



Security Council

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Letter dated 21 November 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement by Denmark, on behalf of the Nordic States (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), in connection with the Security Council briefing regarding the item entitled “Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine”, held on 21 November 2023 (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Christina Markus **Lassen**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 21 November 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Joint Nordic statement on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

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

The Nordics would like to highlight two points: Russia's attacks on civilian infrastructure and violations of international humanitarian law; and that Russia's actions continue to exacerbate global food insecurity.

The Nordic countries condemn Russia's continuing war of aggression against Ukraine, which is causing devastating bloodshed and damage to civilians and civilian infrastructure. These attacks are unacceptable.

The Ukrainian population faces hardship following the loss of lives, injuries and the destruction and devastation of civilian infrastructure and the environment caused by Russia's war of aggression. Since 10 October, Russian armed forces have once again carried out large-scale attacks against Ukraine's critical infrastructure, resulting in electricity, heating and water cuts affecting millions of people. Recalling Russia's systematic attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure last winter, we are deeply concerned that Russia will carry out similar attacks this winter.

Russia must end the bloodshed and destruction by bringing an end to this war and immediately and unconditionally withdrawing its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine.

The Nordic countries are committed to addressing conflict-induced food insecurity and the threat of famine, in line with Security Council resolution [2417 \(2018\)](#). According to the *Global Report on Food Crises*, Russia's actions continue to exacerbate global food insecurity. Overall, the number of people experiencing acute food insecurity continues to rise at an alarming speed, with more than one third of 1 billion people facing acute hunger globally. Russia's aggression against Ukraine contributes to this increase.

We deplore Russia's unilateral withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative and its unwillingness to re-engage in a new agreement despite extensive diplomatic efforts made by the United Nations and Türkiye. Furthermore, we condemn the targeted attacks on grain storage structures across Ukraine, as well as Russia's actions to hinder navigational rights and freedoms in the Black Sea.

As compensation for the food insecurity caused by Russia, Russia has offered 1 million tons of grain. This is in comparison to the nearly 33 million tons that were exported through the Black Sea Grain Initiative and that actually contributed to stabilizing global grain prices. We tend to agree with President Ramaphosa of South Africa – we prefer to keep the Black Sea open to trade.

While Russia's actions demonstrate a cynical approach to food security, Ukraine has showed impressive efforts to address the challenges of global food insecurity: first, by successfully exporting its grain via the "Ukraine corridor" for civilian cargo ships; second, for hosting the second International Summit on Food Security in Kyiv later this week, on 25 November; and third, by focusing on food insecurity as one of the 10 tracks in the Ukrainian peace formula. The Nordic countries fully support all three initiatives.

The anniversary of the Holodomor – a crime of unfathomable proportions – is a tragic reminder of the consequences of the weaponization of food to all of us. As we commemorate the millions of victims of the Holodomor, we do so not only to raise awareness about this historical tragedy, but also to motivate the international community to avoid similar tragedies and to help to ensure respect for international law. That is why we emphasize the necessity of ensuring secure, stable and free navigation in the Black Sea, as this is essential to sustainable grain exports and thereby stable food prices.

The Nordics remain steadfast in our support for Ukraine and its people. We remain committed to providing humanitarian assistance in line with the humanitarian principles. And we reaffirm our support for a just peace, based on international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, ensuring full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. This is why we support Ukraine's peace formula and encourage others to do the same.
