

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 19 May 2022 from the Permanent Representative of  
Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the  
Security Council**

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement in relation to the Security Council's open debate on conflict and food security (9036th meeting) (see annex).

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

(Signed) Michal **Mlynár**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



**Annex to the letter dated 19 May 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations, Michal Mlynár, in relation to the Security Council open debate on the maintenance of international peace and security – conflict and food security – held on 19 May 2022**

The unprovoked, unjustified and illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine puts millions of people around the world at risk of malnutrition and famine due to disrupted production and supply chains. As the world was already grappling with the negative effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic on global food security, this deplorable war made things even worse. Food prices on global markets soared to a three decades' maximum, and we can already see the disproportionate impact of the impending crisis on the developing countries, affecting the most vulnerable communities.

The impact of Russia's military aggression is felt by undernourished victims across Africa and the Middle East and the ripple effect will only continue to deteriorate until Russia stops this senseless war. Low supplies and skyrocketing prices are directly impacting dozens of countries, many of which were already food insecure before the war started. Before the invasion, 90 per cent of agricultural produce from Ukraine, namely grain and oilseeds, was exported through the Ukrainian Black Sea ports – ports that are now blocked by Russia. We are equally alarmed and appalled by the evidence of thousands of tons of Ukrainian grain being stolen by Russian forces, further aggravating the global food crisis. Unfortunately, even with the deployment of all alternative transportation measures available, our capacity to ensure transportation of vital food product to those who rely on it is dangerously limited. We therefore call on the Security Council and the international community to find a solution to this bottleneck that threatens the well-being of civilians across the globe.

Slovakia stands ready to assist with the stabilization of world food markets and global food security. As a neighbouring country, we are ready to play a key role in the logistics and we will deploy our best efforts to help with smooth movement of wagons and lorries to their final destinations. Taking into consideration the different railway tracks used in Ukraine and in most of Europe, improving the infrastructure of the trans-shipment facilities on the borders is key. As for road transportation, we have eased the administrative measures for vehicles arriving from Ukraine in order to facilitate necessary movement of goods. We fully support the plan of the European Commission to establish "Solidarity Lanes", announced one week ago (12.5). The plan aims to ensure exportation of grain from Ukraine, in cooperation with the private sector.

While timely export of existing grains remains the most pressing challenge, the war threatens all future agricultural productivity and production. The rise of fertilizer prices further aggravates the situations and may reverse the progress in reducing hunger that the United Nations has achieved in recent years. We are worried by the reduced household purchasing power and by the rise of fuel prices, which in turn make cooking more expensive. Slovakia is also worried by the protectionist measures applied by a number of countries. We must resist the urge to hoard food and immediately release strategic stockpiles.

And, as we know, hunger is not only the consequence of conflict, it is often its cause. We do already see the increased social tensions in middle- and low-income countries, where civilians pay the highest price of food and energy shortages. We

must act decisively now to mitigate the spillover effect and avoid the threat of increased violence due to food insecurity. Let us not forget that the urgent humanitarian assistance needed in every conflict is only the first step, which will need to be followed by development cooperation and striving to build back better. Slovakia remains committed to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 2 – zero hunger – worldwide, even though Russia made this goal a much greater challenge for the global community.

Slovakia is co-sponsoring the resolution on the state of global food Insecurity, presented to the General Assembly by a group of countries lead by Lebanon. We are greatly worried by the rise of food prices and the limited supply of key fertilizers and crops. Slovakia also commends the establishment of the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance and we stand ready to assist the United Nations in the endeavour to mitigate the damage caused by the unlawful aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine.

With the constant spreading of false narratives and parallel realities, it is understandable that one might slip into some sort of informational confusion. Let me set the record straight. Sanctions and other international restrictions on Russian exports are not responsible for growing food scarcity. It is Russia that has been bombing Ukrainian farms and granaries and imposing a sea blockade on Ukrainian grain exports, which accelerates the global food emergency and risks sending tens of millions of people into an acute hunger crisis. We strongly reject Russia's deliberate disinformation campaign and we call once more on the Russian Federation to immediately cease its hostilities against Ukraine and unconditionally withdraw all its troops from the whole territory of Ukraine.

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