



General Assembly

Eleventh Emergency Special session

3rd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 1 March 2022, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Shahid (Maldives)

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

Agenda item 5 (continued)

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Marta Lucía Ramírez, Vice-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

Ms. Ramírez (Colombia) (spoke in Spanish): Colombia has made clear that it rejects the Russian Federation's threats and attacks on Ukraine and its deliberate support of the secession of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, acts that not only disregard the 2014 Minsk agreements but also violate international law and the founding principles of the Charter of the United Nations. They have resulted in a de facto situation that is causing grave harm to a State Member of the Organization, both as a complete assault on its national unity and territorial integrity and as a gross violation of the human rights of the Ukrainian people.

Colombia reiterates its solidarity with the courage of the Government and the people of Ukraine, who are facing an unjustified and unprovoked aggression that is causing human suffering not seen since the Second World War. No nation can remain indifferent to this tragedy, which is a genuine threat to international peace and security. Russia's unilateral and unjustified actions are currently causing a mass exodus that could result in a new global migration crisis that would put the stability

and peace of Europe and the world in serious jeopardy. Today, right now, there are hundreds of thousands of people, including 293 Colombian citizens, who have been suffering through six long nights of harsh winter weather, leaving behind family members and loved ones, their savings and their plans, as they flee for their lives from the merciless onslaught of the Russian forces in Ukraine. The situation has caused economic panic all over the world, with international markets seeing disproportionate increases in energy and food prices in recent days. The attacks on Ukraine have aggravated global inflation and dealt a new blow to supply chains and to the economic recovery that all our nations need in the wake of losses of millions of lives, jobs, small and medium-sized businesses and of the wealth of millions of families around the world as a result of a pandemic that two years on has yet to end.

As President Iván Duque Márquez has said, Colombia naturally echoes the calls of others in the earlier meetings of this session (see A/ES-11/PV.1 and A/ES-11/PV.2) because we truly believe in the principles that we are defending here. We cannot sit idly by in the face of the extremely serious situation we are dealing with. We are here today not for opportunistic reasons but because of our genuine commitment to world peace. We are truly convinced of the overwhelming gravity of the violations that are occurring and of the disastrous precedent that could be set for the very future of humankind if they were to worsen without serious and hard-hitting consequences for the aggressor, whoever that may be.

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The current international law regime on the responsibility of States, adopted 21 years ago by the International Law Commission, makes the legal consequences of the invasion of Ukraine clear. Russia is internationally responsible for the humanitarian, economic, legal and all other consequences of the wrongful acts it has committed internationally. Russia's offensive, which constitutes a breach of peremptory international norms or *jus cogens*, violates the principle that no State should be subjected to the use or threat of use of force against its sovereignty, political independence or territorial integrity. Based on that, every State represented here should comply with some obligations. First, we have a positive obligation to cooperate using lawful means to put an end to Russia's serious breach of *jus cogens* norms. Secondly, we must comply with the negative obligation to refrain from recognizing a *de facto* situation imposed by force through a serious breach of international law and from assisting or enabling such a situation, along with all its implications. For all of those reasons, Colombia has sponsored and fully supports draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, submitted to the General Assembly at this emergency special session.

Notwithstanding the responsibility that is already incumbent on Russia, Colombia believes that the Assembly should be the body to initiate decisive measures and that it is therefore appropriate to recommend that all Member States act forcefully, simultaneously and comprehensively to impose economic sanctions whenever there is an aggressor, as a means of applying pressure so that it will put an immediate stop to its breaches of international law. This morning we learned of the deaths of dozens of Ukrainian children. How many more will there be? Timid, gradual sanctions have recently been shown to be a resounding failure in a number of parts of the world. In some countries in Latin America they have resulted in increasing human rights violations, further restrictions on political freedoms and the suppression of freedom of expression, because totalitarian regimes require a truly forceful response. If they already do not offer their citizens democratic elections, they know how to handle half-measure sanctions. A second measure that we should consider is operationalizing existing mechanisms for verifying nuclear-weapon States' compliance with their disarmament commitments. Led by our Ambassador Ms. Alicia Arango, Colombia is the current President of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, and we should address the issue there urgently

in the light of Russia's recent nuclear announcement, as President Duque has said.

We commend the decision of Mr. Karim Khan, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, to open an investigation into possible war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide that may have been committed on Ukrainian territory. The Court should prosecute the persons responsible for those crimes individually to ensure that they are held accountable to the international community for their actions, and all of us who are States parties to the Rome Statute should follow up on that.

As we did in 1950, today out of necessity we are uniting for peace, the main *raison d'être* and primary responsibility of the United Nations system and the Security Council. For decades, the Russian nation has contributed in many ways to the evolution of humankind and to building and developing the international law framework, from the peace conferences in The Hague to the drafting of the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act, and we should all acknowledge that. Unfortunately, Russia is currently the lead actor and protagonist in most of the very acts that the Helsinki Final Act condemns.

There is still time for the Russian Federation — which, with its Security Council presidency having just ended yesterday, should be advocating compliance with the Charter and international law — to return to the path of compliance with and promotion of norms, for example through the urgent implementation of mutual confidence-building measures that would enable negotiations to be resumed. Colombia believes that conflicts should be resolved through dialogue and negotiations. However, any negotiations that take place between Russia and the Ukrainian Government should not involve any threats to Ukraine or suppress Ukraine's admirable spirit of freedom, progress, democracy and respect for human rights, and we should all try to support any form of dialogue as long as it leads to the immediate cessation of Russia's special military operations.

That process should also be guided by the Secretary-General, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international and regional organizations in order to achieve an immediate de-escalation of this conflict — in which, as in the past, all of humankind would stand to lose — and thereby prevent an attack or threat of mass destruction. I reiterate that we cannot allow the process to undermine

the desire for freedom, sovereignty and independence that the Ukrainian people have expressed at various times in history and most recently in 2014.

It would be unacceptable in the current circumstances, with a persistent pandemic, for the world to set aside its development agenda and return to an arms race. Instead, for the sake of humankind, we must pursue our agenda addressing climate change, gender equity, energy transitions, reducing global hunger, combating poverty and achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals, while also sending a clear message from all the free nations of the world that no country will accept any threat to the sovereignty of another member of the Organization. The Russian Federation cannot turn back the clock by pursuing a regressive agenda in which great empires flourish at the expense of the rights of other peoples. The world does not want and will not accept such a return to the past.

Mr. Arriola Ramírez (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Paraguay supports the convening of this emergency special session of the General Assembly, the most democratic and pluralistic body of our global Organization, pursuant to resolution 377 A (V), entitled “Uniting for peace”. We are here today because the repeated and increasingly intense ongoing calls by most countries and major world leaders have not been sufficient to stop what we greatly feared from happening.

Unfortunately, for reasons known to all of us, the Security Council’s attempts to prevent the escalation of this conflict were unsuccessful, which once again affirms the urgent need to reform it. Since then, the situation has only worsened and has even involved the threat of the use of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we agree with the Secretary-General and the delegations that spoke before us that there is no justification whatever for the use of nuclear weapons or the threat of their use as a means of intimidation. On the contrary, we join the call for nuclear-weapon States to comply with their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Government of Paraguay has condemned the attacks on the Ukrainian people as violations of the principles of sovereignty and international law, and has urged for an immediate cessation of the hostilities and a resumption of dialogue and negotiations in order to achieve a peaceful, mutually acceptable, lasting solution. The terrible situation that Ukraine is currently enduring also threatens the legal regime on the prohibition of

the use or threat of use of force in the settlement of international disputes, which we established 76 years ago at the San Francisco Conference in our effort to enshrine international law as the sole guarantee for all Member States of the Organization. For those reasons, now more than ever, countries that want peace, an end to violence and an immediate cessation of hostilities must make their voices heard loud and clear. That is also why we have decided to sponsor and vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted to the General Assembly (A/ES-11/L.1), just as we did on Friday on the Security Council’s draft resolution S/2022/155.

The Security Council must play its role and perform its functions. We hope that it can speedily set in motion the various mechanisms at its disposal that some members described yesterday in their statements to the Assembly (see A/ES-11/PV.1 and A/ES-11/PV.2) and begin to deliver results in order to restore peace and security and, above all, as a matter of urgency, to alleviate the pain and suffering of all the people affected. In that regard, we want to highlight the Security Council meeting held yesterday (see S/PV.8983) at the request of the delegations of France and Mexico to assess the humanitarian situation on the ground and determine needs there. We also join the call for all parties to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and access for humanitarian personnel and to provide urgent care for all vulnerable people, especially women and children.

As a member of the Human Rights Council, Paraguay made a fervent appeal in Geneva for peace and respect for the fundamental rights of all people affected by the conflict in Ukraine. Speaking at the high-level segment of the Council yesterday, our Minister for Foreign Affairs emphasized that

“we are going through a moment of perplexity and shock ... in the face of the scourge of war, in which human rights violations are regrettably and undesirably likely”.

For that reason, Paraguay supports the convening of an urgent meeting on the situation in Ukraine to address this crisis from a comprehensive human rights approach that underscores that the right to life is the most important right to protect.

It is also vital that the negotiation process be resumed quickly, constructively and flexibly, based on existing international mechanisms and in accordance with international law, the principles of the Charter

of the United Nations and Security Council resolution 2202 (2015) — which as we all know is binding under Article 25 of the Charter — and respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all States. That is the same clear and direct call that we have all been repeating since the first day of this session, and it is the only way forward.

In conclusion, we hope that the talks that began yesterday morning will be the start of a sustainable, lasting way out of this crisis, while we also reiterate the need for an immediate ceasefire so that the talks can continue without conditions of any kind.

Mr. Blanco Conde (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate your rapid convening of this emergency special session, Mr. President, to address the situation resulting from Russia's military occupation of the territory of Ukraine, a full Member of the Organization. And we commend you and the Secretary-General for your efforts to renew dialogue and negotiations during this difficult time for humankind.

As President Abinader Corona has said, the Dominican Republic is shaken by the military invasion that Russia is perpetrating against the people of Ukraine. The Russian Federation's decision is in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the Minsk agreements, the Budapest Memorandum and countless resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. Such acts violate the fundamental principles of international law, including respecting the territorial integrity and political independence of States, settling disputes by peaceful means and refraining from resorting to the use or threat of use of force or from intervening in the internal affairs of States.

In our firm belief in peaceful coexistence among peoples and in defending an international legal framework that guarantees fundamental rights, the Dominican Republic has decided to make its voice heard by sponsoring and voting in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, entitled "Aggression against Ukraine", to be introduced to the Assembly during this historic emergency special session. We reiterate our call to the parties to urgently lay down their arms and choose the path of diplomatic negotiations. In the wake of this terrible pandemic, what the world wants is to return to a path of stability where solidarity prevails. We do not want more death and destruction. This conflict has already claimed hundreds of lives, and its humanitarian and economic implications are unpredictable.

All of our countries, large and small, have a responsibility and duty as members of the Organization to respect the Charter of the United Nations. Those values are non-negotiable for the Dominican Republic, and as a founding member of the United Nations, we will continue to uphold the democratic principles that brought us all to San Francisco in June 1945. We regret the fact that we are discussing this painful issue today and urge all delegations to firmly and resolutely support the desire and right of Ukraine and of all the countries in the world to live in peace. Let us not fail to meet humankind's expectations.

Mr. Sitaldin (Suriname): The Republic of Suriname has noted with great concern Russia's invasion of Ukraine and strongly condemns its military intervention. We support the principles of international law as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and underscore the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Under no circumstances can we accept the Russian invasion of a sovereign and independent State, and it must stop immediately. It will have far-reaching consequences for the people of Ukraine and is a serious threat to peace and security, both in the region and around the world.

In that regard, the Government of the Republic of Suriname would like to reiterate its principled position with respect to the importance of peaceful coexistence, the re-establishment of dialogue in every existing conflict, regardless of their nature, the upholding of the internationally agreed principles of non-intervention, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity. In the light of those principles, Suriname urges all parties involved to engage responsibly and exercise restraint in order to prevent the destabilization of the region.

There are no winners in any war. It brings only human suffering and devastation. Suriname is concerned about the humanitarian situation in Ukraine and calls on all the parties to allow and facilitate safe and unrestricted access to humanitarian assistance for those in need and to protect civilians, including humanitarian personnel and people in vulnerable situations. Suriname welcomes the actions undertaken in that regard by the United Nations and supports the Secretary-General's call to end the war. The Republic of Suriname maintains diplomatic relations with both Russia and Ukraine and will continue to call for dialogue and diplomatic processes, essential elements that contribute to maintaining peace, stability and security.

Ms. Sulaiman (Brunei Darussalam): Brunei Darussalam is concerned about the escalation of tensions and military action in Ukraine and continues to closely monitor developments there. We condemn any violation of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of any country and reiterate the importance of upholding the principles of a rules-based framework and respect for international law. Finally, we call on all the parties directly involved to de-escalate tensions, refrain from acts that may further aggravate the situation and settle all differences by peaceful means without resorting to the use or threat of use of force, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law and in the interests of maintaining international peace and stability.

Ms. Seid (Palau): Palau aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Fiji in Fiji's capacity as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum (see A/ES-11/PV.2), and I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Ukraine and Palau have little in common. One is a large post-Soviet State in Eastern Europe, and the other is a small blue-ocean State, an archipelago of tropical islands in the Pacific. Yet we feel a certain kinship with Ukraine because we can be considered close siblings with regard to the birth of our nations. Ukraine became independent relatively recently, in 1991, and Palau in 1994, shortly thereafter. It is therefore not lost on us that if by a turn of fate one of our former colonizers had acted towards us with the same aggression that Russia is directing at Ukraine, it would be our people who would be suffering the atrocities of war that are happening in Ukraine today. It could have been my own five-year-old killed in the kindergarten that was bombed; it could have been a Palauan grandfather who fled his home with nothing more than the few belongings he could carry; it could have been a Palauan woman, on what should have been one of the most joyous days of her life, forced to give birth in a bomb shelter with the booming noise of missile strikes in the background; and it could have been hundreds of our civilians killed in their homes, and all of it in Putin's pursuit of his self-proclaimed principle of historical unity.

As we look around this Hall, we can see that few of us have been immune to the use of historical unity as a justification for war. In fact, our colourful histories are often the basis for our interwoven identities. How many of us are former colonies or have lived under foreign rule at one time or another? How many languages are

spoken in our countries? And so on. Our historical past is part of the beauty of the fabric of our integrated world, not a perverse excuse to wage an unprovoked war on our neighbours. It is in that spirit that Palau asks members to vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1 to condemn Russia's use of force against Ukraine. We should call our capitals and make the case for defending the Charter of the United Nations. We cannot stand by while Russia looks to dismantle the rules-based world order in the pursuit of its own narrow self-interest.

While reflecting on the dangers of inaction in the Second World War, Martin Niemöller, a German Lutheran pastor, wrote,

“First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out — because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out — because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out — because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me — and there was no one left to speak for me.”

Palau stands with Ukraine. We will continue to speak out and fight for the principles of the Charter, human rights and international law, and to oppose the inhumane consequences of unjust, illegal warfare. We call on all Member States to join us.

Mr. Webson (Antigua and Barbuda): I stand before the Assembly as a representative of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, which stands in solidarity with the Government and people of Ukraine. We are troubled by the invasion of Ukraine, and we ask the Russian Federation — a colleague and a member of this body — to cease the war and withdraw from the territory of Ukraine. Three weeks ago, on 8 February, our Minister for Foreign Affairs noted that

“as a small country to which sovereignty, territorial integrity and self-determination are vitally important, Antigua and Barbuda is anxious that those principles must be respected and be upheld everywhere”.

Anywhere that those principles are threatened, we, the global community, have an obligation to all countries, big or small, powerful or powerless, to speak out and stand up, lest our silence be misconstrued as consent. We recognize that the powerful country of Russia has security concerns about Ukraine. But such concerns do not justify any kind of attempt to use force to invade the country of Ukraine and its people and

cripple its sovereignty. Antigua and Barbuda believes in international peace and security and adherence to international law by all countries. That is what we stand for. It is central to our own security as a small island State. We will not condone any act of invasion. We will not condone the violation of any country's sovereignty or territorial integrity. We therefore reject in the strongest possible terms the use of force that is currently being employed against the independence and sovereignty of the country of Ukraine. We again ask our friends to stop and to remove all troops from the territory of Ukraine.

Our small nation also recognizes that the conflict in Ukraine is further plunging our world into grave uncertainty, with consequential effects for our entire global community, only now recovering from the effects of the pandemic. The conflict in Ukraine has derailed the discussion on the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and takes away from the much-needed efforts to deal with the issues of climate change. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development reports that as a result of the pandemic, small island developing States like mine have seen a 7.5 per cent average increase in prices of essential goods. This crisis only exacerbates the situation in our island nations.

This situation must end. It is a crisis for all of us, and we must all speak out for diplomacy. We must all support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1. It means as much to small States as to big ones. My Government fully supports the efforts of the Secretary-General and urges the Russian Federation to return to the negotiating table and choose diplomacy over confrontation. As a small State, we had hoped to see the nations of the world choose consultations over confrontation and put conflict behind them. We hoped that the use of force to coerce a sovereign nation was a thing of the past.

We hoped that all the countries of the world had matured enough to accept consultation over confrontation and negotiations over provocations. We regret that our friends in Russia have chosen not to do so and that they are either unable or unwilling to follow the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, to which they are a party. We urge an end to this war.

We were very disappointed with the use of the veto in the Security Council (see S/PV.8979), a power that we entrusted to the Council's five permanent members. The Assembly must stand up to show that the veto should not be used selfishly and that our agreement

with and support for today's draft resolution calls for a change in the way the veto is used. We are aware of the "East versus West" argument, but it does not apply here. This is a pivotal moment for the United Nations, and if we stand together in solidarity, we can change the view that the East can do one thing and the West can do another, and if another such crisis occurs — which we hope will never happen — we will stand up against it.

Antigua and Barbuda fully supports the draft resolution that is before the Assembly and we call on all Members, especially small island States, to recognize that this is protecting the principles of the Charter. Might does not make right.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): Let me begin, Mr. President, by thanking you and the Secretary-General for your leadership and for convening this emergency special session of the General Assembly to consider the grave threat to international peace and security resulting from the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, a member of our Organization.

We have met here under the shadows of the dark clouds of war in Europe, which test the resolve of our diplomacy and our collective ability to turn the instruments of war into pillars of peace. The situation facing us in Ukraine is grave, and we must all acknowledge that. The foundations of trust that have made the Charter of the United Nations the indispensable instrument of the international order have been recklessly assailed. If we do not act to roundly condemn the actions of the Russian Federation and reaffirm our support for the Charter and its collective security mechanism, we will further undermine the pillars that held our world, however imperfect it may be, together.

Indeed, there is plenty of blame to go around in this Hall and throughout our Organization's history. Powerful States have thrown the Charter out of the window when it suited them and unilateral actions have been taken without due regard. However, when old wounds are opened, they bleed just as much as fresh ones. In that regard, and conscious that no amount of blame will ever make us take a neutral stance on the cause of peace and the preservation of our United Nations, we deem it our duty to make every effort for peace. The Charter is our beacon of hope, and when States sail into the turbulent waters of war and destruction, we must point them back to the lighthouse of peace.

As I said in the Security Council on Sunday afternoon (see S/PV.8980) after the adoption of Security Council resolution 2623 (2022), convening this emergency special session of the General Assembly, it is important that we approach this session with sobriety. It is our obligation, not just for this generation and the civilization we have fashioned for our contemporary world, but also for the debt and respect we owe to all whose blood and toil speak to us from the many graves of the two World Wars. We must mean it when we say that never again in our lifetimes and in succeeding generations should the world be put through the scourge of war. The Security Council was constrained from taking action. It is now our responsibility as an Assembly to act, and act we must.

We should therefore support the call for peace. The Russian Federation must hear our call from this Hall for an immediate ceasefire, the withdrawal of its troops from Ukraine and a recommitment to diplomacy and dialogue. The parties to the conflict must respect the principles of international law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The interests of civilian populations must be placed above all else and humanitarian agencies must be granted safe corridors to assist those most in need, especially children, women and the elderly. In that regard, I note the dire situation of 90 Ghanaian students and others in Sumy and urge a humanitarian pause so that they and others in similar situations can leave Ukraine, with the support of the United Nations agencies and the International Federation of the Red Cross.

While Ghana, like many others in the Organization, has enjoyed long-standing friendly relations with the Russian Federation, we have been forthright in our condemnation of its actions. It takes true friendship to be candid with one another on matters of principles and values and to expect the behaviour that befits greatness. The Russian Federation may well have had its security concerns, but it chose to express them in the wrong way. Threatening the use of force, threatening aggression and attacking a neighbour under a pretext are all wrong and unacceptable. The path of war is not the way a country should establish its national positions, and it is not an option the Assembly can accept.

However, in condemning the Russian Federation's aggression, we should not close off the path of dialogue. Ours is a vocation of peace. We must therefore recommit to dialogue to ensure that this war ends as soon as possible. We are horrified by the brutal attacks

in Ukraine, regret the many innocent lives that have been lost and are pained by the needless losses arising from a war that was not necessary. We therefore call on Ukraine, the Russian Federation and all other parties to give the dialogue that commenced on the border with Belarus a chance, without compromising Ukraine's inalienable rights as a sovereign and independent nation. Ghana is fully and unwaveringly committed to preserving the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

We hope that the Assembly's adoption of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1 will ensure that all the parties understand that there is no option other than dialogue for addressing the critical situation that we are confronted with in Ukraine. Let us all therefore say our bit here in this Hall, but also reflect deeply outside its walls, in our own and other capitals, on how to recommit the parties to dialogue and diplomacy in order to avert the catastrophe of war. We have a responsibility to act as purveyors of peace, and the time to do that is now.

Mrs. Chigiyal (Federated States of Micronesia): We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the members of the Pacific Islands Forum (see A/ES-11/PV.2) and endorse the efforts of the Secretary-General in the situation in Ukraine. I would now like to make a few points in my national capacity.

The events on the ground in Ukraine have worsened dramatically. In addition to the tensions in eastern Ukraine, we are now seeing a full-fledged invasion of a sovereign nation, with an attack by one Member of our Organization on another. That is in full contravention of international law and the principles of the United Nations. It is not a peacekeeping mission but a war of aggression. It is clear beyond any doubt which is the aggressor and which the victim.

War has a human face and there are no winners. It is with horror that we are witnessing children, women and other civilians fall victim to the conflict, and we deplore its indiscriminate nature. We call for a cessation of hostilities and for Russia to immediately withdraw its forces from the sovereign territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and return them to their barracks. We further call for rapid, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian assistance and that safe passage be granted to the Ukrainian people and others who are seeking it.

Micronesia is a small and peace-loving country. The principles of our Constitution, which unite our Micronesian island nation and its people, are closely related to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We are encouraged by the strongly expressed views and actions of the United Nations, particularly those aimed at protecting human rights, including under international humanitarian law, and at preventing and ending armed conflict. We are therefore deeply concerned about the Russian Federation's abhorrent acts. I cannot overstate our determination to stand united with the people of Ukraine. In a show of solidarity, as our President announced just days ago, the Federated States of Micronesia has severed diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation.

If peace is to have a chance, there will have to be diplomatic negotiations in good faith and on equal terms. We urge the parties to take the path of peaceful dialogue. Micronesia stands in solidarity with the Ukrainian people and draws inspiration from their strength and resilience in the face of overwhelming forces. In that regard, we have sponsored and will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, entitled "Aggression against Ukraine".

Mr. Fifield (Australia): My Government could not have made its position more clear. Australia condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked, egregious and completely unjustified aggression against Ukraine. As our Prime Minister has said, there is no pretext, no provocation and no just cause for what Russia has been pursuing. These are unilateral, hostile actions. The Charter of the United Nations says that we, the peoples of the United Nations, are committed to uniting our strength to maintain international peace and security. Yet Russia has chosen war. We strongly reject any assertions or excuses that Russia's actions are motivated by humanitarian concerns. We call Russia's actions what they are — a brutal invasion and a direct attack on the people of Ukraine.

President Putin and the Kremlin have ignored repeated high-level calls to engage in genuine reciprocal dialogue regarding security concerns. As our Foreign Minister has said,

"The assertion by President Putin of Russian soldiers acting as peacekeepers is an obscene perversion of the noble and vital role that generations of peacekeepers have played across the world."

Russia's actions are deplorable, reckless and destructive and a wholesale breach of international law. Let us be clear. Russia is violating its obligations under the Charter, including, most obviously, to refrain from using force against another State. Australia has welcomed the significant efforts that have been made by our close partners, including the United States, the European Union (EU) and NATO, to urge a diplomatic solution. Those efforts have failed for now, unfortunately, but we are determined to continue working closely within the United Nations and with responsible nations worldwide to ensure that Russia's actions incur the international condemnation and the high cost that they deserve.

We welcome the significant steps taken by our partners, including the United States, the United Kingdom, the EU, Canada and Japan. We also welcome the increasing numbers of firm statements and practical offers of support to Ukraine, both in Europe and our own region, the Indo-Pacific. The Australian Government has announced a range of sanctions that impose real costs on Moscow in a reflection of the grave nature of Russia's conduct. Australia has sanctioned more than 350 individual Russians, including corrupt oligarchs, members of the State Duma and military commanders who have been facilitating Putin's illegal and violent ambitions. We have also sanctioned 13 Belarusian individuals and entities that have aided and abetted Putin's aggression.

We are supporting Ukraine and its people. We are working with NATO and other partners to provide lethal and non-lethal military equipment, as well as medical supplies and financial assistance, to support the people of Ukraine. Australia made an initial contribution of \$3 million to the NATO Trust Fund for Ukraine towards non-lethal military equipment and medical supplies. Last night, our Prime Minister announced an additional \$50 million towards both lethal and non-lethal defensive support for Ukraine, working with our partners. He has also announced an initial contribution of \$25 million to provide humanitarian support to international organizations in order to help meet essential needs and provide shelter, food, medical care and water. But that is just our opening contribution. We know that needs will continue to increase and we stand ready to help. We call on all parties to adhere to international human rights law and international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of civilians.

Australia will always be a steadfast supporter of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Our

thoughts are with Ukraine and the Ukrainians, who are enduring a terrible invasion. Bombs are falling, the shelling continues and bullets are being fired. Russian special forces are moving towards Kyiv and tanks are rolling in all around Ukraine's borders. We reiterate our call for these violations to end. We want the Russian military to immediately withdraw and cease its action. We call for peace — the kind of peace that is not just the absence of war, but that enables the people of Ukraine to live according to their own rules and sovereignty and to have their own freedom.

As the Secretary-General said last week, the decisions of the coming days will shape our world and directly affect the lives of millions. Now is the time for us all — the peoples of the United Nations — to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security. Australia will sponsor and vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, condemning Russia's aggression. The time to act together is now.

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett (Guyana): The Government of Guyana fully aligns itself with the statements on the situation in Ukraine issued on 14 and 24 February by the Caribbean Community and on 25 February by the Organization of American States. I would also like to re-emphasize the following.

The Government of Guyana is gravely concerned about Russia's recent military intervention in Ukraine, in violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and we call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and a return to diplomacy. Guyana deplors the use or threat of use of force in the conduct of international relations and urges a peaceful resolution of the differences that currently exist, in accordance with international law and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

The ongoing military action in Ukraine is contrary to the principles of respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty and the non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States. It is a threat to the region and to countries everywhere. The Government of Guyana therefore supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to bring about a speedy resolution of the situation in Ukraine and end the threat to international peace and security. In that regard, the Government of Guyana fully supports the draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.1) before us.

Mr. Wallace (Jamaica): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this emergency special

session of the General Assembly to consider the situation unfolding in Ukraine.

Jamaica strongly condemns the Russian Federation's military incursion into Ukraine and calls for the immediate and complete withdrawal of Russian military forces from the territory of Ukraine. We consider that Russia's military actions in Ukraine violate the principles enshrined in both the word and the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. They undermine the core principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in the affairs of sovereign States and the obligation to refrain from the use or threat of use of force. Jamaica considers those to be non-negotiable obligations to which all of us as Member States have subscribed.

Russia's actions over the past few days have been deemed to be seriously egregious and unjustifiable, especially given its position as a permanent member of the Security Council, the very body mandated to maintain international peace and security. By its actions Russia is in clear violation of its solemn duties and responsibilities as a permanent member of the Security Council and of the United Nations family. We therefore call on it to cease all acts of aggression and open all channels of diplomacy to resolve this dispute peacefully. The global rules-based multilateral system will be in danger if we do nothing.

As a small island State, Jamaica recognizes that the international legal framework and the principles of the Charter are designed to provide a safe environment for all nations, regardless of their size and stature. We cannot allow the international order to be cast aside and ignored with impunity. Inaction on the part of the global community would be most egregious. We must stand up for right, law and peace and demand an urgent cessation of hostilities in Ukraine and a return to dialogue and diplomacy. As members of the United Nations, we have all committed to saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which has too often brought untold sorrow to humankind. The ongoing incursion in Ukraine is a violation of that sacred promise. Military conflict has serious implications for us all.

Jamaica notes with grave concern the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Ukraine, as well as its impact on neighbouring countries. We call on all parties to ensure that displaced people, both Ukrainians and non-citizens, including students and expatriates, are allowed safe and unfettered passage to destinations outside Ukraine if they so desire. In that regard, we

welcome the Secretary-General's announcement earlier of the measures being taken to address those humanitarian concerns. Jamaica reaffirms the view that respect for the principles of international law and the Charter remain fundamental to the maintenance of international peace and security. Only in such an environment can we, the peoples, continue to work to address and counter the most pressing challenges confronting the world today and in the future.

As small States, we see the dangers of war all too clearly. We feel the threat of the disruption of our lives and livelihoods and of economic devastation and stagnation all too well. In that sense, today we are all Ukraine. We too are fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, and sons and daughters. In that sense, too, today we are all Ukraine. Therefore, in the eternal and inspiring words of Bob Marley, let us get up, stand up, stand up for the rights of all the people of Ukraine, because today we are all Ukraine.

Mr. Maes (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Luxembourg fully subscribes to the statement delivered yesterday on behalf of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.1), and I would like to expand on it by adding some remarks in my national capacity.

Confronted with the clamour of war, as members of the United Nations we must all make our voices heard. At a time when the Russian armed forces continue to bomb Ukrainian cities and destroy the lives of an increasing number of human beings in Ukraine — men, women and children — I would like to reaffirm Luxembourg's full solidarity with the Government and the people of Ukraine. Like its European partners, Luxembourg condemns Russia's aggression against Ukraine in the strongest terms. My country firmly supports the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly. The brutal, unprovoked, unjustifiable and criminal aggression being perpetrated by the Russian authorities against Ukraine, a founding member of the United Nations, not only violates the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, but also jeopardizes the very principles of the United Nations and of multilateralism, the international rules-based order and the sovereign equality of States. What can the United Nations do in the face of such a grave situation?

Russia's veto has blocked the Security Council from taking decisions in the exercise of its primary

responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. That is something we deeply deplore, given the fact that the draft resolution (S/2022/155) that Albania and the United States submitted to the Security Council on Friday (see S/PV.8979) had the support of more than 80 Member States from every region of the world. Luxembourg is grateful to the Council members who voted on Sunday (see S/PV.8980) to adopt Security Council resolution 2623 (2022), authorizing the convening of this emergency special session of the General Assembly. Now it is up to the Assembly to shoulder its responsibilities.

Luxembourg has sponsored and will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, entitled "Aggression against Ukraine". It is a strong draft resolution that demands that Russia immediately cease the use of force against Ukraine, refrain from any further unlawful threat or use of force against any Member State, and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. It urges the immediate peaceful resolution of the conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine through political dialogue, negotiations, mediation and other peaceful means. Voting for the draft resolution means voting to stop the war, uphold the Charter of the United Nations and international law and ensure that the rule of law outweighs the rule of the strongest. It means voting to save the lives of the people of Ukraine, beset by Russia's aggression. We call on all Member States to support it when it is put to a vote.

We are at a critical moment for security and stability in Europe and the world. As the Secretary-General stressed yesterday, nothing can justify the use of nuclear weapons. We condemn the involvement of Belarus in the aggression against Ukraine, particularly by letting the Russian forces use its territory. We urge Russia and Belarus to comply with international law. The crimes that are being committed, especially war crimes and crimes against humanity, must not go unpunished. In that regard, Luxembourg welcomes the decision announced yesterday by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to open an investigation into the situation in Ukraine as soon as possible.

The war in Ukraine is having a major impact on the civilian population, and the most vulnerable, including the elderly, women and children, are suffering the worst. Human rights violations and abuses continue to increase. Luxembourg supports the ongoing efforts

of the Human Rights Council to adopt a resolution to establish an independent international commission of inquiry on Ukraine. We call on Russia to stop targeting the civilian population and civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals. The European Court of Human Rights today has indicated interim measures to that effect, and we call on Russia to comply with them. All the parties must take every measure to protect civilians, including children and humanitarian workers, and civilian infrastructure. International humanitarian law must be respected.

Luxembourg is extremely concerned about the humanitarian situation in Ukraine and the increasing number of internally displaced persons and refugees. My country has decided to join the momentum of European and international solidarity by providing an initial €1 million in aid to its humanitarian partners. The Luxembourg authorities are also making the necessary preparations to host and shelter refugees who are fleeing the war in Ukraine. We will do our part in those efforts of solidarity. We commend Ukraine's neighbours for the generosity they have already shown in hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees. The Government of Luxembourg has decided that it will provide the Ukrainian authorities with rescue equipment and medicines they have requested, as well as equipment that can be used to strengthen their self-defence capabilities, through the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism. We fully support the restrictive measures that the European Union has adopted against Russia and the aid measures it has adopted for Ukraine. Together with our European partners, we will continue to support Ukraine based on our shared values of respect for human dignity and human rights and of freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law.

Ukraine's destiny is our destiny. Ukraine's fate is the fate of the international rules-based order. We commend the courage of the President of Ukraine and the Government and the people of Ukraine who are currently fighting to defend the universal values on which the United Nations was founded. We also commend the courage of the Russian citizens who, in the face of repression, are protesting to oppose the war. Like them, we say to the leaders of the Russian Federation — and let me use the language of Pushkin here:

(spoke in Russian)

No to war. Stop this war.

(spoke in French)

Today we are all Ukrainians, and Ukrainians can count on our support.

Mr. Rai (Papua New Guinea): Papua New Guinea feels the pain and hurt that the people and the Government of Ukraine are feeling at this trying time, and we stand in unity and solidarity with all Ukrainians in their God-given motherland. We welcome today's emergency special session of the General Assembly and commend the members of the Security Council who made it possible. However, this would not have had to happen had not the Security Council, entrusted and mandated under the Charter of the United Nations to ensure global peace and security, failed to live up to its core responsibilities in the context of the situation in Ukraine.

We are disappointed that some members of the Council, to whom we have given our support in good faith to uphold the sacrosanct principles of the Charter, have failed us. Looking the other way, at a critical juncture for a Member State's peace and security and global peace and security, is not what we expect from Council members, given that they do not represent merely their own delegations' interests on the Security Council. Situations such as this once again bring to the fore and underscore the urgent need for the long-overdue reform of the veto power and an archaic Security Council, which remains a prisoner of its past, to the detriment of our collective security, as we are regrettably witnessing in Ukraine today.

As a small developing country, Papua New Guinea depends on respect for the rules-based international order under international law, including the Charter. Upholding those principles for all countries is fundamental to our peaceful coexistence and international relations. No country, regardless of its economic, financial or military clout, has any right to coerce others in any way. It is in that spirit that Papua New Guinea is deeply concerned about the Russian Federation's aggressive attack on the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine. We strongly deplore its actions, which must cease immediately, as they are in contravention of the Charter and international law and, as the Secretary-General and many other delegations have rightly underscored, are especially egregious given the fact that the perpetrator is a permanent member of the Security Council. We urge Russia to immediately and unconditionally withdraw from Ukraine. We also encourage both

parties to use peaceful dialogue through diplomacy to resolve their differences.

We therefore welcome the efforts for dialogue that are under way and call for safety and security guarantees for the peacemakers. Rebuilding trust, confidence and mutual respect between all the parties concerned must not come at the expense of ensuring accountability for the actions of all involved in the conflict. We also urge for safe passage for humanitarian relief workers and supplies for those in need of such assistance in Ukraine and its neighbours, and express our gratitude to those workers for their selfless efforts in a perilous environment. We also thank Ukraine's neighbours for opening their borders and hearts to receive Ukrainians and others seeking refuge.

For all of those reasons, Papua New Guinea unreservedly supports the Secretary-General for being frank and forthright on this issue. It is the right thing to do. We also fully support, endorse and have sponsored the draft resolution on Ukraine before us today (A/ES-11/L.1), just as we did in the Security Council on Friday (see S/PV.8979) for draft resolution S/2022/155 and on Sunday (see S/PV.8980) for the "uniting for peace" Security Council resolution 2623 (2022).

In conclusion, we also align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (see A/ES-11/PV.2).

Ms. Barros (Timor-Leste): Timor-Leste is very concerned about the current situation in Ukraine. As one of the most recent members of the United Nations, having joined in the past 20 years, Timor-Leste has always believed in the standards set by the Charter of the United Nations whereby every State should uphold the international law that governs the rules-based order and respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other States.

Over the past few days we have been witnessing actions in violation of international humanitarian law and human rights law, as the situation in Ukraine has escalated into a full-scale war and taken a heavy toll on the civilian population. For that reason, Timor-Leste sponsored Security Council draft resolution S/2022/155, which called for an end to the situation, but it was ultimately not adopted by the Council. It is now the General Assembly's duty to stand up and defend the core principles of the United Nations. Timor-Leste has once again reaffirmed its commitment to upholding the principles of international law and the Charter by

sponsoring and fully supporting draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, entitled "Aggression against Ukraine".

We in Timor-Leste understand the pain and suffering that military attacks cause, because we have experienced them ourselves. As a nation that rose from the ashes of years of forced occupation, Timor-Leste knows that war benefits no one. We therefore urge all the parties to the conflict to agree to an immediate ceasefire and to pursue a diplomatic solution. While maintaining peace and security has become the most crucial task for our Organization, we must also protect the civilian population and create the conditions for peace. We thank the Secretary-General and all the relevant United Nations agencies and partners for their continuing support to the civilian population through their humanitarian operation efforts.

Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): At the outset, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines expresses its deepest condolences to the families of the victims who have lost their lives due to the special military operation launched by the Russian Federation in the independent territory of Ukraine. We continue to monitor the escalation of the conflict and are deeply worried about the deteriorating situation. From our perspective, the special military operation is neither necessary nor desirable and is an affront to the Charter of the United Nations.

Given the historical context of the geopolitical situation in the region and Russia's articulation of its legitimate security concerns and perspective on the political situation in the Donbas region, we acknowledge the need for constructive diplomatic efforts that thoroughly address those concerns. However, the special military operation cannot reasonably be justified. It only endangers international peace and security and will exacerbate human suffering across the globe. Let us be clear. No Member State of our Organization will be immune to the ripple effect of this armed conflict.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is unwaveringly committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter, including those relating to paragraph 4 of Article 2, prohibiting the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and mandating non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the right to self-determination. We owe our existence as a sovereign and independent small nation to those sacrosanct international norms and non-negotiable, timeless principles. Accordingly, we cannot stand idly by while the founding principles

of international law are being jettisoned, and we therefore call for the immediate cessation of all hostilities. We specifically urge for strict adherence to the principles of sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, non-intervention, non-interference and respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. We also reiterate the recent calls from the Caribbean Community and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States for the peaceful settlement of disputes and respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Historically, the Russian Federation has been a defender of the purposes and principles of the Charter, including the sacred principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. That is reflected in Russia's membership in the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations. As a fellow defender of those principles and member of the Group of Friends, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines insists unequivocally that the Russian Federation cease its military operations and withdraw its forces from Ukraine immediately. We have witnessed the insidious effects of interventionism and external aggressions across the developing world on countless occasions, and we know that constructive dialogue in adherence to international law is the only path to peace and progress, however difficult it may be.

We deeply regret that the Minsk agreements have been violated. We also urge for meaningful diplomatic initiatives and encourage the continuing work of the Normandy format, the Trilateral Contact Group and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We urge the parties to exhaust all diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful solution to the current conflict. We firmly believe that the nobility of peace is preferable by far to an ignoble military adventure. History has taught us that peace is a great cause, and great causes have never been won by doubtful men and women. While we are encouraged by the meeting between both parties that was held earlier today by the Belarusian border, we must put it on record that the use of nuclear weapons is inconceivable and wholly unacceptable, and we counsel against its mere suggestion by anyone. We also urge that the space for continued dialogue remain open.

Before I conclude, I would be remiss not to express my dismay about the disturbing reports of people of African descent being singled out and given unfair treatment as they join the masses fleeing Ukrainian territory. In line with international humanitarian law and its guiding principles, we call on all States to

uphold their international obligations and ensure the safety of all peoples.

In conclusion, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reiterates that it is a stout champion of the purposes and principles of the Charter and their primacy in our multilateral system. We must, must give peace a real chance to succeed. We must stop this war and return to diplomacy. I wish profound peace to all.

Ms. Picco (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): The Principality of Monaco associates itself with the statement delivered yesterday on behalf of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.1).

I would like to reaffirm from this rostrum my country's commitment to respect for international law and the Charter of the United Nations. In this forum, where each State has one vote, in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality enshrined in the Charter, Monaco wishes to use its vote to support Ukraine. Fulfilling in good faith the obligations of the Charter, settling disputes by peaceful means, and refraining from undermining the territorial integrity of any State are fundamental principles to which every Member State committed in joining our Organization.

We deplore the large numbers of victims and are extremely concerned about the displaced people fleeing the violence, as well as the refugees, who now number more than 600,000. In view of the rapidly worsening situation and the suffering inflicted on civilians, we call for respect for international humanitarian law and recall that the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols require a distinction to be made between the civilian population and combatants and prohibit the targeting of civilians. We also call for unhindered access for humanitarian assistance. We continue to believe that only dialogue based on international law and the principles and values of the Charter can provide a way out of a war that is affecting us all.

This may seem trivial, but on 2 December the General Assembly adopted resolution 76/13, which appealed for the observance of the Olympic Truce. Given the fact that the Winter Paralympic Games will open in Beijing on 4 March, we condemn the violation of this symbol of friendship and fraternity between peoples.

Monaco defends the multilateral system and calls for peace. We have sponsored draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, entitled "Aggression against Ukraine", submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly

at this emergency special session, and we will vote in favour of it.

Mr. Santos Maraver (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain subscribes to and supports the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union in its capacity as observer (see A/ES-11/PV.1).

The General Assembly is gathered here today because the Russian Federation's veto has blocked the Security Council from discharging the responsibility entrusted to it by the Charter of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and the peaceful settlement of disputes. We thank the members of the Council who made this special session possible. It is now up to all the Member States to defend peace, the Charter and the Organization.

Russia explained in the Security Council (see S/PV.8980) that it had exercised its veto on draft resolution S/2022/155 to strike a balance of interests among the permanent members of the Council. Is that balance of interests, based on the understanding of only one of the permanent members, more important than the principles and values of the Charter? Are all Member States equally sovereign, or do some have more equality than others and the right to unilaterally impose their interpretation of the Charter? Spain finds it deplorable that Russia used its veto to prevent the adoption of a draft resolution that was sponsored by 82 Member States, including Spain. The veto is an anachronism and should be abolished. We cannot uphold an international order based on international law and the principles and values of the Charter if we are at its mercy.

Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, which the Assembly is considering and of which Spain is a sponsor, is aimed at ensuring the independence and sovereignty of Ukraine, invaded by the Russian Federation in collaboration with Belarus, and at defending peace and the peaceful and diplomatic settlement of disputes and affirming the *raison d'être* of our multilateral Organization, the United Nations.

Spain unequivocally condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine. We recognize the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. And we commend those in the Russian Federation who are speaking out against the war. Days have elapsed since the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine began, but to the world's admiration, Ukraine has continued to resist in the face of this unequal struggle, and every minute of resistance

further chips away at the pseudo-justifications of their attackers. How can a former empire that the citizens of Russia themselves overthrew deny Ukraine its right to independence while attacking it in the name of the independence of the Donbas regions? How can a country cite unilateral security concerns as the reason for putting its nuclear deterrent forces on high alert while invoking the greatest imaginable threat to collective security?

As if all of those reasons for voting in favour of the draft resolution before the Assembly were not enough, can anyone imagine what hope there would be left for a ceasefire and diplomatic channels if this draft resolution did not obtain an overwhelming majority of votes? Does anyone really believe that the talks, without conditions, would continue to take place in Gomel between representatives of Ukraine and the Russian Federation? Would it be possible to initiate future negotiations for a system of collective security and disarmament under the auspices of the Charter? Moreover, with regard to humanitarian action, how would we garner the moral and financial support needed to help all the victims of this war, without conditions, and to ensure the safety of that process? What support would there be for Secretary-General Guterres' offer of his essential good offices?

Enough of this war. We call urgently for an immediate ceasefire and for Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine. We must return to the diplomatic track that was open before the Security Council convened on 23 February. The talks between Ukraine and the Russian Federation should make way for diplomatic negotiations that, with the good offices of Secretary-General Guterres, can lead to an end to the conflict and a lasting peace.

The General Assembly, with all of its limitations and virtues, will soon vote on a draft resolution that has become the symbol of hope for a future based on multilateralism, the sovereign equality of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and peace. It has become a concrete testimony to the Charter and to the future we deserve. Let us all vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Gahona (Belize): All members of the United Nations are obliged to refrain in their international relations from the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia is a blatant breach of Russia's obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. It constitutes an unacceptable violation

of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and in contravention of Article 2 of the Charter and the norms and principles of international law. The attack on Ukraine is therefore an attack on the Charter and the international system, and we strongly and unequivocally condemn Russia's illegal attack on Ukraine and its gross violation of international law.

We are extremely concerned about the devastating impact that this illegal war is having on the lives of Ukrainians. We are already seeing the loss of life, disruption of livelihoods, destruction of property and terror that are occurring in the Republic of Ukraine. War leaves permanent scars on society. The impact will be felt especially deeply by women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. A generation of Ukrainians will be lost and families forever destroyed.

Today we are meeting to consider a situation of war in the twenty-first century. We all agreed to leave wars behind when the Second World War ended and the international community created the United Nations Organization to ensure that the peoples of the world would never again suffer the scourge of war. We all agreed to and signed the Charter and committed to upholding its principles. We created an Organization to provide a forum where the tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes would be available to all Member States and where diplomacy and international law could prevail over armed conflict. Belize remains resolute in its belief that all States must respect and adhere to the principles of the Charter and the norms of international law that are fundamental to the maintenance of the international system and peace and security. They include respect for States' sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and a prohibition on the threat or use of force in the resolution of disputes.

We join the call made by others for an immediate cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of all Russian troops and military hardware from the occupied territories in Ukraine. We urge all sides to exercise restraint, enable the safe passage of all civilians, comply with international humanitarian law and resort to diplomacy to find a solution to this international armed conflict. Belize stands in solidarity with Ukraine and its people, who are enduring the tragedy of war.

Ms. Joyini (South Africa): South Africa remains deeply concerned about the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine. We welcome the commencement of

talks between Ukraine and Russia and hope that the discussions will lead to a diplomatic agreement that can result in a sustainable political solution.

South Africa is of the view that like all others, this armed conflict will cause unnecessary human suffering and destruction, with global ramifications. In such situations the most vulnerable tend to suffer most, both during and after the conflict. It is regrettable that at a time when the world is struggling to emerge from the effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, we are seized with a conflict that will further delay its recovery. Secretary-General Guterres reminded us of that when he said that the conflict will have a huge impact on the global economy at a moment when we are emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic and when so many developing countries need the space for recovery.

The United Nations was founded in the wake of the horrors of the Second World War, with the aim of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. It is for that reason that the Charter of the United Nations enjoins all Member States to settle their disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace, security and justice are not endangered. We stress that peace is best built through diplomacy and negotiation within the framework of the institutions for global dialogue, especially the United Nations. It is important for all nations to respect and uphold the principles of international law, including international humanitarian law and the provisions of the Charter.

The United Nations is now in its seventy-sixth year of existence and the events of the past two weeks have again reminded us of the urgent and long-overdue need for reform of the United Nations, especially the Security Council. We need a Council that is free from the legacy of the Cold War so that it can genuinely be a space where the community of nations comes together to resolve conflict and build a more just and peaceful world.

South Africa has always appreciated the value of dialogue in averting crises and de-escalating conflict. That is in line with our strong commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflict. In that regard, we urge the Security Council to use the existing tools at its disposal in support of the peaceful settlement of disputes. We also believe that the good offices of the Secretary-General could make a positive contribution to finding a lasting solution to this conflict and should be utilized. We urge all parties to approach the situation

in a spirit of compromise, with all sides upholding human rights and abiding by their obligations under international law and international humanitarian law.

A diplomatic solution to the problem should address the security concerns of the parties. South Africa continues to support and encourage regional initiatives such as the Minsk agreements, and we welcome the work of the Normandy format, the Trilateral Contact Group and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. This meeting is being held under the uniting-for-peace formula, which requires the General Assembly to meet if and when the Security Council is unable to act. However, it is still vital that the Security Council fully assume its responsibility in the current situation.

The situation in Ukraine should not be allowed to negatively affect the international community's other priorities and the rest of the work of the United Nations. We are also concerned about the fact that not all situations of conflict have received the same attention. Indeed, while the focus is now on Ukraine, long-standing situations of which the Security Council is seized have persisted without being resolved. It is essential that we devote equal attention to other long-standing conflicts in which the Charter and human rights are being violated.

In conclusion, South Africa endorses the statement issued by the African Union Commission expressing concern about the ill treatment of African nationals and people of African descent at the borders of Ukraine, some of whom have not been allowed to cross and move to safety. We urge the European countries involved to take steps to resolve the situation, as all people have a right to cross international borders during times of conflict.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): We are gathered here today to send a clear message to the people of the world that the United Nations is against war. In doing so, we are doing our part. The Organization was created to save current and future generations from the scourge of war. That is the essence of the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations. The General Assembly must condemn the war against Ukraine unreservedly. We must condemn all wars of choice, of influence, of hegemony, all wars that prey on resources and all unjust and dehumanizing wars. Wherever the security and dignity of the peoples of the world is violated, the Assembly must make its voice heard with determination and vigour.

As we meet today, weapons are being fired in Ukraine. Blood is being spilled. Thousands of innocent civilians — men, women and children — are fleeing their homes, cities and country to find refuge elsewhere. As members of the international community, we must unequivocally reject belligerence until the spectre of confrontation recedes and sensible prospects for a peaceful resolution of the conflict emerge. We have a duty to offer an alternative to fear. There is still time — there is always time — to choose dialogue and diplomacy over the logic of force.

Gabon is firmly committed to peace and to respect for the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of every member of the United Nations. My country believes in multilateralism, international solidarity and the international rules-based order, not in the rule of the strongest. In the name of the values and principles of the Charter that make the United Nations the relevant and noble Organization it is, we call on the belligerents in Ukraine to agree to an immediate ceasefire and de-escalation and to resume dialogue through the appropriate diplomatic channels.

My country is very concerned about the attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. We urge the parties to the conflict to refrain from any use of weapons that may have indiscriminate effects. We call for unhindered access to humanitarian aid for those who need it, without discrimination. We commend the outpouring of generosity that Ukraine's neighbours have shown in welcoming those fleeing the war. We also echo the cries for help from African nationals and students who are facing discrimination as they flee the war in Ukraine and seek shelter. That situation is unacceptable. We reject racism, demand respect for people's dignity and call for all persons in distress to be treated equitably.

In conclusion, Gabon will support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, submitted for the consideration of the Assembly. My country will support international peace and security with the same fervour by raising our concerns when our common values are under attack, which we are sometimes powerless against, and by emphasizing the fact that the Charter's principles cannot be applied selectively.

Mr. Pedroso Cuesta (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): On 26 February, the Government of Cuba issued a statement on the events taking place in Ukraine, in which it clearly expressed its position in favour of a

solution that guarantees the security and sovereignty of all and addresses legitimate humanitarian concerns.

As a defender of international law and a country that is committed to the Charter of the United Nations, Cuba will always defend peace and unequivocally oppose the use or threat of use of force against any State. That is why we continue to firmly promote the Declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, signed in 2014 in Havana by the Heads of State and Government of our region. Cuba is also committed to international humanitarian law and calls on all parties to protect people and their property, as well as civilian infrastructure. We deeply regret the loss of innocent civilian lives in Ukraine. The Ukrainian and Cuban peoples will continue to have a close relationship.

We cannot thoroughly and genuinely examine the current situation in Ukraine without carefully assessing the factors that have led to the use of force and the non-observance of legal principles and international norms. Cuba fully endorses and supports those principles and norms, which are essential bulwarks, especially for small countries, against hegemony, abuses of power and acts of injustice. The United States' determination to see NATO continue its gradual expansion towards Russia's borders has led to a scenario that could have been prevented and whose implications are unpredictable. It is well-known that the United States and NATO's military manoeuvres to regions bordering on the Russian Federation were preceded by the shipment of modern weapons to Ukraine, which together amount to gradual military encirclement. It was a mistake to ignore the Russian Federation's well-founded demands for security guarantees for decades and to assume that it would not defend itself in the face of a direct threat to its national security. Peace cannot be achieved by surrounding and coralling States.

History will deem the United States Government responsible for the consequences of an increasingly offensive military doctrine, operating outside NATO's borders, that is threatening international peace, security and stability. NATO's recent decision to activate the NATO Response Force for the first time ever reinforces our concerns. Cuba rejects hypocrisy and double standards. It should be recalled that in 1999 the United States and NATO launched a major aggression against Yugoslavia, a European country that they broke up at the cost of many lives in order to serve their geopolitical objectives, in disregard of the Charter. The United States and some of its allies have

used force on multiple occasions, invaded sovereign States to bring about regime change and intervened in the internal affairs of other nations that did not submit to their dominance or that chose to defend their territorial integrity and independence. They are also responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians that they call "collateral damage", along with the displacement of millions and vast destruction in every corner of the planet that have resulted from their plundering wars.

The text of the Security Council's draft resolution S/2022/155, on the situation in Ukraine, which the Council failed to adopt on 25 February (see S/PV.8979), did not truly seek to find a solution to the current crisis. Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, under consideration by the General Assembly, suffers from the same shortcomings and lacks the necessary balance. It does not take into account the legitimate concerns of all the parties involved. Nor does it acknowledge the responsibility of those who instigated or undertook aggressive actions that hastened the escalation of the conflict.

We welcome the start of talks between Russia and Ukraine. The only way to resolve conflicts is through dialogue and negotiations, not war. Cuba will continue to support using peaceful means to find a serious, constructive and realistic diplomatic solution to the current crisis in Europe that guarantees security and sovereignty for all, as well as regional and international peace, stability and security.

Mr. Luteru (Samoa): Samoa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (see A/ES-11/PV.2), and I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

Samoa stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. As a peace-loving and vulnerable small island State, we believe that there are only a few global mechanisms available to safeguard our security, continued existence and welfare. One of them is the maintenance of global peace and respect for the rules-based international order. The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations highlights that one of the key *raison d'être* of our Organization is "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and to live in peace with one another as good neighbours. As members of the United Nations family, that must be our main focus now.

Samoa is deeply concerned about the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine. Such actions are in clear violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and inconsistent with the principles laid out in Article 2 of the Charter. We condemn Russia's unprovoked attack on Ukraine. Samoa strongly advocates for peace and urges all actors involved to focus on ensuring an immediate cessation of hostilities, protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure, refraining from any action that could further escalate the dangerous and delicate situation in Ukraine, ceasing all military operations, returning troops to their barracks and prioritizing diplomacy to defuse tensions. The current call by both Ukraine and Russia for peace talks is therefore most welcome.

We join the chorus from other delegations calling on Russia to respect the founding principles in the Charter, abide by the principles of international law, State sovereignty and territorial integrity and fully honour the Minsk agreements, as endorsed by the Security Council in 2015. Samoa strongly supports the statements made by the Secretary-General last week and yesterday. Samoa may be a small State, but it is our moral obligation to speak up and be counted. In the name of the principles that we have all subscribed to, let us all give peace a chance and support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, which Samoa has sponsored and will vote in favour of.

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): The Philippines will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, and we explicitly condemn of the invasion of Ukraine. No one can trust the news reports of casualties on either side, but 14,000 people have been killed in Ukraine since 2014. In the current fog of lies, we have yet to determine the true numbers of casualties on both sides. We appeal for the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure. We strongly urge for the cessation of hostilities, but while an offensive can be stopped at will, the defence cannot rest until that happens. We call for massive assistance commensurate with the growing humanitarian crisis and echo the Secretary-General's appeal for respect for humanitarian principles in order to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure in Ukraine. Safe access to humanitarian assistance must be assured by the most effective means.

The principles of sovereignty and the sovereign equality of States are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. All States enjoy the right to full sovereignty in all their areas of jurisdiction. The

Charter requires sovereign States to refrain from the use of force against the political independence and territorial integrity of any State. We especially condemn the use of separatism and secession as a weapon of diplomacy, which invites and inflicts terrible cruelties and indiscriminate killings far in excess of any other kind of conflict. We have seen it in the Balkans and in Africa. We strongly urge that the parties be guided by the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes, which would at least halt the ongoing tragedy for a while.

Mr. Freire De Morais (Cabo Verde): The Government of Cabo Verde has been following with deep and growing concern the developments that have been unfolding in Ukraine since 24 February, after Russia began its military invasion in pursuit of recognition of the independence of two Ukrainian regions. We are effectively witnessing an escalation that could lead to the worst and most dangerous scenario of urban guerrilla warfare in Ukraine's major cities, which is likely to bring a high death toll, fracture societies and postpone the future of an entire generation.

Cabo Verde commends the convening of this emergency special session of the General Assembly, which enables all Member States to state their positions on the intensification of a senseless, fratricidal war. This is a defining and pivotal moment for the United Nations and for humankind. We therefore praise the initiatives for humanitarian aid by the Secretary-General and some Member States and urge for the immediate launch of operations on the ground in order to save people's lives, especially the more vulnerable, those fleeing their homes and refugees, who are being deprived of their basic human rights. We commend the efforts of Ukraine's neighbours and urge them to facilitate the entry of everyone fleeing the country. We are facing a scenario that is a global challenge and an enormous threat to international peace and security. It is putting the security and well-being of vulnerable civilians in jeopardy, and is already having negative political, economic and social consequences for the rest of the world as well as Eastern Europe.

Cabo Verde condemns unequivocally any recourse to the use or threat of use of force in relations between States and calls for respect for the values of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, we reiterate the importance of observing the principles of the sovereign equality, territorial integrity and inviolability of States. Let us therefore not

fail to tackle this serious challenge to multilateralism. Let us elicit a response that honours the universality of the Charter and is aimed at stopping and reversing the situation.

As a small island developing State, Cabo Verde considers strict observance of the principles and content of the Charter to be paramount. It is an existential issue for us as a safeguard for international peace and security. It is also instrumental in the context of the ongoing multidimensional global crisis, where at the very outset of the Decade of Action the momentum for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been interrupted by the setbacks of the pandemic, hampering and jeopardizing progress in the ongoing but timid global recovery trend. In that regard, we firmly believe that no effort should be spared to ensure an immediate ceasefire and find a diplomatic way out through dialogue and negotiations to resolve the conflict, on the basis of the Minsk agreements and in accordance with Security Council resolution 2202 (2015). Although they have come late, the ongoing direct talks at the Belarusian border are a step in the right direction.

We are shocked by what is happening in Ukraine. We commend the heroism of the Ukrainian people, to whom we also express our condolences. And on the other hand, as a long-standing friend of Russia, we beg the Russians to stop killing innocent people.

(spoke in Russian)

Enough. Let us end this senseless war.

(spoke in English)

Let us give peace a chance to prevail. Cabo Verde will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1.

Mrs. Horváth (Hungary): While we align ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (EU) (see A/ES-11/PV.1), I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Hungary reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. The Charter of the United Nations is clear. It unequivocally prohibits the use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of States and counsels States to settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered. We subscribe to the Secretary-General's statement on the issue to the effect

that the decision of the Russian Federation is a violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and inconsistent with the principles of the Charter.

Hungary condemns Russia's military intervention against Ukraine and the serious escalation we have all witnessed over the past week, including a threat of the use of nuclear weapons. We also condemn Russia's recognition of the non-Government-controlled areas in the Donetsk and Luhansk districts of Ukraine as independent entities and its subsequent decision to send troops into Ukraine. This aggression against a sovereign Member State is deeply concerning. It is an illegal act that further undermines Ukraine's sovereignty and independence and constitutes a severe breach of international law and international agreements. War is the worst possible scenario, and we had hoped never to experience it again in our neighbourhood. We regret that diplomatic efforts have failed to bring a peaceful conclusion to the tensions. Peace and stability are threatened in Europe and worldwide.

What is happening in Ukraine affects the security of each and every Member State. In this situation, we need to exercise strategic calmness and refrain from actions that could further escalate an already dire situation. As for Hungary, the war in our neighbouring country is a great security risk. We are therefore interested in achieving a peaceful resolution to this conflict, which means that we must also preserve the channels of communication in order to keep alive the chance for negotiations. As a central European country, Hungary is genuinely interested in East-West dialogue. Our region has always suffered as a consequence of conflict in the power struggle between powerful nations. We have not forgotten the experience of the Cold War. We welcome the news of the direct negotiations between the parties and hope that they can lead to a restoration of peace in our neighbourhood.

We strongly support EU and NATO unity on the issue and our joint responses to the situation. Hungary underlines its support for the existing international frameworks for the sustainable and peaceful resolution of conflicts in accordance with international law, and in particular with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) commitments. Hungary also supports the valuable engagement of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and its tremendous efforts to gather and report facts in an extremely challenging situation.

In response to the evolving humanitarian crisis, Hungary is ready and fully mobilized to receive refugees who need help or shelter during the ongoing aggression. Our embassies are open and our border-crossing stations are operating at full capacity. Many third countries have requested our help to evacuate their citizens. We have allowed entry to all people fleeing the war, without any restrictions or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion or country of origin. We affirm that any cases of discrimination will be thoroughly investigated and the perpetrators held accountable. We have established a humanitarian corridor in order to facilitate the entry of citizens of such countries into Hungary without visas, after which we will help them make their way to the nearest airport from where they can safely return to their home countries.

Even though the situation on the ground is deeply worrying, we believe that there is a diplomatic solution to this conflict. To that end, we urge for the immediate cessation of all hostilities and a resumption of negotiations. I would like to reiterate the proposal made by Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, to offer Budapest as a venue for such diplomatic efforts. We hope that the parties will accept that invitation and participate in talks in good faith and with a willingness to peacefully resolve the crisis and end the war.

In conclusion, Hungary is deeply worried about the war that is occurring in our neighbour. We are also worried that it may have security, humanitarian, political and economic ramifications on a global scale.

Hungary reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine's territorial integrity, political independence and sovereignty. Let me reiterate once again our firm belief that tensions and disagreements must be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy, especially in a conflict on this scale. The draft resolution before us (A/ES-11/L.1) is not about taking sides. It is about upholding the principles of the Charter. It is about peace. Hungary will vote in favour of it and encourages all Member States to do the same.

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): Malta fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.1), and I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Malta reiterates its unwavering support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

We express our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims who have lost their lives because of this unprovoked war by the Russian Federation, which we strongly condemn. Russia's decision is illegal and unacceptable. It is a violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and Russia's own international commitments.

Malta fully agrees with the Secretary-General's view that this military offensive is a repudiation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The foundations of the United Nations rest on the sovereignty and independence of States, principles that we have all agreed to and depend on. Threats to the territorial integrity of States and international law cannot be confined to a single region. They have ramifications for the security of all countries. Last week, Malta joined a group of more than 80 countries sponsoring Security Council draft resolution S/2022/155, submitted by the United States and Albania, which condemned the Russian Federation's aggression and called on it to end its offensive. The Council was regrettably unable to fulfil its duty because one of its permanent members vetoed the draft resolution (see S/PV.8979). Even more disturbing is the fact that the permanent member who cast the veto is also the aggressor.

This war has already had a devastating impact on civilians' lives. We stress that international humanitarian law must be respected at all times and that the protection of civilians is a fundamental principle. We also call for facilitating rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian assistance to those in need. Malta calls for the immediate withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukraine and emphasizes the importance of preventing a dangerous escalation in Europe. It is never too late for diplomacy. We once again underline that serious breaches of the Charter are a matter of global concern. As such, we hope that the General Assembly will send a unanimous message to the world by defending the principles on which these United Nations were built and underlining the sovereignty and independence of all Member States. Malta will never accept a situation where might makes right.

Mr. Aidid (Malaysia): Malaysia is seriously concerned about the escalating military conflict in Ukraine. We regret that the Security Council was unable to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, which

has necessitated the convening of this emergency special session of the General Assembly.

We are at a crossroads, and we understand the legitimate security concerns of all the parties. But whatever the circumstances, they must all nevertheless abide by and respect the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Any violation of that sacrosanct principle is unacceptable.

It is clear that in conflict situations, no solutions can be found at the end of the barrel of a gun. At this critical juncture, we call on all the parties to exercise restraint and to take concrete steps to de-escalate and pursue dialogue in order to resolve the conflict peacefully. Malaysia therefore welcomed yesterday's direct talks between Ukraine and Russia in Belarus. We hope that the talks will continue and bring about a speedy resolution of the conflict in order to prevent further devastation and loss of life. Malaysia also calls on all the parties to refrain from taking unilateral actions that may aggravate tensions or have far-reaching regional and global consequences. We are also deeply concerned about the reports of nuclear arsenals being put on high-alert status. We call on all nuclear-weapon States to adhere to their joint statement of 3 January on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races. Malaysia fully supports the precept that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. We further urge nuclear-weapon States to pursue action on de-alerting and risk reduction and to implement their commitments and obligations related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

With regard to the dire situation on the ground, Malaysia urges all the parties to ensure the protection and welfare of the people, in particular, women, children and other vulnerable segments of society. That must also be our immediate priority. In that context, we call on all the parties to respect the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Malaysia is also speaking today as a country that has suffered consequences from the conflict in Ukraine, owing to the downing eight years ago of Malaysia Airlines flight MH-17. That tragedy claimed 298 innocent lives. We continue to remember and mourn them. We will also continue joint efforts with our partners to seek justice and accountability, in accordance with the rule of law and in line with Security Council resolution 2166 (2014).

In conclusion, Malaysia reiterates its commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes, guided by the principles enshrined in the Charter and international law, in the interests of maintaining regional and international peace and security and promoting greater prosperity. In that connection, Malaysia will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, which is now before the Assembly.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): Today the General Assembly is discussing an issue that is a grave challenge and that the Security Council has been unable to address as part of its responsibilities. It represents a threat to peace and security not only for Europe but for the entire world. The multilateral international system, based on respect for international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is going through a delicate stage that will be a real test for the Organization as it defends the purposes and principles on which it was founded more than 76 years ago.

The crisis in Ukraine began with military operations that have led to rapid and dangerous developments, resulting in death or injury for hundreds and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, as well as significant material losses. That demands that we all take a united position calling for an immediate halt to the military operations and insisting on applying the principle of the settlement of disputes by peaceful means. We welcome the negotiations held between Russia and Ukraine on the Belarusian border yesterday, offering a glimmer of hope, and we want to see more rounds of negotiations that can lead to a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

As a small country, with a painful experience of being invaded and occupied in 1990, the State of Kuwait upholds its principled and steadfast position on abiding by international law and the Charter, which represent a safe haven whereby small countries can maintain their security, stability and sovereignty through the concept of collective security. From that perspective, the State of Kuwait categorically rejects the use or threat of use of force among States and reiterates its firm commitment to international law, the Charter and its principles governing and regulating relations among States based on respect for their sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders, as well as respect for the principles of good-neighbourly relations among States, non-interference in their internal affairs and the peaceful settlement of disputes. In that context,

we reiterate our emphasis on respecting Ukraine's independence and sovereignty. We call on all the relevant parties to abide by their agreements and the mechanisms to follow up on them as established by Security Council resolution 2202 (2015), and to put an end to the crisis, agree to a ceasefire to prevent further bloodshed, exercise restraint and resolve their differences through dialogue and negotiations.

While we are deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation and fear that it will only grow worse if the conflict persists, we call on all parties to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the relevant Security Council resolutions calling for the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure. In that regard, we would like to point to Security Council resolution 2474 (2019), on persons missing during armed conflict, which the Council adopted unanimously. We hope that its provisions will be implemented on the ground. That humanitarian resolution calls on the parties to a conflict to take all appropriate measures to search without discrimination for persons who are reported missing and to establish appropriate channels enabling responses and communication with families during the search process.

In conclusion, Kuwait supports all the efforts and endeavours that the Secretary-General and the United Nations specialized agencies and regional organizations are making to de-escalate the situation. We also call for the unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to civilians in need, in accordance with the humanitarian principles set forth in the relevant international conventions.

Mrs. Chimbiri Molande (Malawi): First of all, I want to convey my condolences to the families that have lost loved ones in the Ukraine crisis. Malawi takes note and is a sponsor of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1, on the situation there.

We note with great concern the worsening situation in Ukraine, which has already caused grave human suffering. Malawi would like to commend all Member States for their contribution and commitment to finding a negotiated diplomatic solution to the crisis. As a peace-loving country, Malawi reaffirms its commitment to global peace and security and condemns any escalation of hostilities that threaten that common cause. We therefore want to take this opportunity to reiterate our commitment and support to a peaceful resolution of the crisis, especially at a time

when the global community is focused on fighting the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and other humanitarian crises.

The establishment and survival of the United Nations as we know it today is largely due to our shared commitment to global peace and security. Any threats to peace and security are also threats to the very foundations of this Organization, and they threaten the progress that we have achieved over the years in making the world more peaceful and safer for humankind and all other living things. All of us should be jealously guarding the progress that we have realized in building the global peace and security architecture. Similarly, the sanctity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of all Member States must be respected and protected, and Ukraine is no exception. We are all aware of the consequences of global conflict and its catastrophic humanitarian, socioeconomic and political effects, which it is impossible to overestimate.

The world is already grappling with a number of other existential crises, ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to climate change. Malawi therefore commends the restraint shown so far by various stakeholders in the crisis, as well as the appeals for the de-escalation of tensions. We call on Russia to immediately agree to a ceasefire and withdraw its forces, including its military equipment, from Ukraine, in order to create the conditions necessary for continued diplomatic engagement, peace negotiations, contact and dialogue for the good of humankind. The current crisis in Ukraine demands a demonstration of leadership by the Security Council and all members of the United Nations in the true spirit of multilateralism. Let us give dialogue and peace negotiations a chance.

Ms. Kabua (Marshall Islands): I align my statement with that made by the representative of Fiji in Fiji's capacity as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum (see A/ES-11/PV.2). I will now make some additional remarks in my capacity as Permanent Representative of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations.

The Marshall Islands welcomes the General Assembly's convening of this emergency special session under resolution 377 A (V). That resolution, known as "Uniting for peace", was adopted in 1950 as a way for the Organization to take immediate action when there is a lack of unanimity on an issue relating to the protection of international peace and security among the Security Council's five permanent members. And never has the General Assembly been more needed

than now to correct the blatant self-interest of Russia's veto of Security Council draft resolution S/2022/155.

The Russian Federation's full-scale military invasion of Ukraine has no rational justification under international law and is little more than a ruse to satisfy an imperialist agenda. Free will and the rule of law are being overruled at the barrel of a gun that is, sadly, being held by one of us — Russia, a founding member of the United Nations family. The free will, basic sovereignty and democratic expression of Ukraine are directly at stake. Every democratic country in the world should be concerned, because the unlawful invasion of one of us is truly the unlawful invasion of all of us. The Marshall Islands will not stay silent. We will call this unprovoked and violent invasion exactly what it is — tyranny. The Charter of the United Nations is very clear, and the Assembly has thereby been entrusted with seeking accountability for the immediate situation. If we, as the United Nations, cannot take action, then, like the long-ago League of Nations, we are risking our Organization's very relevance.

But mere words and outcry alone will not change the course of events. As a small nation, the Republic of the Marshall Islands has condemned the recent invasion and urges for the establishment of full accountability. We will play our own part in joining our partners in the response measures countering Russia's aggression. Small and large, all of us must stand in solidarity to uphold basic human rights and the rule of law, including by taking multilateral action. Our population is small, but our voice can be very loud. As it is for many other small nations, the United Nations is our primary platform. And as with many others in this Hall, our own history as a people was marred by the previous global conflict. It has taught the Marshall Islands valuable lessons about the importance of achieving and preserving democratic independence and ensuring that our voice is heard directly.

As so many other speakers have said, is important to speak out. We must all speak out when we see flagrant wrongs in the world. Because if we fail to do it now, who will speak up for us or our neighbours in the event of future threats? In a fragile region such as ours, which is also facing geopolitical competition, we are

deeply concerned about the adequacy of the multilateral response to the situation in Ukraine. And while this invasion poses a challenge, we are also optimistic about the fact that many nations have spoken out and many more will do so. A veto cannot and will not stop a global consensus. Ukraine has a friend in the Marshall Islands. It is not alone and it must remain strong.

Mrs. Furman (Israel): Israel is a country that has experienced many wars and therefore knows first-hand that war is not the way to resolve conflicts. War sows destruction, chaos and tragedy, not a brighter future. Russia's attack on Ukraine is a serious violation of the international order. We have condemned it, and we call on Russia to heed the calls of the international community to stop its attack and respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. Israel has long-standing and positive relations with both Russia and Ukraine. Given our deep ties with both sides, we are willing to contribute to the diplomatic efforts if requested, and have been trying to do so over the past couple of weeks.

Israel is concerned about the safety of the people of Ukraine, including the numerous Israeli citizens living there and the sizable Jewish communities in the affected areas. We are gravely concerned about the growing humanitarian crisis. In that regard, Israel is providing 100 tons of humanitarian assistance to the people of Ukraine, including medical supplies, water purification systems, emergency water supply kits and winter gear. We call on the parties to facilitate humanitarian access.

Let me conclude by echoing the Secretary-General's call for a return to the path of dialogue and peace and for a resolution of this crisis through peaceful means, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I will end with the words of the prophet Isaiah, which, in this context and beyond, express the prayers of my Government and, I hope, the prayers of everyone in this Hall: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item for this morning. We shall hear the remaining speakers at 3 p.m. today in this Hall.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.