrot (France) (*spoke in French*): For two and a half years now, Ukraine, with admirable courage deserving of our gratitude, has been exercising its right to legitimate self-defence, a right that is unambiguously recognized in the Charter of the United Nations — a right to defend its freedom, its territory, its independence and its existence.

I join others in welcoming the presence of President Zelenskyy among us today. He embodies the struggle being waged by the Ukrainian people — a struggle that is also our struggle. How could we not be outraged in the light of the brutal, illegal and unjustifiable war of aggression being waged by Russia against Ukraine; in the light of the massive ongoing violations of the most basic principles of the United Nations Charter, in the light of Russia's defiance and deafness, even as more than 140 States have condemned it unequivocally through their votes in the General Assembly? How could we not be outraged in the light of the systematic and deliberate bombardment of civilian objects; in the

light of the ruthless, methodical destruction of energy infrastructure, which is plunging the Ukrainian people into cold and darkness? How could we not be outraged when we see their atrocities and repeated violations of human rights and international humanitarian law? How could we not condemn rape as a weapon of war? The Ukrainian people are enduring an unbearable situation. This must end. This suffering must end.

How could we not be outraged in the light of the plight of the Ukrainian children, of the young cancer patients near the rubble of the Children's Hospital in Kyiv, of the young Ukrainian people whose mental health is deteriorating, of the orphaned boys and girls, of the children and infants dead as a result of Russian strikes, of the thousands or, perhaps, tens of thousands of children torn away from their families and subjected to so-called re-education in Russia or in Belarus, a treatment of unspeakable cruelty? What has become of them? What will become of them?

France will continue to stand by those who are fighting for the return of the Ukrainian children and to support initiatives under way. There can be no impunity for these crimes. The International Criminal Court has already issued six arrest warrants against Russian officials, and Russia must be held accountable. There must be no complicity in these crimes, which shock our human conscience.

There is no equivalence between support for Ukraine and support for Russia. Russia is flouting all rules in attacking its democratic and peaceful neighbour, whereas Ukraine is exercising its right to self-defence, pursuant to its moral duty. No one should support Russia. France therefore urges all States to refrain from supplying Russia with weapons, dual-use goods or components that fuel Russia's war of aggression. That message is addressed, first and foremost, to North Korea and Iran. We condemn in the strongest terms the transfer by Iran of ballistic missiles to Russia, which has recently been confirmed. That is a significant escalation and a direct threat to European security.

Our concern is heightened by the fact that Russia continues its aggressive and dangerous manoeuvres on the Ukrainian continent in an increasingly brazen fashion. The territorial integrity of a number of European countries has been repeatedly violated this year, and Russia is continuing to destabilize such democracies as Moldova and Armenia — two democratic States

whose sole mistake, in the view of Moscow, was having chosen freedom.

The Russian war of aggression affects all of us beyond the European continent, where it is taking place. It is a global concern. This is a war against food and energy security. Numerous States and populations are being affected by its consequences, and today it is not Russia, but France and its partners that are facilitating the delivery of Ukrainian grain to the civilian population in Gaza. The Russian war of aggression is also a war being waged against the international order. To accept the Russian fait accompli would be to accept the codification of might makes right. It would leave the door open to other border modifications through force. It would be tantamount to renouncing the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including sovereignty and territorial integrity. We would be renouncing the very possibility of envisaging collective security. There can be no collective security without the United Nations, and there can be no United Nations without respect for its foundational Charter. It is our *raison d'être* here at the United Nations, which is under attack.

For all those reasons, methods based on our apathy and demobilization will remain misguided. France will continue to support Ukraine at all levels and over the long term. We will leverage all European instruments and will guarantee Ukraine a path towards the European Union and NATO. A path without aggression and devastation is possible — the path of a just peace, which must be rooted solely in international law and respect for territorial integrity. It cannot take the shape of capitulation by the victim. Here, there is a victim and an aggressor. France will therefore continue to support the Zelenskyy peace plan. Ukraine must be free to choose its alliances and its path.

If Russia decides no longer to be a source of insecurity and instability, another future can take shape.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Cho Tae-yul (Republic of Korea): I wish to thank you, Mr. Robert Golob, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, for convening this meeting. I extend my appreciation to Secretary-General António Guterres for his insightful briefing, and I also welcome President Zelenskyy to this important meeting.

Two and a half years have passed since the Russian Federation launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, a conflict that continues, to this day, to challenge the values and norms that underpin our collective global security. The Republic of Korea remains steadfast in supporting the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Despite repeated calls from the Security Council members for an immediate end to the war, Russia continues its brutal attacks, claiming tens of thousands of civilian lives and destroying the livelihood of millions of innocent citizens. Even more worrisome is the recent escalation along the battlefronts, which has led to a significant increase in civilian casualties and the destruction of critical infrastructure. Our hearts are heavy as we witness the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in Ukraine.

As a nation all too familiar with the anguish of conflict, the Republic of Korea profoundly empathizes with the struggles endured by the Ukrainian people. This shared understanding strengthens our resolve to end this war and restore peace in Ukraine. The Ukraine peace and solidarity initiative, launched by President Yoon Suk Yeol on the occasion of his visit to Kyiv in July 2023, is a powerful testament to our solidarity with Ukraine. Under that initiative, the Republic of Korea committed \$200 million in humanitarian assistance to Ukraine this year. Starting next year, we will provide \$2 billion, to be spread out over five years, to support Ukrainians reconstruction. We are also collaborating with international partners through the Ukraine donor platform in support of reconstruction efforts in Ukraine.

We express grave concern about the military cooperation between the Russian Federation and North Korea. Russia's attacks using North Korean ballistic missiles are increasing in frequency and intensity and the number of areas being targeted is increasing, endangering civilians and prolonging that brutal war. That constitutes an unequivocal violation of multiple Security Council resolutions.

The deepening military cooperation between North Korea and Russia, which was highlighted by the signing of the so-called comprehensive strategic partnership treaty, not only threatens the peace and security on the Korean Peninsula, but also in Europe. It is deplorable that Russia, a permanent Security Council member and one of the founding States of the non-proliferation regime, violates Security Council resolutions and engages in illegal arms trade with North Korea. Any cooperation that directly or indirectly aids North

Korea's military capability is a blatant violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and undermines the non-proliferation regime. We strongly urge North Korea to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions and to respond to our proposals to engage in dialogue.

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has aggravated geopolitical tensions worldwide, presenting us with challenges of unprecedented scale. In order to fulfil its fundamental duty of maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council must devise effective strategies to navigate the complexities and overcome its inherent constraints. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its unwavering support for and active participation in the Council's work to that end with a renewed sense of urgency.

The President: I now call on the Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland.

Mr. Cassis (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): It is crucial that the Council continue to reflect on ways to restore peace and to put an end to the Russian war against Ukraine, and it must do so with Ukraine. I would like to welcome the presence of President Zelenskyy.

I firmly believe in the importance of respecting the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and the application of the Geneva Conventions, whose seventy-fifth anniversary we are celebrating this year. And yet, despite all the tools established since the Second World War, we have not succeeded in silencing the guns. We have not been able to prevent countless civilians from suffering the consequences.

So far, the Security Council has not assumed its responsibility. After 1,000 days of war, we have still not found a diplomatic solution. Why are we unable to agree on the path to restore peace? Have we lost the common grammar of peace? I am a minister because I believe in the power of politics to serve the common good. Politics must always question the maxim of the strategist Von Clausewitz who said war is "the mere continuation of politics by other means". And the United Nations is politics.

It takes courage to make peace. By organizing the first Summit on Peace in Ukraine in June, Switzerland had the courage to put peace on the international agenda

in the midst of war. Countries from five continents met near Lucerne to discuss just three essential issues in peacebuilding: first, nuclear safety; secondly, food security; and thirdly, the humanitarian dimension of the conflict. The joint communiqué issued at Bürgenstock, signed by a majority of participants representing the entire world, has made it possible to overcome some of the obstacles revealed by the war in Ukraine and to restore the beginnings of trust between us. That first step towards peace must be followed by others. It is now essential to continue that dialogue with Russia as well. Only pragmatic diplomacy can get us out of that impasse, which has already cost too many lives.

While peace must be our priority, the reconstruction of Ukraine is also a collective responsibility. Lasting peace will also depend on well-prepared reconstruction. Switzerland laid the foundations for the reconstruction right from the start of the conflict with the Lugano conference. One of our priorities is humanitarian demining. We are currently investing \$120 million in demining civilian and agricultural areas in Ukraine. The needs and solutions for that effort will be discussed at the Ukraine Mine Action Conference, organized by Switzerland and Ukraine, to be held in a few weeks' time, on 17 and 18 October in Switzerland.

Ukraine is about to face its third winter of war. It is our duty to finally offer the Ukrainian people a spring of peace.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

Mr. Todd (Guyana): I would like to commend Slovenia's efficient handling of the Council's business this month. I also thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his sobering briefing on the ongoing war in Ukraine. I also welcome President Zelenskyy to this meeting.

Next month will mark 79 years since the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations — a Charter that binds “we the peoples of the United Nations” to the collective pursuit of peace, the promotion of human rights and the advancement of social and economic progress. In choosing to join the United Nations and accepting the obligations of its Charter, we each agreed to be bound by all of its provisions, including the prohibition on the use of force enshrined in Article 2, paragraph 4. That prohibition is one of the Charter's most explicit provisions and the foremost fundamental principle of

international law. It demands that every Member State of this Organization refrain in its international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of another State.

Seventy-nine years later, we find ourselves confronted with conflicts and crises that challenge the most basic tenets of the Charter of the United Nations and the realization of our collective desire for peace. Most notable is the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, which has already claimed the lives of more than 11,000 civilians. Guyana deplores the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and joins international community in calling for full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We reiterate that the principles of the respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, the prohibition of the use or threat of use of force and the peaceful resolution of all disputes must be adhered to by all Member States of the United Nations.

The war in Ukraine continues to cause widespread suffering and destruction, and it is characterized by an almost wanton disregard for international law, including international humanitarian law. It has also had a detrimental impact on nuclear safety, energy security, the environment and global food security. In both Ukraine and Russia, civilians continue to bear the brunt of the conflict, with many paying the ultimate price. The resulting humanitarian situation has reached crisis level, with 40 per cent of Ukraine's population now in desperate need of humanitarian assistance and more than 10 million displaced. Any further escalation of the conflict will no doubt have even more dire consequences for both countries, the wider region and the world. Guyana reiterates its call for the parties to the conflict to comply fully with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We also call on the Russian Federation to allow full, unhindered humanitarian access to the people in need in the temporarily occupied territories. In seeking a path to lasting peace, Guyana would like to underscore the following three points.

First, we want to emphasize that the conflict cannot be resolved through military means. Only a serious political and diplomatic process can pave the way for peace. Guyana commends the efforts of those who have committed to finding pathways to peacefully ending the war, and we stress the need for that to be a collective endeavour. We therefore encourage a further

intensification of diplomatic dialogue with the parties to the conflict aimed at a de-escalation of the hostilities and the pursuit of sustainable peace.

Secondly, respect for the provisions of the Charter and international law must be upheld. The acquisition of territory by force must not be condoned in any way, individually or collectively. Every State must be able to pursue its national development without the unnecessary and expensive burden of having to arm itself in defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Thirdly and finally, for the bells of peace to ring, the drums of war must be silenced. In that respect, Guyana reiterates its call for the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its military forces from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine and end its invasion of Ukraine. That can be the first step towards finding a lasting and a sustainable peace.

As we prepare to mark the seventy-ninth anniversary on 24 October of the entry into force of the Charter, let us use the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to its purposes and principles and to international law. Let us also reaffirm the primacy of international cooperation and diplomacy in preventing conflicts and settling disputes. We the peoples deserve no less.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the National Community Abroad of Algeria.

Mr. Attaf (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your friendly country's presidency of the Security Council and your wise and effective stewardship of our work.

We are gathered here today as the war in Ukraine has been raging for nearly three years without any prospects for the settlement we desire or tangible progress towards calming the situation, mitigating its impact and containing its repercussions and consequences. We deeply regret that the lack of inclusive international initiatives and meaningful diplomatic efforts for prioritizing dialogue and achieving peace seems to have become synonymous with this conflict and its grave complications and aggravations. That necessitates not accepting the status quo or any obstacles and impediments to remedying it.

We are deeply convinced that we cannot describe the subject on our agenda today as a conflict with limited scope or effect. The war has inflicted significant

losses in terms of human lives and property on both the Russian and Ukrainian sides and has resulted in a full-fledged human tragedy. It has pushed the entire European continent into what has become the most serious open crisis since the end of the Second World War, with all kinds of possibilities and complications. Its political, economic and security ramifications are affecting the entire world and have led to a grave crisis in our system of collective security, accompanied by enormously polarized international relations.

All of that has led Algeria's President Abdelmajid Tebboune to launch an initiative aimed at mediating between Russia and Ukraine, the parties to the conflict. Our initiative is based on the distinguished and deep-rooted relationship between Algeria and those two friendly countries, a relationship characterized by trust, understanding and cooperation. The objective is to bring their viewpoints closer and resolve the conflict by peaceful means. To that end, my country has been seriously involved in the good offices initiated by the Arab Contact Group after the outbreak of the conflict. We believe firmly that this war can have no winners and that everyone will lose as long as lives are lost, people are displaced and infrastructure is destroyed, while economies are undermined and direct threats to regional and international security do harm to us all.

We also believe deeply that the international community has the ability to end the war provided that we put in place the appropriate conditions and environment that any diplomatic initiative needs in order to succeed and reach a settlement that both parties to the conflict accept and are committed to implementing. From that perspective, Algeria calls for intensified efforts to establish a comprehensive and constructive negotiating path. That path would seek to achieve a political and peaceful solution to the conflict, because the solution can only be political and peaceful. That path would steer both parties to the conflict away from the logic of the victor and the vanquished, because there are no winners and losers in a war between two neighbouring countries that share a long history of interdependent interests and relations. That path would be based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and on the legitimacy of international law, because those principles and that legitimacy are the final arbiter among States Members of our United Nations Organization. Last but not least, that path would prioritize addressing the root causes of the entire conflict and appropriately address the

security concerns of both parties. That is the only approach guaranteeing a lasting and steadfast urgent solution by all countries that prioritize the security and stability of those two friendly countries above and beyond any other consideration. That is also the case for my country.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Kabba (Sierra Leone): I thank you, Mr President, for convening this meeting to discuss the security situation in Ukraine at the request of six Council members. I thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, for his comprehensive and sobering briefing. I also join others in welcoming President Zelenskyy's participation in today's meeting.

As the war in Ukraine enters its 941st day, Sierra Leone remains deeply concerned about the continuous aerial attacks on heavily populated areas in cities and towns causing untold suffering to civilians, who find themselves trapped in this conflict.

Sierra Leone takes note of Ukraine's letter of 19 September 2024 (S/2024/688) reporting on a guided aerial attack on a geriatric home in Sumy on 19 September, which was home to 221 elderly people, of whom more than 80 are bed-ridden, and 60 staff members. The attack reportedly killed one elderly person and injured at least 13 others. The facility suffered significant structural damage, and 147 people had to be evacuated.

The Russian Federation has similarly reported shelling of populated areas over the weekend in the Belgorod neighbourhood in Russia and in Russian-occupied areas in Ukraine, resulting in at least one civilian death and at least 14 injured. We also take note of the Russian Federation's letter dated 20 September 2024 (S/2024/692) and its enclosure, detailing attacks on Russian civilians and civilian facilities.

The humanitarian impact of the Ukraine conflict has been devastating, resulting in high numbers of civilian deaths, injuries and displacement. There have been reports of massive infrastructural damage to homes, schools, hospitals, health facilities, businesses and other civilian infrastructure from aerial strikes in Ukraine over the course of the year. Tragically, several first responders have also lost their lives in the attacks, and some have suffered injuries from repeated

attacks on a same site. The attacks have also damaged critical water and electricity infrastructure, causing widespread disruption to services in several areas. For example, according to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, an estimated 16,000 people still inhabiting the town of Pokrovsk have been without water and gas for weeks since both systems were destroyed by ongoing fighting. Attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure are particularly heinous and are prohibited under international law. We call on all sides to ensure compliance with the applicable international law, including international humanitarian law.

It is important for both parties to the conflict to de-escalate and prevent further harm to the lives and livelihoods of their citizens and other innocent civilians. Civilians in front-line communities have had to relocate several times, and humanitarian relief efforts are also being hindered by the extending and shifting front lines. In that regard, we call on the parties to the conflict to exercise maximum restraint. The continued escalation of the conflict presents a clear and present threat of not only drawing other countries in the region into the conflict, but also of triggering a nuclear catastrophe with an unintended strike on a nuclear facility, all of which would cause irreversible damage to efforts to bring the conflict to an end.

Failure to take necessary action towards a political solution for the peaceful resolution of the conflict also shows the Council as being ineffective in, and indifferent to, achieving its mandate and addressing the suffering of millions of men, women and children. The international community, including the Security Council, must remain steadfast in its commitment to supporting the pursuit of an amicable and a sustainable peace in Ukraine. It is equally important for the Council to speak with one voice in the interest of global peace and security, intensify efforts to mediate between the two conflicting parties and encourage measures geared towards de-escalation, a cessation of the hostilities and a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

In conclusion, Sierra Leone once more calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities, respect for the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of both Ukraine and the Russian Federation within their internationally recognized borders and genuine diplomatic efforts to achieve a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict, taking into account the legitimate concerns of all parties involved.

The President: I now call on the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Lammy (United Kingdom): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing on the grim realities of the war.

The United Kingdom commends President Zelenskyy not only for standing up for his people but also for standing up for democracy. When I saw him in Kyiv a few weeks ago with Secretary Blinken, I saw ordinary people from all walks of life — soldiers and civilians, firefighters and first responders, mothers and fathers — working together in defence of freedom. His bravery and courage are an inspiration to us all.

But I also want to speak directly to the Kremlin and its representative here today. To Vladimir Putin, I say that Russia sits on the Council, but its actions tear up the Charter of the United Nations. Russia sits on the Council but over the weekend we saw it put forward amendments designed to wreck the United Nations future. Russia claims to stand for the global South, but it runs roughshod over international law.

When Vladimir Putin fires missiles into Ukrainian hospitals, we know who he is. When he sends mercenaries into African countries, we know who he is. When he murders opponents in European cities, we know who he is. His invasion is in his interests — his alone — and seeks to expand his mafia State into a mafia empire, an empire built on corruption, on robbing from the Russian people and from Ukraine, on crushing the dissent of courageous opponents like Mr. Navalny and on lies that spread disinformation at home and abroad to sow disorder.

I speak not only as a Briton, as a Londoner and as Foreign Secretary. But I say to the Russian representative, who is on his phone as I speak, that I stand here also as a Black man whose ancestors were taken in chains from Africa at the barrel of a gun, to be enslaved, and whose ancestors rose up and fought in a great rebellion of the enslaved. Imperialism — I know it when I see it, and I will call it out for what it is. In this week, when I am here talking to other partners around the world about our shared futures and the future of the United Nations, Russia is trying to return us to a world of the past — a world of imperialism, a world of redrawing borders by force and a world without the Charter. We cannot allow that to happen. Ukraine's fight

matters to all of us. The United Kingdom will remain Ukraine's staunchest supporter because those are the stakes. If we let an imperialist redraw borders by force, those will not be the last borders to be redrawn. If we let an imperialist deny a nation its path, Ukraine will not be the last State to be subjected. Maduro will take encouragement and go for Guyana next. Therefore, let me be clear. We want peace in Ukraine. We want it for the Ukrainian people.

As President Zelenskyy has said, it must be a peace that respects the fundamental principles that underpin the United Nations — the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Putin's Russia wants to unravel it. We want to uphold it, and we will. As President Zelenskyy said, the Charter of the United Nations will prevail. Glory to Ukraine.

Mr. Akahori (Japan): I thank you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Slovenia for organizing this important meeting.

More than two and a half years have passed since Russia launched its brutal aggression against Ukraine. Japan again condemns Russia's aggression in the strongest possible terms and has repeatedly demanded its withdrawal from Ukraine. First and foremost, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to pay tribute to and express our solidarity with President Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian people, who have been fighting to uphold the inalienable principles of the Charter of the United Nations for their country's political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity since the start of the aggression. Today Japan reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine.

As the aggression continues and civilian casualties mount day by day, Russia's attacks targeting critical infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools and power plants, are threatening the future of the Ukrainian people. Russia must uphold its obligations under international humanitarian law. Deliberate and indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets are in flagrant violation of international law and constitute war crimes. Japan condemns Russia's illegal abduction of children who should be bearing the future of Ukraine. We strongly urge it to release all persons unjustly detained and to safely return all civilians illegally transferred or deported. And the damaging impacts of Russia's war of aggression go well beyond Ukraine. In addition to the mass displacement of people from Ukraine, we are

witnessing the dire consequences of food and energy insecurity, particularly in vulnerable and developing countries. Japan is committed to protecting the human dignity of those made vulnerable as a result of the conflict, including women and children, and to continuing its support for them.

It is unacceptable that a permanent member of the Security Council, on which the Charter of the United Nations confers the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, is continuing to disregard international law by attempting to unilaterally change the status quo by force. In fact, by procuring ballistic missiles from North Korea and using them against Ukraine, Russia has violated Security Council resolutions that it voted in favour of. In addition, we are deeply concerned about Iran's transfer of ballistic missiles to Russia. All Member States should refrain from aiding Russia's aggression directly or indirectly. Furthermore, Japan condemns Russia's seizure and continued control and militarization of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during the war, Japan will not accept Russia's nuclear threats, let alone its use of nuclear weapons.

In order to protect the international order based on the rule of law, it is essential to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The overwhelming majority of the international community shares that view. The only country worthy of blame for the present situation of Ukraine is Russia. Every Member State, including the members of the Security Council, should make it clear that it was Russia that started this unjustified war of aggression. The rule of law is essential to multilateralism, and the United Nations should embody multilateralism. To that end, all nations should fulfil their responsibilities so as to strengthen the governance of the United Nations. In order to reflect the realities of the twenty-first century and effectively maintain international peace and security, it is vital to strengthen the functions of the United Nations, including by reforming the Security Council. Japan is determined to continue exercising leadership to that end.

In conclusion, as a country determined to contribute seriously to the maintenance of international peace and security, Japan once again strongly calls on Russia to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw

from Ukraine. Japan will stand with Ukraine so that peace and justice prevail.

Mr. Gonçalves (Mozambique): I want to thank the Slovenian presidency for convening this high-level briefing on the security situation in Ukraine. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement and for conveying the urgency of the situation in Ukraine.

As the conflict in Ukraine approaches its third year, we observe with deep concern that armed hostilities continue to prevail over calls for peace and that the situation remains dire, with significant humanitarian consequences. The international community remains apprehensive about the potential for wider conflict in Europe. There is a growing sense of unease regarding the escalation of tensions. It is imperative to acknowledge that the world is at a critical juncture, where we risk failing in our commitment under the Charter of the United Nations "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". The potential consequences of such a failure could surpass the devastation witnessed in previous global conflicts.

We meet today in the wake of the General Assembly's landmark adoption of the Pact for the Future (resolution 79/1). However, we must recognize that if immediate action is not taken to resolve this conflict, the very future that we seek to secure for subsequent generations may be imperilled, not only in Ukraine but globally. This conflict between two nations with an intertwined history and kinship has put a considerable strain on our global peace and security architecture and on our shared principles of humanity. Against that bleak backdrop, as we stand at a crossroads of history, confronted with the sobering reality of war and the threat of global conflict, it is crucial to reaffirm the fundamental values that bind us. We strongly advocate for the primacy of reasoned dialogue over the use of force. Our collective strength and hope for peace lie in our unwavering commitment to diplomacy, the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Drawing on our nation's historical experience, we affirm that the use of force invariably leads to destruction. Such actions exacerbate divisions, fuel resentment and inflict untold suffering on the most vulnerable members of our society. It is our firm belief that violence, regardless of any party's efforts to

justify it, cannot establish the conditions necessary for lasting peace. It is through reasoned dialogue, patience, a principled approach and a determined pursuit of justice and mutual understanding that we can build the foundations of a world where future generations are safeguarded from the threat of armed conflict.

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine serves as a stark reminder of the fragility of peace and the immense responsibility that we have to protect it. We are being confronted daily with an alarming risk of escalation, including the unimaginable spectre of nuclear confrontation. We must therefore categorically reject the temptation of countering force with force. We must rather rally behind the very principles that have guided us for more than seven decades — respect for countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity and for the peaceful resolution of disputes. Let us reaffirm the solemn commitment made by the founders of this Organization to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. That is not an abstraction but our collective responsibility and mission. It calls on each Member State to transcend immediate political considerations, act with reason and restraint and recognize that our shared humanity supersedes any fleeting political gain. Together we must redouble our efforts to facilitate peace, foster dialogue and support every initiative that seeks to end the hostilities and restore hope.

Tomorrow the Security Council will reconvene for an open debate on the maintenance of international peace and security, focused on the theme of leadership for peace. We must remain vigilant regarding the perils of hubris in leadership and heed the call that we have collectively endorsed in the Pact for the Future to guarantee a better future for current and future generations. Let us be guided by the noble task of ensuring that the legacy we leave behind is one of peace, stability and dignity for all.

Mr. Barberis (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking Secretary-General António Guterres for his tireless efforts for peace and by recognizing the presence in the Chamber today of high-level officials to whom my delegation has listened and will continue to listen with respect.

I have come before the Security Council with a deep sense of responsibility for and awareness of the state of fragility in which global peace and security finds itself. The war in Ukraine, which continues to cause human suffering and growing global instability, has raised

further questions about the Council's credibility in terms of fulfilling its primary responsibility to uphold international peace and security. The Charter of the United Nations remains the beacon that should guide us towards achieving lasting global peace. Its purposes and principles remind us of the need to avoid the errors and horrors of the past, which is why it is our collective responsibility to defend it.

I reaffirm my country's unwavering commitment to the fundamental principles of international law. Respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States is non-negotiable. Paragraph 4 of Article 2 of the Charter is crystal clear, and there is no provision whatsoever that admits or legitimizes the use or threat of use of force as a way of resolving disputes between nations. That is why my country has maintained a strong, coherent position, in line with international law and the Charter, since the conflict erupted in February 2022. We have condemned the invasion of Ukraine, and we have consistently supported the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the March 2022 provisional measures issued against the Russian Federation by the International Court of Justice.

The communities affected by the conflict are facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. The attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure continue to devastate people's lives and destroy their means of survival, including beyond Ukraine's borders. Ecuador has called on both parties to protect civilians, keep the fighting away from populated areas, safeguard civilian infrastructure and adhere to the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution, as called for by international humanitarian law. My country has also called for the implementation of resolution 2730 (2024) and other resolutions pertaining to the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel. Facilitating unhindered access for humanitarian aid to all affected areas is of critical importance.

The impact of this conflict is not limited to the borders of Ukraine and Russia. The economic, energy- and food-related consequences of the war are affecting developing countries and compromising the global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We should also warn of the risk of the war spilling over into a broader conflict. The intensification of hostilities is threatening to put us in a situation of general confrontation, with unfathomable consequences. In view of that, the Secretary-General's call for the hostilities to be brought to an end and the efforts of

international actors to put an end to the conflict must be supported. I reiterate Ecuador's willingness to support all initiatives aimed at restoring peace and security in Ukraine and the wider region. Dialogue and diplomacy cannot be considered to be red lines.

Ecuador's experience has shown that even the longest-standing conflicts can be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy. Although we are aware of how complex the situation in Ukraine is and of the geopolitical tensions surrounding it, that experience convinces us that we can find a peaceful solution in Ukraine. The Council has a historical responsibility to contribute to the quest for peaceful solutions by rejecting the use of force as a way of resolving disputes and working for a world in which collective security prevails.

In conclusion, that is why Ecuador joins the call for the Russian Federation to end its military operations in Ukraine so that we can advance without further delay towards a negotiated solution leading to a sustainable peace based on international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): As for the eloquent British Foreign Minister who lectured us about imperialism — look who is talking. I recommend that he read our amendment to the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), based on the Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations. Let him have a look at it first and then tell us what he does not accept there. Perhaps it is the reference to the United Nations Charter? He has already left the meeting, but I do hope that this will be conveyed to him.

An absolutely horrific and inhumane military campaign is taking place today right before our very eyes. This is how the Secretary-General described it earlier in September,

“The level of suffering we are witnessing ... is unprecedented in my mandate as Secretary-General of the United Nations. I have never seen such a level of death and destruction as we are seeing ... in the last few months.”

The conflict has already claimed the lives of nearly 42,000 people, including more than 300 humanitarian workers. The territory, where 2 million people live, now lies in ruins. It has become uninhabitable and will remain so for years, if not decades. António Guterres previously dubbed this area a graveyard for children

because so many women and children perished there. Nevertheless, the Security Council has been unable to achieve a ceasefire there — as requested by all humanitarian workers, without exception — for nearly a year now. That is due to the position of a single permanent member of the Security Council, who cast a veto five times to that end.

I think it is clear to all that we are not speaking about Ukraine, but about the crisis in Gaza. For the difference between them to be even starker, we recall that one year ago, after the start of the Israeli operation in the Strip, several thousand Israelis of Ukrainian origin moved to Ukraine, deciding that they would be safer there. After all, the residents of Ukraine are perfectly aware that Russia does not carry out attacks against civilian objects unless they are used for military purposes. All such incidents publicized by the Ukrainian authorities occur because Ukrainian air defence systems are operating from residential areas of Ukrainian cities where they are deployed.

Under these circumstances, it is obvious why the whole world expected that the Security Council would convene eminent guests in New York specifically to discuss the situation in Gaza, especially since the tectonic shifts caused by the crisis are threatening to plunge the entire Middle East region, from Lebanon to Iran and Yemen, into a large-scale, brutal regional conflict. In the past two days alone, Israeli strikes claimed the lives of nearly 600 Lebanese. However, Western members of the Security Council booked the Chamber in advance specifically for the Permanent Representative benefit of the expired Ukrainian president. Were it not for the Arab and developing countries who requested a meeting on 27 September, the Security Council would simply not have discussed Gaza at all during this week.

All of this appears even more unseemly for the Council, given that what is happening around Ukraine is perfectly clear to all of us. Here is a brief recap for the Council: The Kyiv regime, which came to power as a result of the 2014 coup instigated by the West, immediately unleashed a brutal civil war against the residents of the south and east of the country who were unwilling to renounce their identity and to bow to Nazi collaborators. As a result, the Maidan authorities lost Crimea almost immediately. Then, in 2015, this conflict was frozen with the signing of the Minsk package of measures approved by the Security Council. However, instead of implementing this document, the

new Ukrainian authorities took great pains to sabotage it, and they actively armed themselves and prepared for war with Russia, with the assistance of the United States and its allies, as admitted by a number of retired Western politicians.

After the regime in Kyiv categorically refused to implement the Minsk agreements and after its Western sponsors rebuffed any dialogue with Russia on European security issues, our country, having come face to face with a significant intensification of Ukrainian strikes targeting peaceful cities in the republic of Donbas, decided to launch a special military operation. This could have ended one month later, when the Russian army was at the outskirts of Kyiv, but the West dissuaded Kyiv's strongman from signing the draft peace treaty initialled by Ukraine in Istanbul, promising to do everything possible to support the Ukrainian army, which allegedly would be able to inflict defeat on Russia on the battlefield.

However, despite the bountiful supplies of weapons, including long-range weapons, the deliveries of intelligence information, the targeting, the deployment of mercenaries and instructors and the West's direct involvement in the conflict, with the aim of inflicting a strategic defeat on Russia with the hands of Ukrainians, the Ukrainian army today is on the verge of complete collapse. In order to be convinced of this, it suffices to read the military communiqués stating the rapid destruction of Kyiv's fortification lines on the eastern front, which were erected over the course of almost eight years.

To have the full picture, we must also take into account the fact that the recruitment of new soldiers, whom Zelenskyy's regime is throwing to certain death in the senseless meat grinder, is being carried out almost exclusively by force, with people being rounded up in raids. That can be seen videos that outraged Ukrainian citizens have posted, and the Ukrainian segment of the Internet is flooded with such images. In other words, the Ukrainians do not wish to go to war. They are trying their best to flee the country, and those who find themselves on the front without being appropriately trained are attempting to either desert or surrender. Were it not for the barrier troops of deranged nationalists shooting them in the back, the number of prisoners would have been in the tens of thousands. For the same reason, the notorious counter-offensive, upon which the sponsors of Zelenskyy and his clique pinned great hopes last year, failed.

Understanding all of this, the head of the Kyiv junta has decided to make use of the sole remaining chance to cling to power and to avoid reprisals from his own compatriots, namely by dragging the West into a direct confrontation with Russia. A large-scale Bucha-like provocation would have fit the bill, but it was so clumsy and so unpersuasive that it was clear that a new one would also be unconvincing. The other option would be to provoke a strong response after strikes with long-range Western weapons targeting facilities deep within Russian territory and then to cry for help. However, Western leaders, whose self-preservation instinct has not yet completely atrophied, have not yet taken that decision or, in any case, they are not eager to announce it.

The Kyiv strongman therefore decided to go all-in and, having lulled everyone with ruminations about peace, decided to launch a reckless attack on a peaceful Russian border region. However, here too, things did not go as planned. He did not achieve his goals and was forced to squander valuable human resources and Western equipment, which is in short supply, in the Kursk region while the collapse of the eastern front is under way at an unprecedented pace.

And here he is, in New York, once again with an extended hand, and once again he is attempting to persuade the West to raise the stakes in the conflict with Russia and throw their own sons to certain death in Ukraine, thereby becoming a direct party to the conflict with a nuclear Power. Zelenskyy has nothing to lose, but the United States and its allies certainly do. And they are perfectly aware of the cost they could pay for an attempt to save the Ukrainian dead weight, the suitcase without handles.

The actor Volodymyr Zelenskyy is now playing the role of a cool guy, an ally of the West and even something of the saviour of all humankind from the Russian threat. He has become an ardent Russophobe and a fervent nationalist, who embraced the ideas of Bandera and Hitler's other henchmen at his mother's knee. However, the character before us did not always play that role — far from it. To understand who we are dealing with, let us briefly consider the political roles he has played over the past decade.

In the past, before being elected President and at the initial stage of the leadership of the country, Mr. Zelenskyy was quite critical of the 2014 coup and called for an objective investigation into its dark

chapters. Being a Russian speaker himself, in 2014 he uttered the following words:

“If people in eastern Ukraine and Crimea wish to speak in Russian, back off. Let them be. Let them speak Russian lawfully. Language will never divide our motherland.”

At the height of his election campaign in 2019, he declared that the oppression of the Russian language was unacceptable, and he spoke of the need to guarantee that the Russian language would develop on an equal footing with other languages. Furthermore, he promised to ensure a lasting ceasefire in Donbas. Not surprisingly, his programme appealed to Ukrainian voters, and he won three quarters of their votes. What also helped him was the fact that he gave interviews in Russian, he promised not to impose a cult of Nazi henchmen on those who do not regard them as heroes and vowed to silence the guns in the east of the country, where the Ukrainian armed forces had been shelling peaceful towns for five years, killing women, the elderly and children.

However, after the presidential victory, he began to play a different role and failed to honour a single one of his promises. We can observe how he gradually betrayed the Ukrainian people and destroyed the State to advance the interests of his Western sponsors. In his inaugural speech, he declared that the Ukrainian State should fight for the hearts and souls of the people of Donbas, not just for territory. Soon after taking his oath of office, he began to sabotage the implementation of the Minsk agreements; he supported the most extremist laws against the Russian language and Russian speakers and even advised the residents of south-eastern Ukraine who consider themselves Russians to move to Russia and called them “specimens”.

I would like to ask Mr. Zelenskyy — although it is no longer possible since he left — who called today for respect for the Charter of the United Nations, how those actions are in accordance with the Charter. How are the violations of basic human rights authorized by Ukraine’s leadership in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations? Is he willing to refer only to some parts of the document, namely, the ones related to territorial integrity?

Instead of eliminating the root causes of the internal Ukrainian crisis which triggered the civil war, the new President of Ukraine decided to exacerbate them. Indeed, a language inquisition was carried out

in the country, and people were punished for the use of the Russian language, which is the mother tongue of the majority of Ukrainians. Even before Russia’s special military operation in Ukraine, the opposition was effectively destroyed, independent media outlets were shut down, the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church was repressed and nationalist and neo-Nazi groups flourished. Anything that in one way or another linked Ukraine to Russia was outlawed, history was rewritten, and children were indoctrinated with delusional theories about the millenniums-old Ukrainian civilization, from which the Jews, the Portuguese and the French descended. That is not a joke, nor is it fake. That is written in an eighth-grade geography textbook of a Ukrainian middle school, and we showed it here in the Chamber.

In Western battle cries, Ukraine is portrayed as an innocent victim of Russian aggression, and the United States and its allies are portrayed as peacekeepers. Those assertions could not be further from the truth. Ukraine under the neo-Nazi Kyiv regime has become a one-man dictatorship. And for the sake of preserving his power and in blind obedience to the West, the dictator is willing to not only to drown the entire country in blood and sacrifice all young Ukrainians who were unable to flee the country, but also to push the world into the abyss of a third world war.

Just a few years ago, Mr. Zelenskyy said:

“I can assure you, for our heroes to not die any longer, I am willing to do anything. And I am certainly not afraid to make difficult decisions. I am ready to give up my post without hesitation to achieve peace.”

Those phrases seem like something out of the realm of fantasy, given how irrelevant they have become. With his support among the population at an all-time low, he has a primordial fear of losing power, because he realizes that he will be held accountable for all the crimes he committed while in office.

I would like to recall that regular elections were to be held on 31 March, but Mr. Zelenskyy cancelled them under the pretext of martial law, which contradicts the country’s Constitution. After 20 May, when, according to the Constitution, the presidential powers should have been transferred to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, the leader of the Kyiv junta turned into a conventional usurper of power. Incidentally, on 28 August, the

authorities of the ninth session of the Verkhovna Rada expired.

In the five years of his presidential term, he has led the country entrusted to him into an abyss, selling off Ukraine to Western corporations, destroying its economy and plunging it into a severe demographic crisis.

President Biden spoke today at the General Assembly about the need to save the Ukrainian nation. The Ukrainian nation is not threatened by anything. We are not fighting against it. We are fighting against the criminal regime that seized power in Kyiv and is leading its people towards catastrophe. And it is not a war for territory, as our foes claim. It is a struggle for acknowledgement and people's rights.

A just and lasting resolution of the Ukrainian crisis is possible only if its root causes are eradicated. First and foremost, the violations of the rights of the Russian-speaking population must end, and other discriminatory laws in Ukraine must be repealed. Today we have heard calls from many corners for a political and diplomatic solution based on the Charter of the United Nations. However, there will be no resolution without overcoming the legacy of Maidan; eradicating nationalism, Nazism and other manifestations of discrimination in Ukraine; respect for the rights and the fundamental freedoms of all without distinction as to race, gender, language and religion, in accordance with Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations. We have not heard about those seemingly obvious elements from our Western colleagues or from the Secretary-General. We also did not hear another important premise: that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their interrelated nature must be fully observed in their entirety. In addition to the provisions on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, there is the principle of the self-determination of peoples. That principle should never be overlooked, nor should the principle of the responsibility of States for all their citizens be forgotten.

We hope that the Kyiv regime will not be able to completely destroy its country and its people, which it is already close to doing, nor push the world into the abyss of a nuclear catastrophe. To that end, it should embrace realistic parameters for a long-term resolution of the Ukrainian crisis, rather than falling back on ultimatums, plans to achieve victory and so forth. The price for that criminal flippant arrogance is paid

by ordinary Ukrainians, whose resistance to the high-handed Kyiv clique is visibly increasing.

The Russian Federation was always ready to live in peace and maintain good neighbourly relations with Ukraine until it became an aggressive, Russophobic, neo-Nazi wasp nest, threatening the country's security, and began to make plans to draw it into the militaristic NATO bloc. We have always respected the Ukrainians; they are a brotherly people with whom we have unbreakable historical ties. It is no coincidence that millions of Ukrainians have found shelter in Russia. If the Western camp will not allow us to excise the cancerous tumour that is the current Kyiv regime by peaceful means and if the geopolitical and economic considerations of Washington and its satellites continue to take precedence over the salvation of the country, we will continue our special military operation until we have achieved our objectives by military means. There is no other way to achieve peace.

The President: Before continuing, please let me read out this time-limit reminder. This meeting must conclude by 6 p.m. I would like to remind all speakers that there is a time limit of three minutes in place to be able to conclude the meeting within the allotted time frame. Participants may send their full statements for publication as a Security Council document with a letter addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Gitanas Nausėda, President of the Republic of Lithuania.

President Nausėda: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the three Baltic countries — Estonia, Latvia and my own country, Lithuania.

We came here to discuss maintaining the peace and security of Ukraine. Before turning our attention to the future, I suggest that we also talk about the past and the present. Ukraine had been perfectly secure from external threats before that security was snatched away, before the illegal occupation of Crimea, before the invasion into Donbas and before the wholesale war of aggression in 2022. Right now, Ukraine has neither peace nor security. It is Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, that is directly responsible for putting not only European but global peace and security under threat.

Let me remind members that this great Organization was created to prevent both wars of aggression and war crimes. We the peoples of the United Nations

determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. That is how the Charter of the United Nations begins. We continue to fail that promise to this very day.

It is truly a shame that Russia is still able to hide behind the veto power and actively uses that power to cover crimes of its partners. Each and every person in the Chamber knows about the Kremlin's many crimes — I will not repeat the whole list now.

What the Baltic States demand is accountability. The whole political and military leadership of Russia must be held accountable, as well as their major accomplices. A special international tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine must be established. War criminals must be arrested under International Criminal Court arrest warrants by the countries that have ratified the Rome Statute.

The Baltic States acknowledge that there will be no true accountability without Ukraine's decisive victory. Peace can be achieved only through the full restoration of Ukraine's territory within its internationally recognized borders. Security can only be guaranteed by Russia's acknowledgment that it will never prevail over the brave Ukrainian people.

Therefore, it is the duty of the international community to support Ukraine for as long as it takes, until its final victory.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania.

Ms. Odobescu (Romania): With every passing day, Russia's aggression against Ukraine undermines effective and rules-based multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core. We are here today in the Security Council to stand by our neighbour Ukraine, by the Charter of the United Nations and by international law and to again echo that there is only one way to end the aggression against Ukraine. This is how.

Russia must abide by the rules of international law. It must unconditionally cease the use of force and withdraw completely and immediately from the territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders. Ukraine's independence, territorial integrity and its sovereign right to freely choose its own pathway should be respected by all United Nations States Members. Ukraine has the legitimate right to defend itself against Russian aggression.

During the current illegal military aggression, innocent civilians have been killed. Furthermore, Russia has been using a wide array of military techniques — from the irresponsible threat of the nuclear option and disinformation to the destruction of energy infrastructure and violations of the basic principle of the freedom of navigation.

The recent strike by Russia against a cargo ship loaded with Ukrainian grain in the Black Sea represents another example of its aggressive actions in the region. Romania will continue to remain committed to enhance the transit capacity of Ukrainian goods via its Danube and Black Sea ports.

In these grave circumstances, we have to make sure that justice is being served and that accountability be duly pursued for all crimes committed against Ukraine, including the crime of aggression. The ongoing war is severely affecting the security of the wider Black Sea area, challenging the resilience of neighbouring States. We recall that the Republic of Moldova's stability is critical for the entire region.

Peace in Ukraine cannot be restored by inaction. Romania tirelessly advocates for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with the United Nations Charter. Romania fully supports the peace formula of President Zelenskyy. One principle is crystal clear, legally and morally — Ukraine alone has the political and moral legitimacy to decide if, when and on what terms it wants to engage with the Russian Federation. What we wish for is simple and only natural — peace for the people of Ukraine and full-fledged respect for the United Nations Charter and international law. That should be our joint objective and responsibility.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary.

Mr. Szijjártó (Hungary): I thank you, Madam Minister, for organizing this briefing.

I represent a country that is a direct neighbour to Ukraine, a country that has been faced with the consequences of the war for the past two and a half years, a country that has been paying the price of the war, although we have absolutely no responsibility in the war being launched.

After almost 1,000 days, I think the question is no longer what we think about the war but how peace will be made — or, even more precisely, the question should

be: which is the quickest way to peace. We believe that we have to reach peace in the fastest possible way, because the later we come to peace, the more people will die, the more families will suffer, the more people will have to escape and the more destruction will take place. And we Hungarians in the neighbourhood do not want more destruction to take place, we do not want more families to suffer, we do not want more people to die, especially given that there is a significant community of Hungarians living in Ukraine.

And if we are honest with ourselves and do not rely only on our own channels of communication, I think that it is obvious from the perspective of peace that what has been done so far has not worked at all. The supplies of weapons have not helped in any way to bring the war closer to a conclusion and an end. The increasing numbers of weapons on both sides of the front line have produced more casualties and prolonged the war. We are also very concerned about the ever-growing risk of escalation and about overt references to the use of nuclear weapons of any kind.

We Hungarians advocate for a ceasefire and for peace talks to be started. We believe that is the fastest way to achieve peace, especially since what has happened so far has proved that there can be no solution on the battlefield. What the battlefield brings is casualties and destruction. We Hungarians are proud to be among the global majority for peace and we are ready to take part in every global initiative that advances hopes for peace and fosters support for peace. We hope that this high-level week of the General Assembly will bring us closer to the conclusion of the war, to peace and to ending the suffering of the people in our neighbourhood.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland.

Mr. Sikorski (Poland): The Russian Ambassador predicted that this debate would consist of hackneyed statements dictated by Brussels. That is a lie. I assure Council members that I wrote what they are about to hear myself.

The Russian Ambassador claims that Russia does not bomb civilian targets. That is a second lie. Two weeks ago, I visited the Ukrainian city of Lviv where a townhouse was hit with a Russian Kalibr missile. That is the result. A man saw his wife and three daughters taken out of the rubble, dead. All of them were civilians. All of them lived far away from the front line and all of them were killed.

The Russian Ambassador has talked about a children's graveyard in Gaza, which is indeed a tragic situation. Well, Ukrainian children are not being targeted solely with bombs. Thousands have been kidnapped and taken into Russia, where they are brainwashed in order to strip them of their memories and their national identity. Russia claims that those children are orphans left alone in a war zone — another lie. Many were separated from their parents either by accident during attacks or deliberately by the aggressor's army. Independent reports have revealed that

“officials have deported Ukrainian children to Russia or Russian-held territories without consent, lied to them that they were not wanted by their parents, used them for propaganda and given them Russian families and citizenship.”

Special camps offered the abducted children a patriotic Russian education and a hotline was established to pair the minors with potential “foster families”, luring those families with money. On top of that, Mr. Putin signed a decree fast-tracking the process of granting Russian citizenship to stolen Ukrainian children. That is not collateral war damage. It was a plan devised before the war and ruthlessly executed. United Nations investigators have concluded that those actions constitute war crimes. In October 2022, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin. Ambassador Nebenzia and Russian propagandists like to refer to the democratically elected Government of Ukraine as Nazis, as the Council has just heard. It so happens that in Poland, I live three kilometres from Potulice, the site of a former Nazi filtration camp during the Second World War. It is known for the fact that thousands of children, from Poland and from around Smolensk and Vitebsk in the Soviet Union, were imprisoned there. As many as 800 of those children died, but thousands were transferred west to be Germanized — blond, blue-eyed Aryan children deemed to be racially suitable.

I therefore have a few questions for the Russian Ambassador and his superiors. How does what they are doing to kidnapped Ukrainian children differ from what German Nazis did to their children and ours? How many Russian officials have adopted stolen Ukrainian children following the example of Sergei Mironov, the former Chairman of the Federation Council of Russia, as reported by the BBC? When will they return the remaining thousands of stolen Ukrainian children to Ukraine? Do they know that stealing another

country's children is tantamount to genocide, as was recently reaffirmed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe? Do they remember that the diplomats and propagandists of a genocidal regime are also criminals, as Soviet prosecutors argued at Nuremberg with reference to Ribbentrop and Streicher?

Permanent members of the Security Council are supposed to be guardians of peace. They are not supposed to fight their wars with other people's children. That is Russia's shame, and it will not be forgiven or forgotten. And by the way, since Ambassador Nebenzia denies the reality of Soviet-Nazi collaboration in the invasion of Poland in 1939, here are pictures of their joint parade. I am sure that he recognizes the Soviet uniforms.

The President: I now call give the floor to the Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia.

Mr. Blanár (Slovakia): I would like to thank the Council for the opportunity to take the floor as an immediate neighbour of Ukraine and to deliver a key message on behalf of Slovakia. I want to focus on three points.

First, and to reiterate our principled position, Slovakia supports the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders as a matter of principle. Borders must be respected and cannot be changed by force. The sovereignty of all must be respected. Those are key provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and essential for global stability and the predictability of international relations. Just as Slovakia did not recognize Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence, it likewise does not recognize the annexation of Crimea or of the regions of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhya.

Secondly, as regards continued peace efforts, more than two and a half years have elapsed since the invasion started, without a firm commitment from global Powers to the peace process. Divisions within the Council are deepening and its role as a protector of peace is being questioned. Slovakia calls on all stakeholders to put aside their differences and focus on stopping the human suffering and destruction of Ukraine. There is no alternative to dialogue, because the situation cannot be resolved by military means alone. The war against Ukraine and the war in Gaza have dire global consequences for global food and energy security and supply routes. And when we talk about peace, we must be very specific. A lasting, just peace for Ukraine

cannot be achieved outside of the key principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Slovakia stands ready to support any meaningful process or format that respects those principles. The process will determine the outcome. This conflict cannot be resolved unless competition among global Powers is replaced by their cooperation and return to diplomacy.

Let me conclude my remarks on peace efforts with the words of Albert Einstein, "peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding".

Thirdly, the future of Ukraine is in the European Union. My Government supports a peaceful, independent, sovereign, democratic and prosperous Ukraine with stable, internationally recognized borders and firmly advancing on its reform path towards future European Union membership. Yesterday I spoke at the meeting of the Group of Seven plus about continued support for Ukraine ahead of the upcoming winter. We continue to provide emergency electricity, gas and diesel fuel supplies to minimize power and heat outages in Ukraine. People are our primary concern. To that end, the third joint meeting of the Governments of Slovakia and Ukraine will soon take place, with the aim of accelerating the implementation of the road map signed by our Prime Ministers earlier this year, focusing on strategic infrastructure and connectivity.

Slovakia remains committed to providing solidarity to people in Ukraine, as well as in Gaza and the Sudan.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Borrell Fontelles.

Mr. Borrell Fontelles: We meet today as a permanent member of the Council, Russia, continues to carry out a brutal, unjustified and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. As many said today, it is a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

Russia launched a war against Ukraine. It is the first inter-State war in Europe since the Second World War. Ukraine is defending itself, in line with its inherent right to self-defence under the Charter of the United Nations — and it is doing so against a nuclear-armed State. The international community must remain determined to support Ukraine's freedom, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Some have declared here today that they love peace. No one loves peace more than Ukrainians do. Those lovers of peace want to achieve peace in the quickest

possible way, but they have not mentioned that the quickest possible way to do so would be for Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine. Yes, there is another way, namely, that of Ukrainian surrender, but we do not want that kind of ending to the war. And those lovers of peace are desolate because the fact that we have been providing support to Ukraine has not brought the war to an end. No, but it has allowed Ukraine to defend itself, and we want Ukraine to continue defending itself. Therefore, all the lovers of peace should please take into consideration that the manner in which this war is going to end does matter. One way of ending this war — Ukraine's surrender when faced with the violation of its territorial integrity — would give the perpetrator of this violation a good example to pursue again and again. Therefore, I call on all peace-lovers to please keep in mind that what we are talking about is the freedom of one country, one people, that is defending itself against an aggressor.

United Nations reports are unequivocal: the deliberate destruction of civilian homes and infrastructure is depriving the civilian population of services necessary for its survival, particularly when the winter season starts, and two thirds of the electricity production capacity of the country has been destroyed.

The recent transfer of short-range ballistic missiles to Russia by Iran, and also by North Korea, is becoming an enabler of Russian aggression; that represents a substantive material escalation and a direct threat to European security. Those weapons will likely be used against Ukrainian civilians, adding another layer of suffering and destruction to this war.

The European Union remains unwavering in its support for Ukraine and for a just and lasting peace — yes, because we too want peace, but we want it on the basis of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, as do more than 110 partners who supported the joint communiqué of the Summit on Peace in Ukraine on a peace framework — supporting, again, the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of an aggressed country.

At the end of the day, it is up to Ukraine, and Ukraine alone, to define the terms on which they want this war eventually to end. And we need to pay more attention to the constant violations of the embargo against Russia; we need to be concerned about the circumvention of sanctions, which indeed are prolonging the war. And we have to reinforce the legitimacy of our support

for Ukraine by being consistent with our values and applying those values everywhere — that is the best way to support Ukraine; consistency is of the essence.

In a world that is becoming less multilateral and more and more transactional, and in order to prevent that slide towards more transactions and fewer norms, we need to work very hard; that is the best way to support Ukraine for a just peace that makes the aggressor fail.

The President: I now give the floor to the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany.

Ms. Baerbock (Germany): Nine hundred and forty-three days ago, Russia launched its full-scale aggression against Ukraine. It has been 943 days of suffering, 943 days of women being raped in Bucha, of tortured people in eastern Ukraine and of children being deported. And as we heard here today, there is no denying that. Children are being deported from their homes, as my Polish colleague outlined. We heard here the Russian Ambassador, that he did not even say that that is not true. He said that it is better for the children. It is estimated that more than 20,000 children have been deported. I ask all present to imagine that those were their children and that they were to hear, here, in the Security Council, that that was what was best for their child — being stolen from them as a mother or a father.

I had the chance to speak with one of the very few teenage girls who was able to be returned. She was telling me in tears,

“please promise me one thing — that you will not stop, you will not remain silent until all the other girls, all the other boys, the little children, have been returned”.

And that is our promise that we made, as European neighbours and as Germans. My country — as we heard here from our Polish friends, we who were responsible for the worst crime committed on the European continent — is lucky, in my generation, to be able to live in peace again. That is because others, other European friends and partners, were there for us, enabling my country to live in peace, reunified in the heart of Europe. And that is also my plea to those who understandably ask us if we can stop this, whether maybe it would help if we stopped supporting Ukraine in self-defence or maybe we should just ignore what is happening. We cannot do that because my country pledged to always stand up for the principles of the United Nations, and we will not rest until these children

are back with their families. And yes, the Russian Federation and the Ambassador who always leaves after he has spoken here — I have experienced that a couple of times — can fool themselves, and the strongest man in their country can hide behind the teenage girls he has kidnapped, but they cannot fool the world.

We do not have to go back through all 943 days of the atrocities, we can all just remember what happened on Sunday here in New York. Russia wanted to prevent us from making a real breakthrough for the United Nations when a vast majority of States rallied around the values of the Charter. The fooling of the world happened there and then, when Russia wanted to prevent us from making a real breakthrough for the United Nations. We can also read it all over Twitter. Russia's truth is that the majority from the "jungle" was not capable of making the right decision. That is how Putin's Russia speaks about other countries these days — the "jungle". They speak about Ukraine being a beauty that must be raped. And that is how Putin's soldiers and Putin's army have behaved, every day, for 943 days. Lately, they have been using heavy drone attacks and missiles to directly target power plants. Two thirds of electricity and heating infrastructure have been destroyed so far, even though we are trying to protect it through air defence. Those two thirds have been destroyed not by coincidence, but because winter is coming again — temperatures of -15°C, electricity and heating not working and water freezing. That is a crime against humanity — people freezing to death.

And that is why, again, I would like to call on all friends around the world. We fully understand why some think that maybe if there were no further weapon support for Ukraine, maybe if we were just to call on all sides neutrally, the situation could improve. But the truth is that if there is no air defence left around the remaining electricity hubs, there will be no electricity in Ukraine, and then everything will be destroyed. And yes, we can call on both sides neutrally, but Volodymyr Zelenskyy invited the Russian President to the negotiation table in the summer and offered a dialogue, and Vladimir Putin has responded with new levels of aggression. In June, Ukraine invited Russia to a second international peace conference, and Putin's response was to bomb a children's hospital in Kyiv.

That is why we believe that we must send further air defence to protect children's hospitals. And that is why we are, on the one hand, very grateful that an increasing number of our partners in the world are

thinking about how to end the war. We need that; we need an end to the war. But that cannot mean standing by and watching while there is no end to the war and while Putin fails to take a seat at the negotiation table, simply standing by and watching Russia destroy the remaining half of Ukraine. For us, when we speak about peace, we believe that it must be a just and lasting peace. Peace means that Ukraine must be sure that the end of the fighting does not mean another round of preparations in Russia, Ukraine, Moldova or in Poland, as we heard again from our colleague here at the table. Just and lasting peace means that Ukraine's existence as a free and independent country is guaranteed. It means security guarantees. That is hard, and people are dying every day.

But on Sunday we showed what we can achieve if we join forces. We showed that those who want to destroy our Charter will not succeed if we stand together and rally around it. Let us rally around the Charter for Ukraine as well, in the same spirit, for a just and lasting peace for Ukraine, Europe and the whole world.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

Mr. Rasmussen (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries — Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Denmark.

First of all, I extend warm thanks to Slovenia for bringing leaders from across the world together. I also want to thank the Secretary-General for his insightful briefing and President Zelenskyy for outlining the situation in Ukraine and presenting the peace formula.

Today marks two years and seven months since Russia began its full-scale illegal invasion of Ukraine. That marked a major escalation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which started back in 2014. That of course cannot be tolerated. It must be condemned, and Russia and its representatives must be held accountable.

Today the Nordic countries would like to share three messages.

First, with its war of aggression, Russia is violating the most basic rules and principles of international law. It is deeply appalling that Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, continues to disregard the Charter of the United Nations, which is the cornerstone of this institution. The vast destruction and the suffering

of the Ukrainian people all come from Russia's choice to continue its brutal aggression. The Nordic countries will continue to seek full accountability for the crimes committed. Ensuring that Russia and its representatives are held to account is a shared responsibility for us all.

Secondly, we repeat that Russia's war has grave consequences beyond the European continent. Earlier this month, a ship carrying grain was attacked in the Black Sea. We strongly condemn such attacks, which jeopardize global food supplies. It is deeply concerning that Russia's systematic and damaging attacks against Ukraine's critical infrastructure continue. Civilians face immense hardship in Ukraine. Nearly 15 million people are already in need of humanitarian assistance. Russia's intensified attacks affect the lives of millions of people in Ukraine. Across all sectors of life, people lack access to water, electricity and heating, and the winter is fast approaching. Ending that will require strong, cross-regional support. We therefore urge Member States to support Ukraine in defending its people and rebuilding its infrastructure, to uphold the Charter of the United Nations by holding Russia accountable and to call for a fair and lasting peace.

That brings me to my third and last point. We need a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace based on international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. The Nordics firmly support President Zelenskyy's peace formula, and we encourage all Member States to do the same. The Summit for Peace in June confirmed strong support for the United Nations Charter and laid the foundation for the way forward. Any pathway to peace in Ukraine must be grounded in the United Nations Charter and its key principles, including Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Our commitment to the United Nations Charter and support for Ukraine remains resolute.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Türkiye.

Mr. Yıldız (Türkiye): At the outset, I too would like to thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive briefing.

As we gather today, we confront the grim reality of the ongoing war, now heading towards its fourth year. This conflict has inflicted profound suffering on millions in Ukraine and beyond. Unfortunately, since the beginning of the war, each day has taken us further from peace. After almost three years of hostilities, hopes for an end to the conflict is low. Besides, risk

of an uncontrolled escalation is still a fact. Escalation poses a threat to not only Europe, but global stability.

Thus far, the international community has tried to end the war primarily through coercive measures. Unfortunately, those methods have yet to deliver. The Charter of the United Nations mandates peaceful resolutions to disputes. We therefore must advocate for a just peace rooted in international law. Time and again, we must reaffirm our commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. The Security Council can bring its influence to bear in order to encourage the sides back to the negotiating table. Ultimately, a just peace can be achieved only through direct dialogue and mutual understanding. That basic principle has shaped our approach to the conflict since the beginning.

We maintain our position that diplomatic efforts and dialogue should constitute the focus of our endeavours. We continue to stand in full solidarity with the Crimean Tatar Turks in supporting their efforts to claim their rights. Above all and at all costs, we must prevent the emergence a new geopolitical fault line through Ukraine that would trigger a long-term global confrontation. It remains important to encourage the two sides to consider revitalizing the diplomatic track, despite the current circumstances.

As all know, some Turkish initiatives, in coordination with the United Nations, have yielded important results, such as the Black Sea Grain Initiative, the exchange of prisoners of war and the capture of sea mines. Other initiatives are still pending, but we will never stop trying.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy.

Mr. Tajani (Italy): On many occasions, including in the Chamber, the Italian Government, led by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, has stated our clear position on the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Italy stands with Ukraine with the goal of a just peace. We stand with an invaded people, fighting to defend their freedom and sovereignty. That is a key priority for the United Nations, for the European Union and for Italy, as President of the Group of Seven (G7) this year.

In only the past few days here, in New York, I attended two G7 meetings on Ukraine. Supporting Kyiv's defence and protecting its infrastructure is

crucial. Our support focuses on the defence of Ukrainian territories. We are not at war with Russia. Our goal is to achieve peace. We are in favour of convening a conference of peace with Russia and China in order to reach a good agreement that affirms that peace is not the defeat of Ukraine, but rather the freedom and integrity of Ukraine.

I wish to express our full solidarity with the Ukrainian Government and its people in the face of the current intense Russian attacks on the energy infrastructure. Winter is imminent. We are very concerned about this situation and reaffirm our support to Ukraine and its energy sector. International humanitarian law calls for respect for energy infrastructure.

As I stated yesterday in our G7 Plus meeting on energy, since the start of the war, Italy provided several hundred tons of materials, including generators. The Italian Government, together with our companies, has made important donations. In February, we signed an agreement with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development on a €200 million project to restore the capacity of Ukraine's main hydropower generation company. We want to do more.

In 2025, at the next Ukraine Recovery Conference, in Italy, our focus will be on peace. We want to avoid escalatory spirals. In our view, the solution involves starting a political and diplomatic process.

(spoke in French)

I would now like to directly address my colleagues from partner countries. It is time to join efforts

towards a just peace and to work on developing a platform for shared negotiations. Rome will always be willing to listen. We support the approach adopted by Russia in the June Summit for Peace. Our view is that we must focus on the three pillars we discussed in Switzerland — the humanitarian response, the nuclear situation and food security.

(spoke in Spanish)

We have serious safety concerns regarding the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, and we must continue to support the efforts of Mr. Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The G7 reiterated the need to support the Ukrainian agricultural sector, which is critical for the global food supply, particularly for the most vulnerable nations. The G7 also asked that export of grains, food, fertilizers and supplies from Ukraine continue. We welcome the exchange of prisoners as a positive step. It is a starting point. We will continue our work in this arena.

(spoke in English)

The commitment to peace needs continuous engagement. Italy wants to do all it can, starting with the upcoming G7 ministerial meeting in November that Italy will host in Fiuggi, close to Rome, and the Mediterranean dialogues, also slated for November, to be held in Rome. It is important to use every opportunity to work for a just peace. The Council can count on the Italian Government to do its part.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.