



# Security Council

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New York

*Provisional*

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Eckersley . . . . .	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania . . . . .	Mr. Hoxha
	Brazil . . . . .	Mr. França Danese
	China . . . . .	Mr. Xing Jisheng
	Ecuador . . . . .	Mr. Pérez Loose
	France . . . . .	Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault
	Gabon . . . . .	Mr. Diaba
	Ghana . . . . .	Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
	Japan . . . . .	Mrs. Shino
	Malta . . . . .	Mr. Camilleri
	Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Fernandes
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Switzerland . . . . .	Mr. Hauri
	United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Ms. Shaheen
	United States of America . . . . .	Ms. Saha

## Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

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

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Raffi Gregorian, Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General and Officer-in-Charge of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism; and, as requested by the Russian Federation, Mr. Sergey Chaulin, civil activist.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Gregorian.

**Mr. Gregorian:** It is an honour to appear before the Security Council, which the Charter of the United Nations imbues with the responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. The Security Council has had a long and admirable record of consensus when it comes to the issue of terrorism, including landmark resolutions related to Al-Qaida, in 1998 (resolution 1189 (1998)) and against terrorism as a whole, in 2001 (resolution 1377 (2001), annex), the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (resolution 1373 (2001)) and a series of resolutions against Da'esh that set forth practical measures that, as successive reports by the Secretary-General have recorded, have helped Member States to choke off the flow of foreign terrorist fighters to Da'esh and reduce its cash reserves. The whole world owes the Security Council its thanks for these measures.

Unfortunately, there has not yet been consensus at the General Assembly on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, including in relation to how the definition of terrorism would precisely apply in situations of armed conflict. When the General Assembly established the Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), in 2017 (General Assembly resolution 71/291), it did so with the clear intention of helping Member States to implement the General Assembly's 2006 Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (General Assembly resolution 60/288) and other relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions related to the fight against terrorism.

The General Assembly mandate for the UNOCT includes five main functions: first, to provide leadership on the General Assembly counter-terrorism mandates entrusted to the Secretary-General from across the United Nations system; secondly, to enhance coordination and coherence across the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities, to ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations global counter-terrorism strategy; thirdly, to strengthen the delivery of United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States; fourthly, to improve visibility, advocacy and resource-mobilization for United Nations counter-terrorism efforts; and fifthly, to ensure that due priority is given to counter-terrorism across the United Nations system, and that the important work on preventing violent extremism is firmly rooted in the Strategy.

The General Assembly does not provide the UNOCT with the mandate to investigate or ascertain the conduct of States and other actors, nor to determine what constitutes an act of terrorism, whether by a State, a group or an individual. For these reasons, I regret that I have nothing else to contribute to the substance of today's meeting. However, I would note that both the Security Council and the General Assembly, on several occasions, have remarked that compliance with international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law, is the bedrock of the fight against terrorism. This includes full respect for all the obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. Any action that contravenes these higher-level legal obligations and moral imperatives undermines the global fight against terrorism. And as the hard-won consensus at the eighth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the General Assembly last month (General Assembly resolution 77/298) showed, when Member States speak with one voice, we can make real and meaningful progress in the fight against terrorism.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Chaulin.

**Mr. Chaulin** (*spoke in Russian*): My name is Sergey Ivanovich Chaulin. I am a humble heating engineer from Estonia. In my spare time, I was involved in human rights activities back home, fighting for the freedoms of assembly and speech, for the right to receive education in one's native language and for the traditional family values that my parents taught me back in Soviet times.

For all those reasons, on 14 February, I was deported from Estonia, having been denied the opportunity to even call my lawyer or relatives. By doing so, the Estonian authorities violated all existing international norms and agreements regarding stateless persons. I had an alien passport, and I was a stateless person, a fact that brings shame upon Europe. Despite the fact that the Russian side had no obligation to host me, I was hosted and received in Russia. Upon my arrival in Saint Petersburg, I was provided lodging in a hotel and given assistance with obtaining documents establishing my legal status in Russia. They also provided me with food, clothing, housing and money, as I had been deported while still wearing my work uniform — I had been deported straight from my workplace. Since I ended up in another country, I began to look for other sources of information in order to understand what was happening. In Estonia and in Europe they say one thing, whereas what we hear in Russia is completely different. That is how, on 2 April, I ended up at an event in a café in Saint Petersburg with a military correspondent, Vladlen Tatarsky. When I arrived at the event, I took a seat close to the stage, in advance, so that I could potentially meet the participants. For me, to hear a military correspondent speak was an entirely new experience. I had never even seen a military correspondent with my own eyes.

Many people attended the event, which had a very warm and friendly atmosphere. There were even some of Tatarsky's fans in attendance — people who were well acquainted with his work. One young woman said that she had written the military correspondent many letters and sent him photographs. He recognized her. She asked if she could bring a special gift up to the stage. The military correspondent acquiesced, and the gift turned out to be a bust of Vladlen Tatarsky himself. Everyone was impressed by the bust, which was covered in gold paint. The young lady was thanked and given a standing ovation. I then invited her to take the spare seat next to me, by the front of the stage.

A few seconds later, there was an explosion. At first, I thought that perhaps my cell phone had exploded and so I threw it aside. It felt as though I were being hit across the face with a wooden board from every direction at once. My face felt like it was full of splinters. At first, I was in a state of complete shock and total confusion. I did not understand what happened. I thought that the ceiling was about to collapse, because the room was filled with smoke, and it was impossible

to see anything. There were two women next to me, whom I helped leave the building as quickly as possible. Once we were out in the street, I saw people wounded and covered in blood. Everyone was drenched in blood, especially their faces. Some were screaming and some were crying, while others were on the phone, calling ambulances. Some people stopped and tried to help, while others drove by, as though nothing had happened.

When the ambulances arrived, they put out chairs for people right there in the street and began to provide first aid. They put me in an ambulance and began assisting me. They had to cut my clothes off of my body because they were impossible to remove. They simply had to cut off my clothes. I was then taken to hospital for various surgeries and a long treatment and recovery process.

While I was in the hospital, the investigators looking into the terror attack came to interview me. They were trying to find out who was involved, what had happened and why I was there. The investigation revealed that it was the bust gifted by the young lady, whom I had kindly invited to sit next to me, that exploded. As it turns out, she had been recruited by Ukrainian militants. The terrorists had detonated the bomb, despite the fact that the young lady herself was right there next to it. Somehow, she was barely injured — I think because she was directly behind Vladlen Tatarsky. He unknowingly shielded her from the blast with his body, leaving her practically unhurt. Tatarsky himself, of course, died as a result of the explosion. Many other people are still in critical condition and in recovery in the hospital. One of my friends is still having issues with her vision after a number of surgeries and requires further treatment. The host of the event, too, is still in the hospital receiving treatment, five months after the incident.

As for the young woman who brought the bomb disguised as a gift, realizing that the terrorists had no qualms about letting her die, she most likely cooperated with the investigators. As far as I know, the investigation has now concluded and there will soon be a trial, during which all the details of the investigation will be made public, and we will be able to learn more about what happened and who is responsible.

I believe that Vladlen Tatarsky's murder was organized because of his professional activities. Tatarsky was an honest journalist, and he tried to convey what he had seen in Donbas and the truth about what had been happening on the front lines since 2014. With

regard to my own personal experience, it is difficult to put it into words. I had not been planning to go to the front or to fight. My friends and I had simply decided to attend an event at a café together, along with many other ordinary, peaceful citizens.

That took place in a city thousands of kilometres from any military conflict. There is no war in Saint Petersburg, yet it witnessed that terrorist attack, causing many people to suffer. Now I can understand the people who survived the terrorist attacks in Pushkin Square in Moscow in 2000; on the metro in Saint Petersburg between the Sennaya Square and Institute of Technology stations in 2017; or in New York on 11 September 2001, when so many people died. But unlike the United States authorities, who later drowned all of Iraq in blood by killing more than a million of its citizens in response, Russia is investigating the incident in order to punish those directly responsible for what happened.

I am not a vengeful person, but I would very much like to see not only the perpetrators of such an attack punished, but also those who planned and prepared it, including by recruiting beautiful young women to do their dirty work. Terrorist acts should be condemned by the international community and international organizations. Measures must be taken to punish the direct perpetrators, as well as those who give them their orders.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the surgeons who treated me and patched me up so well that one could hardly tell that I was barely a metre away from the epicentre of the explosion. I am so grateful to the doctors who helped me to get back on my feet.

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

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

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): As my colleagues have probably calculated, in July, the Security Council, under the British presidency, has already discussed various aspects of the Ukraine topic four times. Furthermore, this issue was also discussed in the General Assembly this month. I would therefore ask what the added value is in having a fifth Security Council meeting on the topic?

I am sure that we will hear in this regard our former Western partners' traditional mantra about Russia's strategy to divert the Security Council's attention from its actions in Ukraine. We are already used to the fact

that Washington and its satellites are ready to discuss only concepts that are part of their propaganda about the supposedly unprovoked war of choice that Russia is conducting in Ukraine. That ploy can be followed if one assumes that the Ukrainian crisis — and in fact world history as a whole — began on the 24 February 2022.

It is satisfying that an increasingly number of our partners understand that that is not the case, and if world diplomacy truly wants to find a peaceful solution to the crisis around Ukraine, we need to examine all its aspects, including various aspects of the harrowing Kyiv regime. Today, we are precisely suggesting that we discuss the terrorist essence of the Ukrainian regime, which was formed after the bloody anti-constitutional coup d'état of 2014 sponsored by Washington and Brussels. For Russians, as well as Ukrainians who have not become zombies by the Banderite ideology, the notion does not even need to be explained; it is absolutely obvious. Western colleagues living in a world where the truth no longer plays a role and where black has become white and vice versa, of course, will not hear or accept anything we say. That is why our efforts are not intended for them, but for those who are still capable of thinking and analysing.

To begin with, I would like to mention a quote from a recent television interview with one of the most public talking heads of the Kyiv regime, the former adviser to Zelenskyy, Oleksiy Arestovich, who, by the way, claims to be open-minded and even liberal. He stated, "Zaluzhny", the Head of the Ukrainian armed forces of Ukraine,

"has two tasks: to gain access to the sea and to cut off the land corridor. To cut off Crimea, the bridge must be destroyed. That's it. We have 2 million people in Crimea with nowhere to go and no water or food. We can use that to negotiate."

In other words, one of the main ideologists of the Kyiv regime argues that the task of the Ukrainian armed forces is to take the inhabitants of Crimea hostage and use them to negotiate. It is a classic terrorist approach, similar to that of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) fighters or Chechen terrorists who took peaceful civilians hostage, including children in Beslan in 2004, with the tacit connivance of Western moralisers, who, of course, will stay silent now too.

It should be said that Kyiv has been for many years losing sleep over Crimea, which has been thriving since its reunification with Russia and receiving millions



of tourists. According to Kyiv's playbook, Crimea is supposed to be depressed and engulfed in protests. That explains Kyiv's blind desire to punish the Crimeans and take revenge on them. That explains the two terrorist attacks on the Crimean bridge on 8 October 2022 and 17 July this year. The Kyiv regime did not even try to deny responsibility for that; on the contrary, it claimed responsibility for it. It is important to take into account that the bridge has long been an exclusively civilian structure. It ensures passenger and cargo transit, as well as railroad connectivity with the peninsula. There is has long been no need to use it to transport military cargo. Both Kyiv and the West know that very well. The Head of the Security Service of Ukraine, Malyuk, called the first attack "an implementation" of SBU. Deputy Minister of Defence Hanna Maliar labelled it as a "success of Ukrainian army". What's noteworthy is that the tactic for the first attack was again borrowed from ISIL. The driver of the truck that was laden with explosives was unaware that he was being used as a suicide bomber. Among the victims there were only civilians.

Another dream of the post-Maidan Ukraine is the energy and water blockade of the peninsula, which Kyiv imposed in September 2015 and in April 2014, respectively. However, after the Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions became part of Russia, the Kyiv regime could no longer bother the Crimeans in such a way. So Zelenskyy's regime set another goal — to ensure the shallowing of the North Crimean Canal, which supplies the Crimea with water. In pursuit of this, they blasted the dam of the Nova Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant.

Some colleagues may have already included in their statements today the idea that Ukrainians can use any means possible to defend themselves themselves in the context of the ongoing hostilities against that country. I strongly advise them to think twice before stating that. The Kyiv regime is attacking not so much the Russian military infrastructure, warehouses and fuel depots, but peaceful cities and targets, sometimes thousands of kilometres away from the area of fighting and it is also resorting to ISIL methods of individualized terror. What military expediency can explain the shelling of villages on Russia's border regions, where no military facilities are situated and civilians are the only ones to be killed and injured? What can justify the cowardly raids by Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance groups that do not shy away from shooting fleeing children in

the back, as happened in the Bryansk oblast? What kind of threat to Ukraine did Daria Dugina, Vladlen Tatarsky or Zakhar Prilepin, who were targets of assassinations, represent? They were not carrying arms on the battlefield. Their only weapon was words. By assaulting them, the Kyiv regime, in classic terrorist tradition, wanted to silence them and intimidate those in Russia and Ukraine who are not afraid to tell the truth about what is happening in Ukraine and what Zelenskyy's regime is doing. What military expediency can explain using drones to attack Moscow and other Russian cities? At the same time it is important to understand that hundreds, if not thousands of terrorist attacks that the Security Service of Ukraine planned on Russian territory are being prevented by Russian security services. Such reports pop up in the news almost every day. Just as pointless in terms of gaining military advantage was another act of intimidation — the strike on 22 July with cluster munitions supplied by the United States on a civilian car with journalists in the Zaporizhzhya oblast. The strike killed Rostislav Zhuravlev, a correspondent from RIA Novosti, and inflicted wounds of varying severity on four of his colleagues.

We are likely to hear today our Western colleagues make some inappropriate comparisons with the precision strikes by the Russian airspace forces against Ukrainian facilities that are aimed at destroying the military potential of the Kyiv regime. They will say that Ukraine is acting that way because Russia is acting that way. But I would like to warn the Council: such an assertion would be blasphemous, because, as we have recently confirmed, the destruction of homes and other purely civilian objects in Ukraine is not due to our strikes, but to the actions of the Ukrainian air defence forces located in residential areas. Numerous video testimonies leave no doubt about this. Suffice it to mention the recent incident involving the Transfiguration Cathedral in Odesa, when Ukrainian Internet users exposed the Zelenskyy regime, having discovered that the Cathedral had been hit by a Ukrainian air defence missile.

I would also like to mention that one should not think that the Kyiv regime began using terrorist methods only after the start of our special military operation in February 2022. In fact, its terrorist nature was evident immediately after the 2014 coup d'état, when the United States and the European Union financed and organized the bloody Maidan coup. They were

well aware of what kind of forces they were bringing to power in the country. People such as Oleksandr Turchynov, Andriy Parubiy, Oleh Tyahnybok, Oleksii Bilyi, Andriy Biletsky and similar national radicals, criminals and extremists, openly, in plain sight of their Western sponsors, used methods of terror to overthrow a democratically elected Government. Their first victims were all those who thought differently from them — Ukrainian politicians, journalists and public figures. On 18 February 2014, radicals threw Molotov cocktails at a branch of the ruling party, the Party of Regions. They started a fire and beat the people who tried to escape the office. Two people died. The same terrorist tactics were used in Odesa on 2 May 2014. Organized armed groups of nationalists, with the connivance of the police and authorities, turned a rally against the self-appointed “Maidan authorities” into a massacre. They drove the protestors into the building of the Trade Union House, then blocked the doors from the outside and set the lower floors on fire with Molotov cocktails. They did what they could to let no one escape. Those who jumped from upper floors were killed on the ground. Approximately 50 people died at the hands of neo-fascists.

It would seem that, looking at this terrible atrocity, the collective West, which always, at least rhetorically, promotes human rights and the fight against impunity, would have finally thought about who it brought to power. But no, its support for the national radicals only grew, giving the latter a sense of complete impunity. As a result, the repression against dissenters grew stronger and stronger. On 15 April 2015, Oleh Kalashnikov, a former member of the Verkhovna Rada from the Party of Regions, was killed at the door of his Kyiv apartment. The next day, on 16 April 2015, journalist Oles Buzna was shot dead near his home in Kyiv. On 20 July 2017, a well-known Russian and Ukrainian journalist Pavel Sheremet was blown up in his car in Kyiv. Their murderers were not brought to justice.

The multifold increase in violence in Ukraine began in April 2014, when the Maidan Acting President Turchynov issued a decree for the start of the so-called anti-terrorist operation. That was the beginning of a multi-year campaign to exterminate the Russian-speaking population in Donbas, who refused to accept the outcome of the coup d'état. Its characteristic feature is the shelling and bombing of peaceful towns for no military purpose. On 2 June 2014, for example, Luhansk was the target of an air strike. A kindergarten, a small

park, civilian housing and a city hall were targeted, and eight civilians died. The inhabitants of Horlivka have named 27 July 2014 — when a massive artillery strike by the Ukrainian army killed 13 people, including children, and wounded dozens — Donetsk Bloody Sunday. Every year, we in Russia remember the children of Donbas who died as a result of Ukrainian shelling. The support of the West emboldened the Maidan authorities to believe that they could do anything. From 2014 to 2022, these typically terroristic tactics of the Kyiv regime, namely targeting peaceful cities and towns where there were no military objectives, led to the loss of thousands of civilian lives. We do not have enough time to list all the facts of the Ukrainian crimes against the people of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic.

Since the beginning of the special military operation, the Kyiv regime has expanded its terrorist methods of warfare. The Ukrainians military and nationalists use the tactics of “human shields” previously employed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Artillery positions and ammunition depots were deliberately set up in schools, hospitals and residential buildings so that civilians could be used as shields.

The neo-Nazi Azov Battalion, located in Mariupol and designated by Russia as a terrorist group, was particularly keen to resort to such practices. We got access to Azov's playbooks, according to which residential buildings were to be transformed into so-called “sandwiches”, with the first and last floors to be occupied by the military and all other floors reserved for civilians who would serve as hostages. Kyiv is using terrorist means to achieve its political goals as well. Let us recall the explosion of the Togliatti-Odesa ammonia pipeline in Kharkiv oblast on 5 June — this facility was important for ensuring food security. Kyiv used terrorist methods to organize appalling provocations against our country in order to smear its image. It is enough to simply mention the strike against the packed railway station in Kramatorsk, controlled by the Ukrainian regime. Dozens were killed or injured. All of this was done just to point a finger at Russia. However, as we know, the plan failed. Photos of the supposedly Russian missile debris, which were published on the Internet, made it possible to identify the missile as a Ukrainian Tochka-U, and the serial number visible in one of the pictures proved that the missile had belonged to the Ukrainian forces. We also recall how the Nazis from Azov blew up the theatre in Mariupol with people

inside it, just so as to be able to portray this barbaric act as a Russian strike. The staged operation in Bucha will also undoubtedly go down as one of the most dirty and inhumane provocations in history.

It would be highly naive of us to expect Western countries to condemn the terrorist actions of their Ukrainian mentees. For a long time now, the United States and their satellites, including the United Kingdom, have not hesitated to voice their true goals in Ukraine. They talk about ensuring that Russia suffers a strategic defeat. They do not hide the fact that they strive to maintain their domination in the world at all costs and by any means necessary. For Western intelligence agencies, creating and using terrorist organizations, including ISIL and Al-Qaida, to promote their own geopolitical interests is nothing new — they are orchestrating a similar scenario in Ukraine. Any and all radicals, neo-Nazis, white supremacists and other extremists fostered by the collective West first were used to overthrow the legitimate Government, and then integrated into the army, law-enforcement bodies and special services of the country, where they started promoting terrorist tactics and methodology. With the help of its sponsors, the whole of Ukraine has become a collective suicide bomber, willing to defend those sponsors' geopolitical interests down to the last Ukrainian. Meanwhile, Western self-proclaimed advocates of democratic values and human rights seem to remain under the delusion that if all the “dirty work”, including blatant terrorism, is assigned to Zelenskyy and his cronies, it is possible to keep their own hands clean. It is not going to be that way. To execute its terrorist attacks, Ukraine has used Western weaponry, equipment and intelligence. Therefore, its generous sponsors do in fact bear full responsibility for the regime's many crimes and terrorist acts that have already been or will be committed. The Council should have no illusions about that. Moreover, it is obvious that without regular military, financial and organizational support from the West, especially from the United States, the Kyiv State terror machine would have fallen like a house of cards a long time ago.

Setting aside the financial side of the issue, I would like to highlight its ethical and moral aspects. It is very difficult to believe that ordinary Americans, who survived the tragedy of 11 September 2001 and who know the dangers of terrorism first-hand, would support financing and pumping full of weapons a regime whose leaders openly admit their involvement

in terrorist attacks and laugh at the victims. Also, residents of European Union member States might reasonably ask how supporting Ukrainian terrorists relates to European values. Is it possible that the Western media have gone completely mad, with their primitive Russophobia having permanently zombified the Western public, making it forget how to think and analyse facts?

In conclusion, I would like to say that, considering Kyiv's descent into outright terrorism, we cannot forget the role of the United Nations Secretariat and other international bodies. After the bloody coup in 2014, they all demonstrated incredible selective blindness, readily turning a blind eye to Kyiv's atrocities and crimes, including those against peaceful cities and towns in Donbas. Meanwhile they zealously joined in propagating and recounting all manner of fake crimes orchestrated by the Ukrainians and for which responsibility was attributed to Russia, be it the staged provocation in Bucha or utterly wild lies about handing out Viagra to Russian soldiers to promote mass rape. In addition, United Nations officials increasingly often resort to the universal response when it comes to any information about the increasingly bold crimes being committed by the Kyiv regime's leaders, including blatant terrorist attacks. They say that none of what has happened would have happened had it not been for the so-called “Russian aggression”.

That position is based on a gross shift in ideas. The root cause of the crisis in Ukraine is precisely the unreasonable geopolitical ambitions of the collective West, which organized a coup d'état in the country neighbouring ours and brought to power aggressive nationalists who hate everything Russian and do not shy away from using any method to achieve their extremist goals. Without that, a special military operation would not have been necessary. By repeatedly refusing to condemn the increasingly monstrous actions of the Kyiv regime, the United Nations follows the Western lead and gives the Zelenskyy regime and his clique carte blanche for all manner of crimes, allowing them to do whatever they want, as everything will be written off as a part of the Russian special military operation. As a result, the Kyiv regime, now convinced that it acts with impunity, has turned to terrorism, which it practises with undisguised enthusiasm. What will be next — nuclear, chemical or biological terrorism? Will the Council remain silent and blame everything on Russia? We expect that the leadership of the

United Nations Secretariat will finally remember the principles of impartiality and independence and have the courage to give an objective assessment of the actions of the puppet Kyiv regime, as Ukraine's use of terrorist methods is a factor that is only exacerbating the Ukrainian crisis and making a peaceful resolution ever less likely. The United Nations should be well aware of it.

**Mr. Hoxha** (Albania): Let me thank the Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Gregorian, for his briefing.

Let me also say, from the very start, that our position remains crystal clear: we denounce any and all acts of terror — anywhere, at any time and by anyone. Our actions and policies in that respect speak far louder than our words.

I have lost count of the number of Security Council meetings called by Russia to push its distorted narrative about Ukraine, but this one — on the final day of the United Kingdom's remarkably handled presidency of the Council — does not stand out in any particular way. It is in the same vein of *déjà vu*. We deplore the fact that Russia has turned the Security Council into a place where it tries to sell every ludicrousness on what has been, is and will remain — for as long as it goes on — an unjust, unjustified and inexcusable war of choice.

We should not be trapped in an artificial discussion of a chicken-or-the-egg sort because everything that happens in Ukraine, including what we hear in the Chamber on the matter, is a consequence of that war. Had there been no aggression, we would not be here to deplore its consequences. That is why all these meetings continue to have two features in common: they are part of the same usual propaganda, and they reveal a lack of credibility. As per today's topic, calling Ukraine's defence terrorism is as credible as when Minister Lavrov made a packed room in New Delhi laugh by saying that Russia was trying to stop a war initiated by Ukraine.

By calling meeting after meeting to disinform, Russia is taking up our time. It is misusing the Council's resources for such purposes. It has lowered the bar by inviting militants and propagandists, including in some cases entertainers disguised as briefers — no offence to Mr. Chaulin and his personal account today.

While that course has not changed anything on the ground or in the understanding of the war, it has contributed to making noise — the kind of noise that,

regrettably, further erodes the credibility of the Council and is used as an excuse to hinder the United Nations and its bodies from properly doing their work and discharging their responsibilities. But truth cannot be hidden, facts cannot be altered, and a narrative aimed at brainwashing domestic opinion and misleading the world is doomed to fail. As we know, it has not changed the core issue. Russia is the aggressor, and there is so much to say about that. I have three specific questions.

I would very much like to know, what is the purpose of throwing missiles in the middle of the night into apartment buildings and residential areas if not to terrorize people? What is the definition of the use of Iranian kamikaze drones that end up destroying schools, kindergartens and health facilities? How does one explain the vicious obstinacy of attacking to deliberately destroy power generation installations in the midst of winter, if not to terrorize the population, freeze it to death and force it to surrender?

Therefore, for us, and I hope for many, there is no doubt as to who is using terror in the bloody war, who is responsible for its terrible consequences and who should be held accountable. Neither is there any doubt about who is violating the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as clearly and unquestionably determined by the General Assembly. That is the issue that should have been the primary preoccupation of the Security Council, were it not paralysed and held hostage by a permanent member, in a blatant conflict of interest.

The world is witness to the fact that Russia is using every method to bring Ukraine to its knees. It has instrumentalized religion. It has attacked Ukraine's culture and assaulted its identity. It has weaponized gas and has again turned against food. In a desperate and regrettable move, Russia went back to the crime scene and killed the grain deal — the one to which it had agreed, showing once more that agreements mean little to Russia when breaking them suits its interests. Furthermore, to consolidate its gains, Russia is now bombarding Ukraine's ports on a daily basis in an effort to make impossible any future exports of grain from Ukraine.

Let me end with the following. When we know very well — and we have been there already — that preventing grain exports from one of the breadbaskets of the world, Ukraine, would worsen the world situation, lead to increased prices, make it harder for millions to afford their daily bread, make the poor go hungry and



cause the death of innocent people who do not need to die from hunger, is that not terror of some kind? It is just a thought.

**Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland challenges the pretext under which today's meeting has been convened. Moreover, we believe that today's meeting harms the effectiveness of the Council's work.

Russia's military aggression against Ukraine is a serious violation of international law. Switzerland condemns that act in the strongest possible terms. The promotion of international humanitarian law and respect for all its rules is an abiding feature of Swiss foreign policy. The principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution must be respected in the conduct of hostilities by all parties and in all armed conflicts. The parties have an obligation to protect civilians and persons hors de combat. In that respect, we are appalled by the serious violations of international humanitarian law committed during the war. We recall that Russia is not only responsible for the military aggression against Ukraine, but that credible reports show that it is also responsible for the vast majority of violations of international humanitarian law during the conflict.

With the adoption of a General Assembly resolution in February (ES-11/6), more than 140 countries reiterated their call on Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukrainian territory. More than 140 States voted in favour of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and in favour of respect for international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations. They made a commitment to peace. For the quest for a diplomatic solution to continue, we urge Russia, once again, to de-escalate the situation, cease all hostilities and withdraw its troops from Ukrainian territory without delay.

**Mr. Pérez Loose** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation for the way in which you, Mr. President, have steered the work of the Council. I listened closely to the briefers.

This is the fifth meeting we have held in the past two weeks on Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. I must point out that, as long as the invasion continues, the Council must continue to pay attention to the developments in the situation and discuss them. We should also be able to take decisions.

On 27 February 2022, the Council was able to adopt resolution 2623 (2022), based on the Uniting for Peace mechanism. That resolution convened the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly on the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine.

Similarly, in May 2022, the Council was able to agree on a presidential statement (S/PRST/2022/3), in which it expressed its deep concern about the maintenance of peace and security in Ukraine. It also recalled that, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States have an obligation to resolve international disputes through peaceful means. The statement also expressed strong support for the efforts of the Secretary-General in the quest for a peaceful solution. Other draft resolutions were vetoed, owing to a partial application of Article 27, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Charter, which results in a veto, but also includes an obligation for the parties to a dispute to abstain from voting.

It is nearly a year and a half since Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a year and three months since the last time the Council took a decision on the conflict. Since then, instead of improving, the situation has only deteriorated. We will never tire of insisting that this organ must fulfil its obligations. We reiterate that, in line with Article 51 of the Charter, nothing in the Charter shall impair the inherent right of legitimate self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member State. We also recall that all parties must observe strict and unconditional compliance with their obligations under international humanitarian law, focused primarily on the protection of civilians.

Lastly, we reiterate our belief that only a political solution, based on respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, will allow for lasting peace.

**Mr. Diaba** (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank the briefers for their statements.

The war unfolding in Ukraine continues to flout the most fundamental principles of international law and international humanitarian law. We are helplessly watching the escalation of violence, in which civilians have become trapped because of their cultural or religious affiliation. The number of victims continues to rise, places of worship are being destroyed, and major infrastructure is being damaged. We will not tire in repeating that the situation is unacceptable and must be continuously condemned. Indiscriminate or targeted attacks, forced displacements, acts of sabotage and similar acts lead only to further suffering for the population, especially women, children and the elderly.

Protecting the physical and psychological integrity of every individual is a moral imperative. We recall the need to safeguard civil and cultural infrastructure. Attacks on schools, hospitals, churches, monuments and cultural sites are not only a crime against the country's cultural heritage, but also against its future generations and their cultural inheritance. We must redouble our efforts to end this war. Concrete measures must be taken to guarantee the safety of populations and facilitate access for humanitarian organizations.

In conclusion, my country recalls that the proliferation of both conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction poses a threat to world peace and security. No reason — no matter how praiseworthy it might be — can justify war and its devastating social, geopolitical and economic consequences. Gabon continues to advocate for international peace and security and calls on the parties to engage in dialogue in order to find a diplomatic solution. It is our shared responsibility, as an international community, to support efforts to that end in our collective commitment to achieving world peace.

**Mr. Camilleri** (Malta): I thank Mr. Gregorian for his briefing.

Today the Security Council is meeting yet again at the request of the Russian Federation to discuss a topic that does not reflect the realities on the ground. This is another attempt by Russia to advance its isolated stance and try to justify its senseless, unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine. Malta reiterates its condemnation of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which constitutes a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We also condemn Russia's unilateral decision to terminate the Black Sea Grain Initiative at a time when the World Food Programme estimates that more than 345 million people are facing high levels of food insecurity worldwide, 43 million of whom are just one step away from famine.

The world is at a turning point. We are facing a man-made problem of food insecurity, and hunger is being used as a weapon. Furthermore, Russia is blocking and bombing Ukrainian seaports. It is preventing freedom of navigation in the Black Sea, without any justification, while also targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure. Those are the issues on which the Security Council should be focusing when discussing Ukraine. Russia's disregard for international

humanitarian law has been perpetuated further by the recent deliberate missile strikes on Odesa and Kostiantynivka. Those acts violate the architecture of international treaties that the international community has been building for decades. Malta condemns those barbaric acts of terror, which have resulted in the death of civilians, including children. The shelling has also damaged educational institutions and other cultural and religious sites. We remain firmly committed to ensuring that Russia be held fully accountable for all its crimes.

In conclusion, Russia's efforts to change the optics over the largest humanitarian crisis in Europe since the Second World War are counterproductive to the efforts to achieve a political settlement. Malta remains convinced that the only step towards a lasting peace is for Russia to immediately cease all hostilities and unconditionally and completely withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders.

**Mrs. Shino** (Japan): I thank the briefers for their briefings.

This is the sixth time that the Security Council is discussing the Ukraine-related issue this month. It is regrettable that Russia has been consuming Security Council resources by simply requesting the same number of Council meetings as those requested by the countries that accuse Russia. Instead, Russia should have taken the floor at the previous meeting on Ukraine, on Wednesday (see S/PV.9386). Russia seems to have requested today's meeting to blame Ukraine for not being able to reach a political solution to end Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. However, we should never lose sight of the root cause. We all know the indisputable fact that, if Russia had not initiated the current aggression, the tragedy we are witnessing now would have never happened. As stated by the overwhelming majority of the General Assembly, Russia's aggression is a clear violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations.

There are calls for a political solution for peace. A diplomatic solution cannot be reached by inflicting damage on one side. Peace prevails based on justice and the principles of the Charter in order for it to last. Russia must stop its hopeless attempt to deceive the international community. It will never be able to justify its outrageous act. Instead, it should fulfil its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Security

Council. The Russian Federation should withdraw all of its troops and military equipment from Ukraine and respect Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, within its internationally recognized borders.

**Ms. Saha** (United States of America): I thank Mr. Gregorian for his briefing.

We regret that this meeting, convened at Russia's request today, makes a mockery of the important work of the Office of Counter-Terrorism in countering terrorism and that Russia continues to abuse its position on the Council to lie, distract and mislead.

In listening to Russia's remarks today, some might be confused about who is the aggressor and who is the victim. Since the beginning of Russia's brutal full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the international community has been clear: more than 140 countries have repeatedly condemned the Russian Federation for its aggression against Ukraine and demanded that Russia withdraw its military forces from Ukraine's internationally recognized territory. We have listened carefully to Russia's remarks, and it is clear that its efforts to divert the Council's attention from the core issues at hand are a transparent ploy to distract from its own aggression. Over the weekend, Russia once again resorted to irresponsible nuclear rhetoric. Russia also announced the stationing of tactical nuclear weapons in the territory of Belarus, further aggravating an already dangerous situation. Russia's complaints about the impacts of a war that it began should remind us all of a simple truth: this war would end today if Russia withdrew its forces from Ukraine's sovereign territory and abandoned its relentless and brutal attacks against Ukraine's cities and civilian infrastructure. Until that day comes, the United States will continue to offer its full support for Ukraine's self-defence and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Ms. Oppong-Ntiri** (Ghana): I thank Mr. Gregorian, for his briefing. We have also listened to the views expressed by Mr. Sergey Chaulin.

At the outset, I reiterate Ghana's position against all acts of terrorism, wherever they occur and whosoever the perpetrators may be. Terrorism, as we know, is a canker on any society. We therefore reaffirm our support for accountability for any acts of terrorism that are duly established. The information provided must therefore be properly investigated if the conclusions being proposed are to be shared. My delegation is

also mindful of the context of the ongoing aggression against Ukraine and the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, which affords Ukraine the right to self-defence against an existential threat to its independence and sovereignty. Ghana, however, continues to be deeply concerned about the fact that the prospects for peace in Ukraine remain starkly dim, with the parties now heavily invested in a fierce military contest. It would appear that the strong appeal for a military win over any other resolution is the only common denominator between the parties at this time. Regrettably, the calls for peace continue to go unheeded, and the chances of sustainable peace are reduced by the events of each passing day.

As we have always maintained, nothing justifies the extensive destruction of the war and the accompanying civilian casualties now running into the tens of thousands. Characteristically, innocent citizens, especially women and children, continue to pay the highest price of the war. In parallel, the global economic repercussions caused by the war continue to visit situations of hardship and instability on many populations already faced with socioeconomic difficulties.

In assessing the trend of the war over these past 17 months, we conclude that its perpetuation can only lead down a path of further destruction and tragic outcomes at great costs to all. Accordingly, my delegation wishes to reiterate the following four points.

First, the rules and principles of international law must be respected and upheld by all States and applied in a consistent manner. A selective application based solely on the convenient choices of States weakens the international legal order as well as the protection that that order affords to ordinary and vulnerable citizens. It also diminishes our ability to protect present and future generations from the scourge of war.

Secondly, the protection of civilians everywhere must be prioritized, and all necessary measures taken to avoid causing harm to them, in line with requirements under international humanitarian law. We also stress the need for humanitarian access to all areas, as millions of people still stand in need of life-saving assistance.

Thirdly, we stress the crucial importance of dialogue in reaching a mutually acceptable agreement on a credible pathway for negotiating a settlement of the conflict. We believe that the conflict between the two neighbouring countries should ultimately be resolved around the table and not on the battlefield. Accordingly,

we encourage the use of diplomacy to build bridges towards peace and call for the sustained support of the international community.

Fourthly, we strongly urge the Russian Federation to heed the many calls for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of its troops from Ukraine. The cessation of violence would offer some respite to the suffering people of Ukraine and further support a negotiated settlement free from the sway of the war.

Finally, and in closing, I wish to reiterate the interest of my country, Ghana, in seeing an early end to the war. We reiterate our support for all international efforts aimed at realizing our collective objective, namely, peace in Ukraine.

**Mr. Xing Jisheng** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General and Officer-in-Charge at the Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Gregorian, for his briefing. I have also listened attentively to the briefing by Mr. Chaulin.

The Ukraine crisis remains ongoing with a persistent prevailing military logic, expanding the number of affected areas, utilizing new methods of warfare and causing ever-greater destruction to civilians and to large-scale and critical civilian infrastructure. Cruelty, danger and the unpredictability of the war are all on the rise. The situation is deeply concerning.

Since the outbreak of the crisis, developments have repeatedly shown that protracted and prevailing clashes will cause greater risks, even to the point of no return, undermining the interests of all parties and the prospects for peace talks and reconciliation. The parties concerned should exercise reason and restraint and refrain from action or rhetoric that might further escalate confrontation or lead to an error in judgment. It is especially imperative to strictly safeguard the bottom line of clear nuclear safety, stay away from the red line of nuclear war and spare no efforts to prevent the situation from getting out of control.

China calls upon the parties to the conflict to strictly comply with international humanitarian law and do their utmost to protect civilian and civilian infrastructure. In the face of the situation, the international community needs to make every effort to bring about the cessation of the hostilities and a political settlement at an early date. The parties should meet each other halfway and explore solutions in line with regional realities that accommodate each other's concerns. The international

community should create conditions and an atmosphere that enable the parties to reach a ceasefire and halt the fighting, resume peace talks and break the impasse.

Relevant African national leaders recently called once again for a political settlement of the Ukraine crisis, which China welcomes. On the issue of Ukraine, China consistently advocates that all countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity should be protected, that the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter be respected, that all parties' legitimate security concerns be taken on board and that all efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of crises be supported. We stand ready to make unflagging efforts and work with the international community towards a political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

**Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault** (France) (*spoke in French*): Russia says it is worried about the lack of prospects for resolving the war of aggression it itself has unleashed. Once again, let us remind ourselves of the facts: Ukraine did not want war, nor did it do anything to provoke it. Russia alone is responsible for the current situation. It is Russia that decided to violate the principles of the United Nations Charter and attack its neighbour. It is Russia that is committing war crimes in Ukraine.

Let Russia withdraw its troops from Ukraine, and the war will end. It was ordered to do so by the International Court of Justice over a year ago.

Ukraine wants peace, but it is forced to choose between its legitimate right to defend itself and its annihilation. That is why France will continue to support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people for as long as necessary. Any solution leading to the ratification of illegal annexations would only reward violations of international law and encourage the use of force. This is why there is only one possible outcome: a just peace, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, which respects Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

**Mr. Afonso** (Mozambique): I wish to thank the briefers for their insights.

International conflicts, such as that which is ongoing between Russia and Ukraine, do create conditions that are ideal for terrorist acts and methods, which exacerbates the situation and leads to the eventual postponement of a political settlement. This conflict has spurred radicalization on both sides and is threatening to create a fertile breeding ground for



other non-State violent actors to thrive. That is deeply disturbing for countries in Africa, which are already grappling with the fallout of international crises that have led to an unprecedented rise of acts of terrorism and violent extremism.

If recent history is any guide, international conflicts have often set the stage for the genesis and growth of terrorism, allowing terrorist groups to extend their terror footprint globally. This fact is borne out by examining the genesis and emergence of contemporary violent transnational groups that have exploited the chaos that ensues from conflict. These unfortunate patterns have been witnessed not only in Afghanistan and Iraq but also in Libya and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where protracted conflicts have led to the rise of terrorism that has reverberated regionally and globally. As the custodian of international peace and security, the Security Council has a duty to act in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The recently concluded review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the General Assembly, coupled with the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace, underscored the need to deter and prevent the spread of terrorist ideologies through enhanced dialogue and broad international cooperation. We must therefore employ all tools at our disposal to stop the potential exploitation of terrorist methods in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. It is an urgent task that demands immediate attention and action, guided by the principles shared by the international community as a whole.

As we have stated in previous Council meetings, Mozambique reiterates its plea for an immediate halt to hostilities and the resumption of direct negotiations between the parties. This is the only desirable path to a lasting peace, where human lives are saved and socioeconomic infrastructure preserved.

We further emphasize the importance of considering various peace initiatives, including those proposed by African countries, in resolving this conflict, as repeatedly emphasized during the recently concluded Africa-Russia summit. We advocate a comprehensive, multifaceted approach that can address not only the symptoms but also the root causes of this unfortunate confrontation. We must also seek the swift application of diplomatic pressure, backed by the international community, to ensure respect for the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States. Let us

remember, the solemn pledge inscribed in the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

In conclusion, let us not be remembered as the Council that observed and deliberated, but as the Council that acted when action was required the most.

**Ms. Shaheen** (United Arab Emirates): I would like to thank Mr. Gregorian his informative briefing. We listened carefully to Mr. Chaulin.

Eighteen months into the war, there is no sign of it abating. We reiterate our deep concern with the continuing conflict and its impact on civilians, including those in different regions the world.

The dynamics of the war are perpetuating a dangerously escalating cycle with potentially severe repercussions for geopolitical stability, civilian lives and livelihoods and the environment. The tragedy of the Nova Kakhovka dam and the situation around the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant are just two reminders of that precariousness.

They are among the reasons we continue to call for hostilities to end, but as long as they continue, they must be carried out with full respect for international humanitarian law. We reiterate our call on all parties to abide by their obligations under international law. We stress, in that regard, that civilian objects must never be a target of attack. We also recall the clear prohibition under international humanitarian law of acts whose primary purpose is to spread terror among the civilian population.

Throughout the conflict, there have been efforts to help bring it to a conclusion and to mitigate its impact on people in Ukraine and elsewhere in the world. We encourage and commend the endeavours of the Secretary-General and many world leaders to that end. That diplomacy has contributed to several humanitarian initiatives, including prisoner-of-war exchanges and most notably the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the memorandum of understanding on Russian fertilizers and food products. We encourage all relevant actors to engage with a pragmatic and constructive spirit, such as that which led to the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the memorandum of understanding on Russian fertilizers and food products a year ago in Istanbul. That engagement could again mitigate the impacts of the conflict and eventually end the conflict itself. It is

time to redouble efforts to achieve a just, sustainable peace in Ukraine in line with the Charter of the United Nations and that respects Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

Finally, as this is the last meeting of the Council for July, I would like to conclude by congratulating the United Kingdom for its presidency this month. And we look forward to supporting the United States during its presidency in August.

**Mr. França Danese (Brazil):** I thank Mr. Gregorian for his briefing.

Last week, Brazil warned once again that the continuation of hostilities was causing ever-increasing human and material losses (see S/PV.9386). Preventing further destruction is a common responsibility of the parties and all Member States under the Charter of the United Nations.

Deliberate attacks against civilian targets are illegal under international humanitarian law. Brazil reiterates its call on all parties to refrain from actions that may result in more fatalities and in further damage to civilian infrastructure, including port facilities, transportation, schools, hospitals and places of worship, and raise the costs of reconstruction. It is our priority to prevent this humanitarian crisis from reaching new levels.

The Security Council has met to discuss the conflict in Ukraine 66 times since February 2022 and 5 times this month alone. We regret that other urgent situations, such as in the Sudan, the Sahel and Palestine, are not given adequate consideration.

While we believe the situation fully justifies the level of attention of the Council, it is disturbing that our collective response is limited to a repetition of opposing narratives about events on the ground and of positions known, at this point, by all. It is regrettable that dialogue — the only way to lasting peace — remains blocked and that no advancements towards that end is in sight.

Once again, Brazil urges the parties to immediately de-escalate hostilities and initiate peace negotiations. We support a lasting solution that respects Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and the security concerns of all parties involved. Ending the fighting, achieving a lasting peace and preventing new conflicts is our common responsibility not only regarding the world now, but also future generations.

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

More than 100 years ago, Sigmund Freud came up with a psychological concept called projection. It involves denying negative characteristics and behaviours of oneself and falsely attributing them to others. It is often done deliberately as part of a strategy of blame shifting, or it can be indicative of various types of dysfunction.

Russia's claim that it is Ukrainian aggression that is in any way responsible for the ongoing war in Ukraine is absurd. It is a projection of the behaviour of the Russian State itself.

There is only one aggressor in this war. We have all seen hundreds of thousands of Russian troops invading that sovereign country illegally and unprovoked. We all know that the right to self-defence in those circumstances is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Russia has carried out relentless attacks on civilian infrastructure, including homes, schools, hospitals and, as we saw last week, places of worship. Russian forces are responsible for horrific atrocities on the ground. It is Russia that has been condemned by the Secretary-General for committing grave violations against children. It is Russia that made the unilateral decision to end the Black Sea Grain Initiative, despite widespread calls from the international community, including the Pope and the leaders of the African Union, for Russia to renew the deal. And it is Russia that is sending thousands of its own young men to their deaths. Estimates suggest that more than 200,000 Russian soldiers have been killed or injured in Ukraine. Russia is inflicting terror on the Ukrainian people and, in parallel, it is inflicting suffering on its own population and millions across the world.

In the face of this, Ukraine has had no choice but to exercise its right to defend itself enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. It is fighting a war of national survival and defending the right of all nations to live without fear of aggression.

The only path to a sustainable peace in Ukraine is for President Putin to end his illegal invasion, withdraw his troops and thereby demonstrate that he is prepared to engage on terms for peace that respect the Charter of the United Nations.

Russia started this war, and Russia must end it before it causes any more suffering.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

**Ms. Hayovyshyn** (Ukraine): I recognize the members of the Security Council. I also recognize the representative of Russia in the permanent seat of the Soviet Union. Let me thank the Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Gregorian, for his briefing.

The Security Council has gathered today to address threats to international peace and security. Ukraine firmly reaffirms its unwavering commitment to safeguarding global peace and security, which we have consistently demonstrated, including over the past nine years, since the start of Russia's aggression. We fearlessly confront the Russian aggressor State, whose actions pose a substantial threat to stability in the region and worldwide.

It is crucial to remember that Russia's testing of international law long predates its invasion of Ukraine in 2014. The lack of an adequate response by the world to Russia's invasion of Georgia back in 2008 only encouraged Moscow to escalate further, based on that dangerous precedent. That historical example underscores the importance of not allowing illegal actions to go unpunished, as they tend to recur with greater force. Indecisiveness or delays in addressing such misconduct pose a genuine risk to international peace and security. The world's failure to restrain Russia then was due to misguided beliefs in its power and the myth of the world's second army. Today, Ukraine dispels those myths, proving that evil can be stopped only by force, not mere talk.

The Russian aggression against Ukraine presents the gravest threat to international peace and security. But just as dangerous is the world's reluctance to employ force and accountability mechanisms to stop the aggressor. Ukraine remains steadfast in its pursuit of liberating its sovereign territory within internationally recognized borders and freeing our citizens from the horrors of Russian occupation. That endeavour is not just a right but also a duty — an obligation to protect fellow United Nations Member States from similar ordeals.

Working in collaboration with United Nations structures, the International Criminal Court and other international bodies, Ukraine will keep gathering

evidence of Russian crimes. All those responsible for the crime of aggression, war crimes and crimes against humanity will be held accountable. It is a matter of primary interest for, and responsibility of, the international community.

In recent days, the aggressor State has been stubbornly attacking peaceful cities, shelling civilian objects and housing. This morning, regions of Ukraine were shelled again, including Kryvyi Rih and Kherson. Residential buildings, a university building and a crossroads were hit. Among those killed was a 10-year-old girl. That is terrorism against peaceful cities and people.

As President Zelenskyy said:

"But this terror will not frighten us or break us. We are working and saving our people. Each new Russian act of terror increases only the amount of reparations that Russia will pay for its crimes, not the chances of the occupiers to stay on our land".

When evil faces defeat, it behaves exactly like the representative of the Russian delegation in this Chamber. It often resorts to manipulation, trying to portray itself as a victim. It persistently mocks the mandate and procedures of the Council — all that because the Russian Federation is losing the war it launched against a sovereign, independent, and democratic country that stands firmly in defending itself and will do so for as long as needed for a victory in the war. That means the liberation of our entire territory from Russian occupiers, the full restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty within internationally recognized borders and the return of all Ukrainian citizens captured by Russia.

Ukraine exercises its inherent right of self-defence under the Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The delegation of Ukraine officially stated so at the Security Council meeting on 25 February 2022 (see S/PV.8979) and notified the United Nations of that statement, circulated further in Security Council document S/2022/183.

These days, we are commemorating the victims of Olenivka, brave prisoners of war who tragically lost their lives at the hands of Russia on the solemn day of 29 July 2022, just a year ago. As we reflect on the lives lost, we are reminded that there can be no other course of action but to ensure the aggressor is held accountable and brought to justice. Their memory inspires us to seek rightful retribution and find the appropriate punishment for those responsible.

Recognizing evil's weakness is crucial, and we must resist the temptation to extend a hand of compromise. If evil is pardoned or inadequately punished, it will resurface with even greater ferocity, seeking revenge for its perceived humiliation. We cannot afford to display weakness or stop halfway. The Russian Federation will face full and just punishment.

**The President:** There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

Before adjourning the meeting, as this is the last scheduled meeting of the Council for the month of July,

on behalf of the delegation of the United Kingdom, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the members of the Council and to the Secretariat for all the support they have provided to us, including the technical support team, conference service officers, interpreters, verbatim reporters and security staff.

As we end our presidency, I know I speak on behalf of the Council in wishing the delegation of the United States all the best for the month of August.

*The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.*