



General Assembly

Eleventh Emergency Special session

13th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 12 October 2022, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Kőrösi (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 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)

Draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.5)

Mr. Benard Estrada (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Sir, for summoning us to this emergency session, Sir, although the occasion for which we find ourselves in need of meeting is a cause of deep regret. Once again, we are witnessing serious violations and abuses of human rights in Ukraine and against its inhabitants by the Russian Federation. Beyond the systematic violations and abuses committed by the Russian Federation against the population in Ukraine, today we also meet in the face of the exacerbation caused by the illegitimate annexation of the Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions, Ukrainian regions annexed by the Russian Federation under the fallacious argument of popular referendums.

Those acts of annexation lack any legal validity and at the same time constitute a very serious violation of the purposes of the United Nations. In addition, those unfortunate events undermine friendly relations and cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. We must remember that “no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as legal”, in accordance with paragraph 1 of resolution 2625 (XXV) of 1970,

entitled: “Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.”

We cannot but strongly condemn the recent attacks carried out by Russian forces against Kyiv and other cities in Ukraine, as well as the attacks on the residential areas of Zaporizhzhya, which continue to endanger the lives of its inhabitants and its territory. It is essential that the Security Council respond adequately to that growing threat, which continually endangers international peace and security.

Guatemala did not hesitate to express its support and backing for the Ukrainian people and to co-sponsor draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, “Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations”. The draft resolution is not a call to form a multipolar world, nor does it favour a unipolar world; it is a call to defend the territorial integrity of Ukraine and consequently uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter. We have supported and co-sponsored the draft resolution based on our own convictions as a country with a deep peaceful vocation and as a State that recognizes that, through dialogue, negotiation and the peaceful means granted to us under international law, differences among States can be resolved.

It is not through force or imposition that we will solve the existing disagreements. The Political Constitution of Guatemala prioritizes our contribution to the maintenance of peace and freedom, respect for and defence of human rights, and the strengthening

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of democratic processes and international institutions that guarantee mutual and equitable benefit among States. My delegation unequivocally reiterates the need to put an end to this invasion and to seek a peaceful solution, with unrestricted respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, human rights, and security of all.

To conclude, I echo the call of the President of the Republic of Guatemala, Mr. Alejandro Giammattei Falla:

“Let us bet on dialogue. Let us bet on solving problems, as brothers do. It is now or never. Let us bet on peace. Futures generations and the preservation of the human race us will thank us.”

Mr. Mythen (Ireland): In this Hall in March, United Nations Members overwhelmingly rejected Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine. Yet still, the Russian Federation continues its war of aggression. Ireland condemns in the strongest possible terms the attempts by the Russian Federation to illegally annex the Ukrainian regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya. That is yet another blatant breach of the Charter of the United Nations by the Russian Federation in its war of aggression against Ukraine. Such annexation attempts have no validity under international law.

Ireland condemns outright the holding of sham referendums by Russia and its proxies in Ukraine. Those referendums were illegal and illegitimate. They violate the United Nations Charter, they violate Russia’s obligations under international law and they violate the law of occupation. Their results do not represent the freely expressed will of the people of those regions of Ukraine. Voters faced intimidation by the Russian military and Russia’s illegitimately appointed authorities in Ukraine’s occupied territories.

Ireland remains fully committed to the sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. Let me be clear. No sham referendum or illegal annexation attempt will change Ukraine’s borders — not today, not ever.

On 29 September, 10 members of the Security Council voted in favour of draft resolution S/2022/720, condemning Russia’s illegal referendums and attempts to annex Ukrainian territory (see S/PV.9143). The draft resolution failed only due to the Russian veto. It was a reprehensible attempt to excuse its own military aggression against Ukraine, a fellow Member of our

United Nations. No one country, no matter how big or powerful, should have the ability to veto the application of international law for its own aims. Ireland, and indeed many States represented here today, have long called for the abolition of the veto. It is an anachronism. Today I reiterate that call. However, the use of the veto will not prevent the international community from responding to Russia’s breaches of international law. It will not deter us from holding Russia accountable for its actions. In that regard, Ireland welcomes the submission to the General Assembly of the special report as part of the veto initiative

The latest indiscriminate attacks by Russia earlier this week on civilian populations and infrastructure represent a blatant disregard for human life and constitute a serious violation of international law and international humanitarian law. They are unconscionable. Rockets have once again landed in central Kyiv, Zaporizhzhya and other Ukrainian cities. The deliberate targeting of civilians is a war crime. Those actions by Russia are a serious escalation and must not go unpunished. There must be no impunity for those crimes.

Ireland calls on the Russian Federation to immediately cease hostilities and unconditionally withdraw from the entire territory of Ukraine. We call on the Russian Federation to refrain from further threats or the use of force of any kind, including nuclear weapons, against Ukraine or any other Member State, which could have serious implications beyond the region.

This is not just about Ukraine. This is about the entirety of the United Nations membership. If we fail to hold Russia accountable, we send a signal to large, powerful countries that they can prey on their neighbours with impunity. Every State relies on the rules-based international order for our prosperity, for our independence and for our sovereignty. Russia has turned its back on that order, and it is incumbent on each one of us to defend it. If we do not reject Russia’s actions in the clearest possible terms, we will allow the world to be governed by force and not through dialogue. And that would be simple unacceptable.

Mr. Massari (Italy): Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12) and wishes to add some remarks in its national capacity.

We reject and unequivocally condemn the illegal attempted annexation by Russia of the Ukrainian

provinces of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhya. Such unilateral annexation is void and cannot have any legal effect whatsoever. Italy deplores in the strongest terms the sham referendums in Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia during its war of aggression against Ukraine. Such actions constitute a flagrant breach of the Charter of the United Nations and blatantly violate international law and the principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

Far from being an exercise of self-determination, the sham referendums took place amidst widespread and systematic abuses of human rights and intimidation. It is crystal clear that they represent only an attempt to unilaterally annex territories of a sovereign State through the use of coercion and military force. Italy does not and will never recognize the illegal attempted annexation, just as it has not recognized the illegal attempted annexation of Crimea, and calls on all States to do the same. We see this is not as a discretionary choice for States, but rather as our common duty under international law.

Italy strongly condemns the recent, brutal and indiscriminate Russian attacks against many cities across Ukraine, deliberately targeting civilians, and calls on Russia to put an end to its military aggression, withdraw from all Ukrainian territories and genuinely commit to diplomatic dialogue.

Italy expresses its strong support for urgent and concrete de-escalation and a peaceful resolution, with respect for Ukrainian sovereignty and integrity, along the lines of paragraph 7 of draft resolution's A/ES-11/L.5. Russia needs to stop this senseless war, which is causing huge human losses, having serious economic repercussions around the world and hitting the most vulnerable countries and categories of people.

Italy continues to firmly stand on the side of Ukraine's people and in defence of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. We must all stand together to resist Russia's actions against a sovereign United Nations Member State and uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter. We therefore call on all Member States to support the draft resolution and vote in favour.

Mr. Feruță (Romania): Romania aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12), and I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

This is indeed a sombre occasion. The reconvening of the eleventh emergency special session can only mean that we are again confronted with a dire situation. We are also confronted with a choice — a choice between accepting insecurity and lawlessness or fighting with immovable resolve to protect and uphold the principles we have agreed upon for our individual and collective good: equal sovereignty, territorial integrity and the prohibition of the use of force.

The Russian Federation's actions are very clear. It directed a brutal, unjustified and unprovoked illegal military aggression against Ukraine. Russia proceeded to organize illegal so-called referendums in four Ukrainian regions under occupation and subsequently attempted to annex them. Those actions are mere attempts to justify its illegal military occupation of territories belonging to another sovereign State and represent an irresponsible escalation of the current situation. As in the case of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, the actions of the Russian Federation are based on the illegal use of force and represent serious violations of the most important principles and norms of international law, enshrined first and foremost in the Charter of the United Nations.

We also strongly condemn the recent missile attacks against civilian objectives in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities, resulting in the destruction of civilian infrastructure and loss of innocent civilian lives.

In the face of such flagrant violations of international law, our response must be prompt and definitive. We must condemn those actions and make clear that the so-called referendums and the attempted illegal annexation have no validity. What is more, we have a legal obligation not to recognize any alteration of the status of the Ukrainian regions concerned. Let us be clear — Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, Crimea and Sevastopol are Ukraine.

The text before us is simple and straightforward. It reflects nothing more than the most well-known rules of international law. Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 defends the United Nations Charter and ultimately attempts to protect each and every one of us present in the Hall. Ukraine is a victim of forceful territorial acquisitions, and if that is left unsanctioned it could become the worst precedent of the beginning of the decay of the international order generations have strived to build in the aftermath of devastating world wars to ensure the lasting reign of peace and prosperity.

But the text before us also represents something else — a building block for peace. The text calls on Member States and international organizations to support de-escalation and a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Peace remains our perpetual goal, and peace can be achieved only by boldly facing the aggressor and taking concrete action to enforce the principles of international law. Negotiations while looking down the barrel of a gun cannot be called negotiations and cannot produce anything that would have any legal effect attached to it.

The Russian Federation must, as a matter of urgency, reverse its illegal actions and unconditionally withdraw its military forces from the territory of Ukraine, as understood within its internationally recognized borders. Today we have an opportunity to demand exactly that with the full authority of the most representative United Nations organ. I hope that the result of the voting today will prove that this opportunity was not wasted.

Ms. Stoeva (Bulgaria): Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12). I would like to highlight a few points in my national capacity.

For the third time this year, the General Assembly has reconvened in emergency special session to address yet another escalation of the Russian Federation's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of choice against Ukraine and because of yet another veto of the Russian Federation that prevented the Security Council from exercising its duties. While we are meeting prompted by the attempted illegal annexation by the Russian Federation of the occupied territories in the Ukrainian Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions, on Monday Russian armed forces struck cities around Ukraine, leaving at least 12 civilians dead and more than 100 injured. Let us be clear — attacks on civilians are prohibited under international humanitarian law and thus constitute war crimes for which perpetrators will be held accountable.

Bulgaria categorically rejects and condemns in the strongest possible terms the attempted illegal annexation by the Russian Federation of the occupied territories in the Ukrainian Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions following the illegal so-called referendums, which were neither free nor fair. We will never recognize it, just as we have never recognized the illegal annexation of Crimea and

the city of Sevastopol in 2014. Bulgaria reiterates its unwavering support for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters.

The actions of the Russian Federation not only blatantly undermine Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, but also demonstrate its effort to redraw post-Cold War boundaries in Europe and to dismantle the existing global order. This war must end now, and the Russian Federation must end it by abiding by its international commitments and by immediately, completely and unconditionally withdrawing all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

The means of war in resolving disputes and tensions and the illegal annexation of a sovereign country's lands have no place in twenty-first century. Full respect of the Charter of the United Nations and international law are the only guarantee of global peace and security and the only universally effective tool that provides justice and accountability.

We are having this debate today not because of Ukraine but because of all of us. Today it is Ukraine; tomorrow it could be anyone of us unless we show a firm and united stance against any violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law. The draft resolution before us does exactly that. It stands for the Charter and international law; it stands for all of us. Therefore, we ask members to vote in favour of the text before us.

Mr. Espinosa Cañizares (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for resuming the eleventh emergency special session. I also thank you for the way in which you managed procedural matters at the beginning of this special session.

Ecuador followed closely and with concern the meeting of the Security Council on 30 September (see S/PV.9143), at which draft resolution S/2022/720, which sought to reaffirm and defend respect for and to guarantee the territorial integrity of Ukraine, was considered and vetoed.

We appreciate the submission by the Security Council of a special report on said veto, in accordance with resolution 76/262.

Since its founding as a republic, my country, Ecuador, has rejected and condemned the use of

force by one State against another. In line with the principles of our foreign policy and honouring our peaceful vocation, we do not and will not recognize the acquisition of territories by force. For that reason, and in observation of the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations that enshrine the territorial integrity of the States, Ecuador rejects the referendums held in the territories under foreign military occupation, in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya, which violate the sovereignty of Ukraine and lack legal validity.

For that reason, too, Ecuador decided to co-sponsor and support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5. We invite all delegations to do the same. We join the countries that are demanding that the Russian Federation revoke its decisions of 21 February and 29 September related to the status of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya, and that the human rights and international humanitarian law in the occupied territories be respected. My delegation reiterates its call for the Russian Federation to withdraw its troops from Ukraine immediately and to respect the lives of its inhabitants, its sovereignty, unity, independence and internationally recognized borders.

Seven months after the aggression against Ukraine began and faced with the worrisome threat that the conflict will irreversibly affect humankind, we reiterate our support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and other initiatives that promote political dialogue and negotiations and offer a diplomatic solution to the crisis, in line with the requests made by various regional and subregional organizations, such as that put forward by the Organization of American States at the meeting of its General Assembly held in Lima last week.

Mr. Mlynár (Slovakia): Slovakia fully aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12) and wishes to add some remarks in its national capacity.

The Slovak Republic unequivocally condemns the attempted illegal annexation of further territories of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. As is the case with most of my colleagues, this is not the first time that I am taking the floor in this emergency special session. In fact, we were hoping earlier that the calls that we had addressed in the General Assembly, especially on the aggressor, the Russian Federation, would be heard in the interest of the people who are suffering on a daily basis and in the interest of respect for the very basic values

and principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Yet, that is far from being the case and, unfortunately, the situation has further escalated, including with the illegal annexations and sham referendums, not to mention the continued suffering of the Ukrainian people. It has to stop. That call has to be heard again in the Hall, and we address it very urgently to the representatives of the Russian Federation.

We are outraged that, despite calls from the majority of the world's States and the international community, the Russian Federation has taken another step in stark contradiction to the basic democratic principles and constitutional order of Ukraine. The Russian Federation, a permanent member of the Security Council, besides abusing its veto right in the Security Council, has once again flagrantly violated international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States.

Slovakia recognizes Ukraine as an independent, sovereign State with unquestionable territorial integrity. All acts associated with the forcible acquisition of Ukrainian territory by the Russian Federation are null, void and illegitimate. The so-called referendums in the occupied regions took place during an active armed conflict, in areas under Russian occupation, and cannot in any circumstances be called a true expression of the will of the people. Slovakia will never recognize those territories as anything but a part of Ukraine. We will continue to provide multifaceted support to our neighbouring country Ukraine in its just struggle to preserve its statehood, sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders.

The pre-orchestrated sham referendums and subsequent attempted illegal annexation of parts of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhya regions, in addition to the previous attempted illegal annexation of Crimea, represent a deliberate escalation by the Russian Federation, which is part of its ongoing military aggression against Ukraine. We therefore once again reiterate our call on the Russian Federation to cease its military activities in Ukraine and to immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its troops, military equipment and occupation administration structures from Ukrainian territory.

It has been clearly expressed before that it is the Russian Federation that started the war and that it is

only the Russian Federation that can end it. That should be done immediately and without delay. All those who participated in the preparation and implementation of the attempted illegal annexation of further parts of Ukrainian territory to the Russian Federation must be held accountable for their actions. That includes all crimes committed and now being documented in Ukraine. The accountability context remains a key focus of our attention and deserves the further attention of the international community and the United Nations.

I would also like to seize this opportunity to once again condemn Russian propaganda, the related distortion of facts and the promotion of alternative reality, so to speak, that the Russian Federation has conveyed today. Slovakia totally rejects that approach and finds it highly deplorable.

To conclude, I would like to appeal to each and every delegation in the Hall to vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5. As others have already clearly said, this time it is the attempted illegal annexation of parts of Ukraine by Russia; next time, it might be the annexation of any State's territory by any of its neighbours through military force. That is dangerous and unacceptable, and it is in our collective interest to take collective and resolute action. The international community must send a clear signal that such behaviour cannot and will not be tolerated.

It is precisely for that reason that this is not a vote for Ukraine or a choice between Ukraine or Russia. This is a vote between the respect of core principles of international law and the United Nations Charter or complete anarchy and arbitrariness — between the power of law and the power of force. I think we should all be clear about what we want to vote for and on which side we want to be on this important issue.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): We are here today to once again address the situation in Ukraine. Seven months have now passed since the emergency special session was first convened on this matter in February. Since then, the international community has condemned the Russian Federation's armed invasion of Ukraine and urged the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Unfortunately, Russia has not answered the repeated calls of the international community. The unprovoked aggression has tragically continued, killing thousands and displacing millions of Ukrainians. We were especially shocked by the recent Russian missile attacks targeting cities and innocent civilians across

Ukraine. Russia even announced the annexation of parts of Ukrainian territory while combat is still under way in those regions.

Most members of this body have repeatedly referred—almost mantra-like—to the importance of national sovereignty and territorial integrity as a basic principle of international relations. Today the Republic of Korea joins many others in unequivocally reiterating its support for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

My Government does not recognize the so-called referendums held under military coercion in Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson, and cannot accept Russia's attempt to divide the Ukrainian territory. The Republic of Korea, through its own painful experiences, can testify to the fact that any attempt to divide a nation in any form or method is merely the beginning of lasting, very serious troubles, rather than a solution.

We should also recall the regrettable part of our history when the League of Nations, the United Nations predecessor, started to collapse in the 1930s when expansionist, military Powers invaded neighbouring countries. All of us are well aware of the ensuing horrors. All of us here today owe it to ourselves to prove to future generations that the United Nations can fulfil its mandate now.

The core values of the United Nations are at stake today. As the Secretary-General made it clear in his statement, any annexation of a State's territory by another State resulting from the threat or use of force is a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. Russia's illegal actions will not be accepted or tolerated by the international community.

In this regard, my delegation notes with deep interest that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the only country so far to issue a statement endorsing the so-called referendums and supporting the Russian annexation. Beforehand, only two countries, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, recognized Donetsk and Luhansk as independent States. That is why the President of the Republic of Korea emphasized in this Hall last month (see A/77/PV.4) that Member States all together have to overcome threats to freedom and peace through international cooperation, solidarity and fearless commitment to universal norms consolidated within the United Nations system.

As we seek ways to further contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, the Republic of Korea has joined the sponsorship of the important draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5. We have also provided and pledged \$100-million worth of assistance to Ukraine, which includes the provision of medical items as well as flexible funding, in response to the United Nations-led appeal. We will continue to support the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General and regional and international organizations.

Lastly, my delegation is deeply concerned about Russia's recent escalatory nuclear rhetoric against a non-nuclear State, which squarely contradicts the joint statement issued by the leaders of the five permanent members of the Security Council in January. We call on Russia to assume its due and special responsibilities as a nuclear-weapon State and a permanent member of the Security Council by translating its crucial commitment in the statement into actions.

Mr. Fifield (Australia): Australia is proud to stand alongside Ukraine and the dozens of other Member States represented here today that are determined to uphold the Charter of the United Nations and to condemn Russia's sham referendums in the occupied regions of Ukraine and Russia's illegal attempted annexation of Ukrainian territory. We remain committed to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Let us be absolutely clear — Russia's sham referendums in the occupied areas of Ukraine have no legal effect. Let me repeat that: Russia's sham referendums in the occupied areas of Ukraine have no legal effect. Russia's attempted annexation is illegal and a dangerous escalation. We urge all Member States to support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 before us. Doing so would demonstrate our unreserved commitment to upholding international law, including our obligations under the United Nations Charter. We all seek a peaceful and prosperous world where sovereignty and territorial integrity are respected. We must show all those contemplating acts of aggression that the international community stands together in firm defence of those principles.

Australia will continue to stand with the brave people of Ukraine. Australia responded swiftly to President Putin's attempted illegal annexation of the Ukrainian regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya, with additional targeted financial

sanctions and travel bans on 28 Russian-appointed separatists, ministers and senior officials. Australia has also filed an intervention in the International Court of Justice case brought by Ukraine against Russia, supporting Ukraine's claims that Russia has violated the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Those actions underscore Australia's support for Ukraine and the draft resolution before us today, and reinforce Australia's strong objection to the actions of President Putin and those carrying out his orders.

Australia continues to call on Russia to comply with its obligations under international law, including the United Nations Charter, and immediately withdraw its forces from Ukraine. We call for peace; a peace that is not just the absence of war, but that enables the people of Ukraine to live according to their own rules and according to their own sovereignty, and to have their own freedom.

Australia pays tribute to the remarkable resilience and the remarkable courage shown by the Ukrainian people. Now it is time for the international community to show our courage and conviction to support Ukraine. Now is the time to act — to act together.

Ms. Ojeda Tapia (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, which governs international coexistence, indicates that the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of States must be avoided, that disputes must be resolved by peaceful means, and that obligations assumed must be fulfilled in good faith. In that regard, the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of every State Member of the United Nations, including Ukraine, must be respected and protected.

Chile, faithfully compliant with the Charter and international law, reiterates its commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. It therefore considers the referendums held in the regions and cities of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya to be without legal value. It also reaffirms the need for Russia to withdraw its troops and respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, which includes Crimea. The international community cannot remain indifferent to that attempt to illegally annex Ukrainian regions. Nothing justifies violations of the stated principles of Article 2 of the United Nations Charter.

Chile supports the Secretary-General's statement of Thursday, 29 September, in which he points out that the United Nations Charter makes it clear that

“[a]ny annexation of a State's territory by another State resulting from the threat or use of force is a violation of the Principles of the United Nations Charter and international law”.

We highlight the work on the ground and the efforts undertaken by various actors to guarantee peace and security for the entire population. Likewise, we highlight the diplomatic efforts that countries such as Türkiye, the crisis coordinator for Ukraine, and regional organizations are making to achieve a peaceful solution through dialogue between the parties involved.

The Government of Chile once again expresses in the strongest terms its total repudiation and condemnation of the war crimes perpetrated on Ukrainian territory controlled by Russian forces, which have been brought to light by the investigative mission of the United Nations in Ukraine. From an international peace and security perspective, the war has set us back decades with the resurgence of irresponsible threats of the use of nuclear weapons.

For all those reasons, my country has decided to co-sponsor draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, before us today.

Mr. Dang (Viet Nam): Viet Nam's consistent position related to the basic conduct of international relations has been reiterated time and again. We have always believed in the utmost importance of ensuring full respect for the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Such principles include sovereign equality among States, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of States, and refrainment from the threat or use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

But most sacrosanct and supreme among them all is respect for national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all States. All nations must fully abide by their obligations and commitments under treaties that they are parties to, including recognition of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States within their internationally recognized borders. That must be the principle that all States have

to fully uphold in their international relations. That is the prerequisite for international peace and security.

Such earnest belief in those fundamental principles is dearly won from Viet Nam's own history. Having suffered from decades of wars to defend and reunify our nation, Viet Nam understands first-hand the value of peace and cooperation. Regrettably, since the foundation of the United Nations, we have over and over again had to bear witness to wrongful courses of action that have wrought havoc for many nations and peoples. In the face of such challenges, throughout the decades the Vietnamese people have strived for the righteous struggle shared by all progressive peoples, especially in our common advocacy for the promotion of friendly relations among States and against the threat or use of force in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States.

It is therefore with a heavy heart that we have been closely following the situation relating to Ukraine. We are particularly gravely concerned over recent developments that could lead to further escalation and suffering and heighten the risk of miscalculation and confrontation beyond anyone's imagination, with a grave impact on international peace, security, stability, development and cooperation. The longer this continues, the farther we will be from an acceptable settlement of disputes among parties concerned. Furthermore, this is happening even when the multidimensional consequences for our peoples have now been felt deeply across regions, with burning issues that we all heard about from leaders at the high-level general debate just a few days ago.

Viet Nam once more reiterates our consistent call for the exercise of utmost restraint and the immediate cessation of hostilities, as well as on the parties to avoid actions that may further escalate the situation. We also call for an early resumption of dialogue and negotiations with a view to achieving a comprehensive solution acceptable to all, taking into account the legitimate interests and concerns of all parties, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. It is also important to ensure the safety and security of the people and critical civilian infrastructure, including nuclear facilities.

The international community must join hands to create an environment conducive to such ends. That will depend on refraining from actions that may drive the parties further apart and further delay the prospects

of settlement. It is important to bear in mind that what is at stake is the interests of peace, stability and development of all States concern, not only in Europe but also throughout the world as a whole, but first and foremost the concerns and daily lives of each and every person who is suffering on the ground now.

We therefore call on international partners to make further efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to those in need. We commend the operations of various United Nations agencies and other regional and international agencies in that regard. At the same time, it is important to continue efforts aimed at de-escalation and mediation among the parties concerned through all possible channels. We welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General and other relevant partners, and their tireless endeavours in helping bring all parties together.

Viet Nam stands ready to constructively contribute to these diplomatic efforts and to the reconstruction and restoration in Ukraine.

Mrs. Pereira Portilla (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Colombia rejects the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country because it constitutes a direct violation of the fundamental purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It recalls the content of resolution 2625 (XXV), adopted in 1970, according to which “no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force will be recognized as legal”. It is precisely for that reason that we will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, defending the principles, obligations and rights derived from the Charter of the United Nations.

Colombia reiterates its rejection of war and violence in any circumstances. Likewise, my country, consistent with its policy of total peace, urges the parties to seek a negotiated and peaceful solution to the conflicts.

Mr. Kulháněk (Czechia): Czechia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12), and I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

Despite numerous calls by the international community to immediately stop its military aggression against Ukraine, the Russian Federation has decided to further escalate its aggressive war by supporting the illegal so-called referendums, by the mobilization of its citizens and by repeated threats to use nuclear weapons. Bearing witness to that are the ongoing

cowardly missile attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure in many Ukrainian cities and in the very centre of Kyiv. Putin’s regime is once again flagrantly violating the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and threatening the security of Europe, as well as the very nature of the current global order.

Changing the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine by force constitutes a clear and serious breach of the United Nations Charter. That step has absolutely no validity under international law. Many world leaders had warned about the predicted outcome of the illegal sham referendums even before their falsified results were announced. We urge all United Nations Member States to reject that illegal annexation by voting in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5.

Russia’s illegal actions are already showing their damaging global impact. As they multiply, every member of the international community is now threatened by such unscrupulous conduct. We have not recognized the illegal annexation of Crimea and we will never recognize the illegal annexation of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson oblasts of Ukraine. We will never recognize any decision taken by Russia following the attempted illegal annexation, including the simplified procedure to obtain Russian citizenship and Russian passports.

Czechia reiterates its full support for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters. Organizing fake voting amidst the war is yet further proof that Ukrainian citizens are facing widespread and systematic human rights abuses and intimidation by Russia and its illegally appointed authorities in the temporarily occupied territories. The manipulated public vote presents no expression of the real free will of local Ukrainian citizens, who are exposed to inhuman conditions, brutal torture and mass killings.

All perpetrators of the most serious crimes under international law must be held accountable, as must those involved in organizing such sham voting. Czechia supports the creation of a special international tribunal to bring to justice the official representatives of the Russian Federation responsible for the crime of aggression against the neighbouring State as they seek to destroy its free existence.

Once again, we strongly urge the Russian Federation to stop this war and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its troops from the territory of Ukraine. Russian actions are gravely damaging the global economy and the food security of many countries represented here today. Furthermore, they seriously threaten the rules-based international order and harm all United Nations Member States .

Mr. Song Kim (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Today the situation of Ukraine is the focus of the attention of the international society.

Self-determination is the legal right of peoples to decide their own destiny and international relations. Self-determination is also the legitimate right to freely choose their sovereignty and international political status, without interference from others, as a basic principle stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

The residents of the People's Republic of Donetsk, the People's Republic of Luhansk and the regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhya have the due right to freely determine and choose their sovereignty and international political status at their own discretion. The people of those regions have exercised their due rights through referendums held from 23 to 27 September. We recognize that the referendums were conducted in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international laws which stipulate the principles of the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Therefore, we respect the will of the people if the People's Republic of Donetsk, the People's Republic of Luhansk and regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhya who aspire to integration into the Russian Federation and support the position of the Government of the Russian Federation of making those regions components of the Russian Federation. We strongly insist that the principle of self-determination enshrined in the United Nations Charter and international law should not be applied in a selective and partial manner.

We clearly recall that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya were violated brutally by the United States and Western countries under the pretext of maintaining international peace and security, but the unlawful and illegal acts of the Western countries have never been called into question in the Security Council.

It is absurd for the Western countries that have devastated sovereign States in the past to talk about

respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine over the referendums held in the People Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk and the regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhya. Even today, the United States interferes in the internal affairs of sovereign countries and infringes upon their legal rights by abusing the Security Council in order to maintain the hegemonic, unipolar world. That is the same old trick of the United States, and the world has seen many similar illegal acts not only in the twentieth century but also in the twenty-first . High-handed and arbitrary practices and partial and double-standard acts can never be tolerated in any case.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that the result of the referendums took place in the People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk and the regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhya must be respected in accordance with the basic principle of self-determination and non-interference in the internal affairs of others.

Also, the position of any sovereign State must be respected on this floor, but one previous speaker mentioned just now the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. His remark was politically motivated. Of course, I can wholly understand how he can say that, because his country is not a sovereign State.

Mr. Leucă (Republic of Moldova): At the outset, my delegation welcomes the resumption of the eleventh emergency special session to consider the critical issue of so-called referendums held illegally by the Russian Federation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in the regions of Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, Donetsk and Luhansk.

While the Republic of Moldova aligns itself with the European Union statement (see A/ES-11/PV.12), I would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

For more than eight months now, our neighbouring country, Ukraine, has been defending its territory from the Russian Federation's unprovoked war of aggression, which has triggered the largest humanitarian and refugee crisis in Europe since the end of the Second World War, prompted global food shortages and economic downturns, and deepened the European energy crisis. Reports of massive human rights violations and disrespect for international humanitarian and international law are widespread. We have all been appalled by the massive Russian missile attacks conducted recently against Ukrainian cities,

especially civilian and critical infrastructure. Those attacks are causing human losses and suffering and significant destruction.

According to verified airspace monitoring data, three cruise missiles launched from Russian military ships located in the Black Sea against targets in Ukraine have crossed Moldovan airspace. The Republic of Moldova firmly condemns any violation of its sovereign airspace. Those incidents have created serious risks to the security of the Republic of Moldova. Any escalation is also increasing the security risks for the entire region and to the Republic of Moldova, as an immediate neighbour of Ukraine. Now, such risks include those posed by the use not only of conventional arms, but also of nuclear ones.

We express deep and grave concern about the military activities in and around Ukraine's nuclear sites and the dangerous rhetoric about the possible use of nuclear weapons. All these worrying developments pose a major threat not only to the region, but also to the entire world. In that sense, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of stopping the shelling in and around those sites with a view to avoiding catastrophic consequences.

The Republic of Moldova strongly condemns the so-called referendums illegally organized by the Russian Federation in the temporarily occupied Ukrainian regions of Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, Donetsk and Luhansk. Conducting such pseudo-referendums during the ongoing war and using them as a pretext to annex a part of Ukrainian sovereign territory occupied by force is a severe infringement of the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity and other fundamentals of international law. The Republic of Moldova does not and will not recognize the results of those illegal actions and reiterates its steadfast support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

In the light of all this, my delegation co-sponsored and will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, entitled "Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations". The Republic of Moldova calls once again on the Russian Federation to stop its aggression and immediately withdraw its military forces from sovereign Ukrainian territory.

Mr. Lippwe (Federated States of Micronesia): I shall be very brief. The brevity of my statement does not

in any way diminish the grave concern of my delegation over recent developments in Ukraine or the importance we attach to the issue before this Assembly.

Micronesia aligns its statement with that delivered by the Permanent Representative of Fiji on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (see A/ES-11/PV.12).

My delegation appreciates the timely resumption of the emergency special session, as we are deeply troubled by the events of recent days. We do not recognize the so-called referendums held in the four occupied regions and reject any attempt by the Russian Federation to incorporate Ukrainian territory. The annexation of Ukrainian territory by the Russian Federation is yet again another violation of the principles of our Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Micronesia fully supports the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and demands the immediate withdrawal of all Russian Forces from said territory.

Finally, Micronesia is a co-sponsor of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 and will vote in its favour. We encourage all members of the Assembly to uphold the United Nations Charter and vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Šimonović (Croatia): Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12). I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

In just a couple of months, Russian aggression against Ukraine has come a long way, from a so-called special military operation to the brink of nuclear Armageddon. Tens of thousands have died so far; hundreds of thousands, or even millions may in the future. Have we done enough to stop it? The crimes committed are piling up. They started with a crime of aggression and continued with war crimes and crimes against humanity. We are meeting today because of yet another, most recent crime: illegal annexation of the temporarily occupied territories in Ukraine.

The aggression against Ukraine clearly demonstrates the weakness of our institutional capacity to protect countries and populations from occupation and atrocity crimes, especially when the aggressor is one of the permanent members of the Security Council. It is obvious that we need to improve the United Nations prevention and protection capacity, but that does not relieve us of the responsibility to do as much as we can

within the existing institutional framework. When the Security Council has been blocked in the past because of the veto power, we have taken joint action through the General Assembly, overwhelmingly condemning the crime of aggression, warning that there would be accountability for the crimes committed, and isolating the perpetrator.

Now, we should show the same resolve and provide the decisive response to this attempt of annexation, which is null and void and cannot have any legal effect under international law. We must reject it and condemn it in the strongest and clearest terms. By doing so, we would be protecting not only Ukraine, but also our own sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the Charter of the United Nations, the rules-based international order and the future of our children.

Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 before us is unfortunately not legally binding, but its strength comes from our widespread condemnation of the illegal annexation as yet another violation of international law by the Russian Federation. However, the International Court of Justice did issue a legally binding order, requesting the Russian Federation to immediately stop its military operation in Ukraine. Blatantly ignoring it, the Russian Federation continued with its aggression, and now, when the situation in the battlefield is changing in Ukraine's favour, it is escalating the conflict through partial mobilization, illegal annexation and the targeting of crucial civilian infrastructure, as well as civilians themselves.

What kind of greed for imperial power and land grab is inciting the leadership of the largest country in the world to annex territories of its brotherly neighbours and sacrifice tens of thousands of lives of Ukrainians, as well as of its own citizens, to this sickening plan and to expose the whole world to food insecurity, energy shortages, setbacks in development and the danger of possible nuclear Armageddon? It is the sort of greed that can swallow our whole planet, if we let it happen.

We must stand together and protect Ukraine, the Charter of the United Nations and our own future. We the peoples are watching us today, as well as our vote. Let us not disappoint them. A vote in favour of the draft resolution is a vote for a just peace in Ukraine as well as the re-establishment of the rule of law in international relations.

Mrs. Horváth (Hungary): Hungary aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the

European Union (EU) on behalf of the EU and its member States (see A/ES-11/PV.12), and I wish to make the following remarks in our national capacity.

Hungary reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders. With regard to the so-called referendums held in the occupied territories of Ukraine, we firmly reject and unequivocally condemn the illegal annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson regions. The referendums blatantly violate not only the fundamental rights of Ukraine to sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, but also several of the core principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We will never recognize the illegal referendums or the illegal annexation. Furthermore, we reaffirm that Ukraine is exercising its legitimate right to defend itself against the Russian aggression and to regain full control of its territory, and has the right to liberate occupied territories within its internationally recognized borders.

The United Nations Charter is not optional. Every Member State represented in this Hall has to abide by the rules that were set up to protect the international order. If one Member State decides to disregard the rules, there will undoubtedly be others that will not feel obliged to respect those rules. Today it is the sovereignty of Ukraine; tomorrow, it might be another State, another principle disregarded, or another fundamental right violated. We need to be clear that the action of the Russian Federation is a violation of rights today, and if we fail to step up against it, it could be improperly misconstrued as a precedent in the future. Therefore, our common determination to protect the rules-based international order and international law must be strong and united.

We must also stress that any use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction is contrary to the provisions of international law, including the United Nations Charter and the commitments the parties made, inter alia, in the Budapest Memorandum and the Review Conferences of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Let me be clear — Hungary condemns any threat of a nuclear war. A nuclear war cannot be won and therefore must never be fought.

Sadly, more than half a year into this conflict, we are witnessing worrying trends and still do not see

any sign of the cessation of hostilities. It is our view that the conflict is on an alarmingly wrong trajectory that, foreseeably, will lead only to a further spiral of escalation. We see around the globe that, after barely recovering from the worst pandemic in more than a century, too many Member States find themselves to be in a particularly vulnerable situation as a result of the war in Ukraine, faced with unprecedented interlocking crises. Energy, food and water crises and the adverse effects of climate change, exacerbated by a cost-of-living crisis, pile on the hardships of people around the world, putting the resilience of Member States to the test. As a result, uncertainty and political upheaval are growing across the world, with potentially far-reaching ramifications for international peace and security and putting hard-won gains in sustainable development into jeopardy.

From the perspective of Hungary, the war in our neighbouring country poses a great security risk, with a multidimensional effect on our society. The ensuing rise in the cost of food, energy and fuel poses a real challenge to us. Furthermore, as winter approaches, we also expect the humanitarian needs arising from the war only to grow. On a wider horizon, energy supply routes are being disrupted regionally; as a result, our continent is facing its most severe energy crisis, which also threatens to plunge the European economy into recession. Faced with those challenges, what we need today, probably more than ever, is dialogue and diplomacy.

Therefore, in conclusion, let me reiterate Hungary's urgent call for peace. We have to use whatever tool is available for facilitating peace. We have to help this conflict to come to an end as soon as possible. We cannot allow this aggression to threaten all the international community has achieved under the umbrella of international law in the 77 years since the adoption of the United Nations Charter. We need to restore peace, set firmly upon the edifice of the rules-based international order.

For all those reasons, Hungary will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 and encourages others to do the same.

Mr. Santos Maraver (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain fully subscribes to the statement of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12) in support of the text of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, "Territorial integrity

of Ukraine: defending the principles of the United Nations Charter".

Spain reiterates in the most categorical terms its condemnation of the sham referendums in parts of Ukrainian territory temporarily under Russian military control, as well as the measures taken by the Russian authorities aimed at the illegal annexation of those territories to the Russian Federation. With those measures, Russia has once again demonstrated its lack of respect for the principles, values and norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Russia persists in its ongoing and flagrant violation of international law and its most basic principles, particularly the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State, which the General Assembly condemned unambiguously in March. The Secretary-General did so again on 29 September.

We will never acknowledge those illegal annexation attempts by Russia. Spain reiterates its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, and we demand the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Russian troops from Ukrainian territory. In the meantime, as we did in March, we call for an immediate ceasefire and support the efforts of Secretary-General Guterres and the Member States that are working to de-escalate the war and seek a peaceful solution, which can come only from respect for international law.

Mr Rai (Nepal) Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Assembly meets again following the veto exercised by the Russian Federation, hindering the functioning of the Security Council, while threatening to use nuclear weapons. That is unacceptable and a violation of the Charter. Russia's actions undermine the foundations of the international security architecture and directly threaten global peace and stability. The international community cannot afford a precedent that would undoubtedly have catastrophic consequences in the future.

For all those reasons, we call for a firm and energetic condemnation from the international community against Russian actions, by co-sponsoring and supporting the draft resolution on the territorial integrity of Ukraine. It is precisely here at Headquarters that we must reaffirm the norms and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Hadjichrysanthou (Cyprus): My delegation fully subscribes to the statement of the European

Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12) , and wishes to make some additional remarks.

Cyprus condemns the illegal and illegitimate holding of the so-called referendums in the occupied regions of Ukraine, as well as their subsequent attempted annexation by the Russian Federation. International law is clear. First, the prohibition of the use of force is one of the foundations of the Charter of the United Nations; boundaries cannot be altered by any use of force. Secondly, an occupying Power cannot gain sovereignty of the territory it unlawfully occupies through an attempt of unilateral secession or otherwise. Thirdly, a referendum cannot take place unilaterally without the consent of the Government of the territorial State. The occupying Power must respect its obligations under international humanitarian law, including The Hague Regulations of 1907 and the Geneva Conventions. Fourthly, in no circumstances can those so-called referendums be considered as an exercise of the right of self-determination through remedial secession.

Cyprus is strongly opposed to any modification of the fundamental principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, which is essential for the stability of States and for the international relations between them. Furthermore, we reiterate that States have a legal duty to withhold recognition of acts in violation of norms of international law of peremptory character, such as the creation of an illegal territorial situation by use of force.

International law must remain the compass by which States are guided, and it must be applied consistently and globally. Cyprus, as a country that has remained divided for almost 50 years as a consequence of the crime of aggression, and as a country that is fully committed to promoting respect for international law, adds its voice to the international outcry in defence of the Charter of the United Nations and the rule of law. Multilateralism, and not recourse to unilateral action, must guide the conduct of States with a view to the maintenance of international peace and security. We remain deeply concerned about the effectiveness of our system of collective security, and disappointed at the fact that the Security Council has failed to do everything in its power to prevent and end the war in Ukraine. We truly believe that there is only one way out — diplomacy, not war.

Cyprus will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, entitled “Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations”, and encourages all Member States to also support it.

In closing, I wish to reiterate that my country remains fully committed to the sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Ms. Squeff (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): As we have done in various multilateral forums in relation to the war in Ukraine, the Argentine Republic reiterates, as it has already stated in relation to Crimea, that it will be only through full adherence to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations — respect for international law, the sovereignty of states and their territorial integrity — that it will be possible to arrive at solutions that are just and lasting for all political and social actors.

Argentina has maintained a consistent position against the acquisition of territories by force and in defence of the principle of territorial integrity. The Argentine Republic therefore condemns the aggression against Ukraine and reiterates to the Russian Federation that it must immediately cease its illegitimate use of force and military operations in Ukrainian territory. In that context, we do not consider the referendums held in the occupied territories in Ukraine from 23 to 27 September to be legal.

Any attempt to fracture, partially or totally, the national unity and territorial integrity of a State or country or its political independence by force is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It represents an attempt to violate the territorial integrity of Ukraine inasmuch as it does not enjoy the consent of the Government of that country. Therefore, from the point of view of international law, such referendums are null and void; they lack legal value and do not alter the status of said territories.

For the reasons stated, we will support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, which rejects the alleged Russian annexation of Ukrainian territories, and will vote in favour of it.

We renew our call on the Secretary-General and all existing multilateral instances to cooperate urgently to defuse the conflict and return to the negotiating table

to reach a solution through political dialogue and all peaceful means that can be used to stop violence.

The recent pandemic, climate change, the precarity of living conditions in entire regions and the vast displacements of millions of people have shown us, among other global challenges, that they are not the agenda of the future, but rather urgent problems that the international community must address expeditiously. Time is against us, and we cannot afford to continue talking about war — a tragic past whose consequences we all know and which we promised in 1945 to leave behind.

Ms. Zacarias (Portugal): I thank you the President for reconvening this emergency special session and for his leadership in these challenging and sobering times.

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12), and I would like to make a few additional remarks in my national capacity.

Portugal firmly condemns the so-called referendums organized by the Russian Federation and its subsequent annexation of the Ukrainian territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson, which constitutes a clear violation of international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Portugal considers those referendums and annexations illegal, null and void, and does not recognize any of their political and legal effects. We reaffirm our support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and for Ukraine's right to self-defence in the face of ongoing foreign aggression.

One cannot claim to be defending the interests of populations by bringing further death and destruction to their doorstep. No security concern could ever be a legitimate reason to invade a neighbouring country that posed no threat to the Russian Federation. We cannot be indifferent to those annexations. We cannot turn a blind eye to a decision that compromises the stability of an international order built collectively over 77 years — an international order based on the principles of the rule of law, equal sovereignty, peace and the defence of human rights. Those are principles that we cannot compromise.

We cannot stand silent in the face of the ongoing rhetoric on the possible use of nuclear weapons. That is totally unacceptable. We cannot be silent when we

witness the shocking indiscriminate shelling of civilian targets across Ukrainian cities, scaling up the violence and the unbearable death toll of this war. The authors of those and other attacks should be held accountable under international law. We cannot be silent when we see the spillover effects from the war in Ukraine jeopardize millions of people's food and energy security. We fully support the efforts coordinated by the United Nations to address the global impact of the conflict, and we call for the renewal of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. We commend the Secretary-General's courageous leadership in that regard and his vision for a much-needed new agenda for peace.

The Russian Federation must stop this war and withdraw from Ukraine. We must continue to address this situation collectively to preserve a rules-based international order, stand for the rule of law, abide by the principles of peace and security that are the foundation of the Organization, and uphold the United Nations Charter. That is why we have co-sponsored and will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5. We strongly encourage others to do the same.

Mrs. Theofili (Greece): Greece aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12) and we would like to add the following in our national capacity.

Today's debate concerns each and every Member State. It is about upholding the Charter of the United Nations and the core principles of our Organization. It is about respecting the most basic principles of international law. Greece reiterates what has been said repeatedly in this Hall. The Charter of the United Nations is clear. Paragraph 4 of Article 2 of the Charter stipulates that "[a]ll Members shall refrain... from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity... of any state". That is the guiding principle underpinning the United Nations Charter and all States should abide by it. Respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of all countries forms the cornerstone of international law and the main pillar of Greek foreign policy. That is not merely our unwavering principled position; it is the foundation of international order.

Revisionism, no matter where it comes from, is the main threat to world peace. Violations of international law, no matter whom they target, are a threat to us all. Any unprovoked aggression, any decision and any threat that targets the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a Member State cannot and should not be

tolerated and has no place in the twenty-first century. We can make no exceptions and we must maintain a consistent stance across the board. We will not allow a dangerous precedent that would give the green light for similar attacks and violations of international law globally and against other members of the international community. Any act that undermines the rules-based international order and violates the fundamental rights of Ukraine to independence and sovereignty cannot be recognized. If we do not condemn the actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine today, then we open the way for similar attacks on any and all of our countries tomorrow. Now is the time to show solidarity and a strong commitment to peace and stability. Our message should be clear and strong in upholding the fundamental principles of our Charter and international law.

We categorically condemn the illegal annexation of Ukraine's regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson, which constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. It is null and void and cannot produce any legal effect whatsoever. Greece will spare no effort to ensure the protection of the Greek community in Ukraine, especially in the east, and all civilians who are subjected to immense, unnecessary suffering. Greece will spare no effort to ensure that justice is done. We are mobilizing with our partners to combat impunity for war crimes and crimes against humanity, including gender-based violence. Greece will spare no effort to ensure peace and uphold the principles of our Charter. Today we vote in favour.

Mrs. Mc Gill (Liberia): As the United Nations, we continue to witness inexcusable acts of violence and forceful annexation of regions within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders: Luhansk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhya and Donetsk. This is one of the unprecedented moments in international history and one that leaves an indelible stain on our great Charter.

Once again, there is a territorial integrity issue. Russia's sham referendums and forceful annexation of the aforementioned four Ukrainian territories are in flagrant violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as global peace and stability. Article 2 of the United Nations Charter states that

“[a]ll Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of

any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations”.

That article prohibits the threat or use of force by United Nations Member States and calls on all Members to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of other States.

Liberia condemns the violence, threats of violence and other acts of intimidation increasingly taking place in Ukraine by Russia and joins other Member States in calling for an end to the chaos and tumult that have been incited in favour of calm and peaceful actions. My delegation wishes to emphasize our position that Ukraine deserves our support in all its efforts to maintain its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. My country furthermore calls upon Member States to make all efforts to prevail upon the invading nation, Russia, to cease all hostilities and prevent the consequent humanitarian disaster and untold suffering of the women, children and other vulnerable people of Ukraine. It is imperative that we act within the framework of the United Nations Charter at all times to promote peaceful coexistence globally.

Mr. De Maesschalck (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium aligns itself fully with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12). In my national capacity, I wish to insist on the following points, which are essential to the proper functioning of the international rules-based order that we all desire.

I address the Assembly as the representative of a country that appreciates the added value of multilateralism — a country which, through its history, is aware of the common heritage of all Member States represented by the Charter of the United Nations. In the face of the current escalation, is it necessary to recall that the current serious situation has a single and unique cause — the fact that a State has chosen to invade a neighbouring sovereign state in an attempt to illegally and forcibly annex part of its territory?

The consequences of that illegal and violent action are unfortunately felt by all Members of the Organization. They seriously jeopardize the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by increasing global food and energy insecurity. The violation of the Charter of the United Nations was noted and condemned by the Assembly in March. No violation of the Charter of the United Nations can go unchallenged. In addition to not respecting the Charter and international law governing

inter-State relations, violations of international humanitarian law are occurring again and again and on the rise. On Monday yet again, cities with large concentrations of civilian populations were bombed indiscriminately. The protection of civilians is an empty word for the aggressor.

But what is at stake today is respect for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, a sovereign State. Belgium will not recognize the attempted annexation of land conquered in warfare. Belgium will not recognize those referendums, which do not respect any rule. The annexations are illegal, as Secretary-General Guterres has reminded us

Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, before us today, was developed in an inclusive and transparent manner in support of the Charter of the United Nations. Many countries, large and small, from diverse geographical areas and of diverse profile, have contributed to it. Belgium fully supports the draft resolution and calls on other Member States to do the same. As the Assembly has already done, Belgium therefore joins the many calling for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all the military forces of the Russian Federation from Ukrainian territory and a return to its internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): This emergency special session is convened yet again on the situation in Ukraine, which is deteriorating. Japan condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's aggression against Ukraine, including its recent missile attacks against cities across Ukraine, leading to the deaths of innocent civilians, and its continued infringement upon Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. Russia's attempted illegal annexation of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions into the territory of the Russian Federation by force clearly breaches the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Japan firmly believes that the General Assembly must not accept such outrageous actions by Russia. Those actions by Russia have no validity and cannot form the basis for any alteration of the status of those regions of Ukraine. That has been clearly stated by Secretary-General Guterres as well. Those unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force shake the very foundation of the international order and must not occur in any corner of the globe.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, but it failed to act because of the veto cast by Russia, which Japan categorically deplores. In this time of trial, Japan is determined to defend the Charter and multilateralism.

The voting on draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 is not about choosing sides, but rather reflects our collective commitment to upholding the rule of law. Japan trusts Member States to join us in defending the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Bakradze (Georgia): Georgia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12). Let me add a few remarks in my national capacity.

For more than seven months now, we have continued to witness the devastating consequences of Russia's full-scale military aggression against Ukraine. The number of civilian casualties in Ukraine and other gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law has been rising. We are gravely concerned by the recent deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure in a number of Ukrainian cities. The Russian Federation has continued to disregard the calls of the resolutions adopted in this very Hall this year.

Georgia condemns Russia's attempted illegal annexation of the Ukrainian regions following the sham referendums, and reiterates its unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters.

As a Permanent Representative of a country that has been occupied by Russia since 2008, let me be absolutely clear — time matters, words matter and the action we will take today matters. It matters for the future of the succeeding generations and for the United Nations future and its ability to tackle and solve the world's most pressing challenges in the months and years to come. It is our collective responsibility to send a clear signal in defence of the principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity — the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): The Republic of Azerbaijan and Ukraine support each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders. That position is grounded in the

Charter of the United Nations and international law. Consequently, Azerbaijan does not recognize the result of the referendums held in the territories of Ukraine from 23 to 27 September and reiterates its support and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

We renew our call for the earliest possible settlement of the situation exclusively through peaceful diplomatic means. Further, we reiterate that strict compliance with the norms and principles of international law concerning inter-State relations and the fulfilment in good faith of the obligations assumed by States under the Charter of the United Nations and international law are of the greatest importance to the maintenance of international and regional peace, security and stability.

Mr. Fepuleai (New Zealand): Aotearoa New Zealand condemns unequivocally Russia's attempts to illegally annex Russia-occupied regions of Ukraine. Russia's sham referendums in Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya are illegitimate and have no legal basis for the acquisition of Ukraine's territory by Russia. Let us be clear. Russia's attempts to annex those regions are a further act of aggression in clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and in flagrant breach of international law. This Hall has made clear that the annexation by the use of force of the territory of another State or part thereof qualifies as an act of aggression.

We as the General Assembly and an international community have an obligation to speak up when there is a violation of international law. We must use our collective voices to condemn any State's flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations. That is not just our opinion. The facts speak for themselves. The Secretary-General has been clear that Russia's actions have no basis in any international legal framework and are a clear-cut violation of the United Nations Charter. Russia must comply with the legally binding orders of the International Court of Justice to immediately suspend its military operations in the territory of Ukraine.

We also cannot ignore the real human suffering that extends from that violation of the fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations. Those concepts are not simply theoretical. Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has already caused thousands of deaths, a massive humanitarian crisis and untold suffering. It must end. We also reiterate the

Secretary-General's points that the impacts of the war extend well beyond the region, affecting our global economy, especially those of developing countries, and setting back our critical work to deliver life-saving aid in Ukraine and beyond.

As we have seen from the start of Russia's invasion, New Zealand continues to call on President Putin to act consistently with international obligations, cease Russia's invasion of Ukraine, withdraw troops and return to diplomatic negotiations as a pathway to the resolution of the conflict. New Zealand continues to stand in support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We call on representatives in the Hall to vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5. This is a vote not only to support Ukraine, but a vote to support the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Malovrh (Slovenia): Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12) and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Earlier this week, we were again shocked to learn about the missile attacks on Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities by the Russian army. We strongly condemn those latest attacks and denounce the Russian Federation's latest threats to use nuclear weapons. As civilians are often the main victims in armed conflicts, the vast majority of whom are women and children, we once again underline that the shelling of residential buildings and other civilian infrastructure represents a most severe violation of international law that cannot remain unpunished.

Moreover, we call on the Russian Federation to fully respect international humanitarian law and to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access and assistance to all persons in need. We call for an immediate, complete and unconditional stop to all fighting. We strongly support all efforts to de-escalate the current situation through political dialogue, negotiation and other peaceful means, in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

Slovenia is committed to the promotion of a culture of peace and dialogue. As an active member of the community of small States, we believe in peaceful coexistence of States and cooperation among them. Our future, prosperity and security depend on international cooperation and respect of the norms set out in the United Nations Charter and wider international law. Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, which we will be

adopting today, is clear. It firmly stands by the goals and principles of the United Nations Charter, which are being gravely undermined and disregarded as we speak.

Today's meeting is taking place in response to an attempted illegal annexation of Ukraine's regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya, which are firmly within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders. While the principle of self-determination remains the cornerstone of my country's independence, we cannot but echo the Secretary-General's statement that referendums conducted in occupied regions of another country cannot be a genuine expression of any popular will. We therefore firmly and unequivocally reject those attempted illegal annexations.

We call for respect for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of all countries. Slovenia condemns any unprovoked invasion of any sovereign country under any pretext. Violations of the international legal order that we have all worked so hard to build cannot and must not become the new normal of today's world's affairs. For that reason, Slovenia will be voting in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Amorín (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): In its statements delivered at the emergency special session held in March, Uruguay clearly expressed its firm condemnation of the military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, stressing that it was a clear violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations that all its Members must respect.

That position was ratified a few days ago in the general debate of the Assembly by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, Ambassador Francisco Bustillo (see A/77/PV.14). Addressing the Assembly, the Uruguayan Foreign Minister asked the Russian Federation to cease hostilities and withdraw from Ukrainian territory as soon as possible. He also called on both parties to the conflict to make their best efforts to return to the negotiating table in order to resolve their differences peacefully, as stipulated in the United Nations Charter.

Given the new actions carried out to legitimize the occupation of part of the Ukrainian territory through the use of force, we stress that our country does not recognize the instruments signed and announced by the Russian Federation concerning the annexation of four Ukrainian territories following the so-called referendums held in the occupied territories of Donetsk,

Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson, which are in clear contradiction with international law.

Uruguay's position has been very clear regarding unrestricted respect for international law, particularly the prohibition of territorial expansion through the use of force or other mechanisms that contravene the United Nations Charter. That rule of international law, expressly provided for in the Charter of United Nations and endorsed by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice, ensures that the referendums held in the occupied territories in Ukraine have no legal value.

The declaration of annexation in a context of aggression against another State is in violation of the Charter of our Organization and international law, and the votes that gave rise to it cannot be considered a free and genuine expression of the popular will. Consequently, the Government of Uruguay reiterates its firm support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and once again appeals to the Russian Federation to cease its aggression. It is for those reasons that Uruguay will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, on the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Finally, we reiterate our call for avenues for dialogue to be found, through the negotiation mechanisms provided for in the United Nations Charter and with the participation of the Security Council and the Secretary-General, that will facilitate agreement on the steps to de-escalate the war and that, through diplomatic negotiation, help the parties to the conflict to resolve their differences and put an end to the war.

Mr. Sarufa (Papua New Guinea): I begin by aligning my delegation's remarks with those delivered earlier by my fellow Melanesian and Pacific neighbour, the representative of Fiji, on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (see A/ES-11/PV.12).

Today marks the 226th day, or a little over seven months, since we, the peoples of the United Nations, meeting in this Hall at the eleventh emergency special session, conceived and almost unanimously supported resolution ES-11/1, relating to the Russian Federation's needless aggression against Ukraine, which was roundly condemned. The calls for a peaceful end to the conflict without preconditions were loud and clear. Papua New Guinea is pleased to have co-sponsored that resolution and also supported the subsequent resolution ES-11/2. We continue to stand in solidarity with the

people and the Government of Ukraine in the face of the unprecedented aggression that continues to be perpetrated by a permanent member of the Security Council, the Russian Federation.

It is in that spirit that Papua New Guinea has again given its strong support to draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, before us today, including as a co-sponsor. For us, that is the right thing to do. It unequivocally reminds us, as a small developing country like many others, of the crucial importance of protecting and defending our sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It is not for external forces to take it away from us at their whim.

How many more Security Council meetings and General Assembly emergency special sessions must we convene to end those senseless and hostile actions of the aggressor — actions that not only threaten global peace and security, but also continue to seriously undermine the territorial sovereignty and integrity of Ukraine and to prolong the wanton devastation of the lives and livelihoods of Ukrainians? That cannot and must not be allowed to continue.

It is regrettable that, despite the emphatic calls of the international community for Russia's siege of Ukraine to cease forthwith, we continue to witness with profound concern the continuing destabilizing and dangerous manoeuvres deployed by Russia against Ukraine, including the disastrous global socioeconomic impacts it has brought down on all of us.

For my delegation, the views expressed last month by the Secretary-General on Russia's annexation of the territories of Ukraine are crystal clear and instructive. The so-called referendums held in dubious circumstances in Ukrainian territory under Russia's control during an active armed conflict, coupled with the threat or use of force, are highly questionable, to say the least. How many more parts of Ukraine may face the same fate? We strongly condemn the carving up and annexation of the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya. My delegation stands together with the Secretary-General and other Member States that share the same perspective. Russia's annexation of Ukrainian territories is illegal and null and void. For Papua New Guinea, the occupied territories remain a sovereign and integral part of Ukraine.

Mindful as we are of the harmful and catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear

weapons, the veiled threats by Russia to use nuclear weapons against those who stand in the way of the aggressor are highly deplorable. It is also irresponsible for a permanent member of the Security Council to threaten international peace and security with such uncalled-for action. Not only is the threat or use of force and of nuclear weapons a clear violation of the United Nations Charter and international law, but it is also contrary to the commitments Russia made in the Budapest Memorandum, the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the statement by the five NPT nuclear-weapons States in January that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.

Let me now turn to the efforts of a certain delegation, undertaken at the procedural level, to have the General Assembly consider the draft resolution before us through a secret ballot. My delegation is of the strong view that an issue of grave importance to the international community regarding global peace and security must never be hidden behind the veil of a secret ballot under the current purview. It is too important for that fundamental issue to be shrouded in secrecy. Why would a Member State want to hide behind a secret ballot? What the world and Ukraine in particular need is for us to be accountable and transparent in upholding our United Nations Charter obligations and responsibilities, including to foster international peace and security. It was pleasing to be part of the overwhelming majority of Member States that rallied against the improper use of the secret ballot.

Before I conclude, it would be remiss of my delegation not to speak to the members of the Security Council. We applaud those Council members that stood up and were counted for peace, stability and security, as well as for the protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, at the Council's meeting on 30 September (see S/PV.9143), which triggered the resumption this week of the General Assembly's emergency special session. We are, however, disappointed that some members of the Council which we have supported and trusted in good faith to uphold the sacrosanct principles of the Charter in the Council have yet again failed us. Looking the other way at a crucial moment concerning a fellow Member State's sovereignty, territorial integrity, peace and security, as well as global peace and security, is not what we expect of Council members, given that they represent not only their own delegation's interests in the Security Council,

but those of the wider United Nations membership. I ask them to take a long, hard look at their respective actions and ask whether they deserve a seat at the peace table of the Security Council.

Mr. Sabbagh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Once again, the rostrum of the General Assembly is being flagrantly manipulated by some Western countries for their own geopolitical interests. Those countries are increasingly deepening polarization among United Nations Member States and have requested the resumption of this emergency special session to submit to the General Assembly draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, which is even more hostile towards the Russian Federation after failing to adopt it by the Security Council.

Member States have not had the opportunity to discuss the draft resolution before us today or to introduce amendments to it or even to consult about it, which is clear evidence that those countries seek solely to take a hostile political stance against the Russian Federation through a specious, one-dimensional view of current events. The relentlessly hostile and provocative approach of those countries clearly shows that they strive to fuel the conflict and to promote neo-Nazism in Ukraine, rather than to resolve it by reaching a peaceful solution through dialogue and negotiation.

We condemn the coordinated campaign of Western States and their media against the Russian Federation, which includes fake information, false accusations and fabricated images and videos, with the aim of undermining the genuine right of the Russian Federation to address the threats posed to its own people's security, as ensured by the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter, which was drafted 75 years ago in good faith by the founders of the Organization, has been exploited over recent years in a selective, misguided way by applying it with double standards.

The countries that are launching a hostile campaign against the Russian Federation today and criticizing it for defending its own security and borders are the same countries that launched barbaric acts of aggression against my country under the pretext of defending their own national security, despite the fact that my country is tens of thousands of kilometres away and presented no threat to them whatsoever. The United States and the countries of the illegitimate so-called international coalition have destroyed entire towns and killed thousands of citizens, as was the case in the Syrian

city of Raqqa. Those States therefore have no right to shed any tears or to preach us, because they have no credibility whatsoever.

It is well known that after the Soviet Union fell apart, the Russian Federation recognized the Commonwealth of Independent States and extended its hand to its partners in the Commonwealth, including Ukraine. Authorities in Kyiv should have respected the historical and geographical facts and abstained from any taking vengeful measures or practices against the Russians who have historically resided in the Donbas and those living in the People's Republics of Luhansk and Donetsk. They should have respected the principle of neutrality and good-neighbourly relations.

Unfortunately, after the 2014 coup the Ukrainian Government adopted negative and dangerous policies against Russia, their historic neighbour, seeking to deny everything that brings the two peoples together. Political leaders and extremist political parties in Ukraine, with the support of the West, sought to warp the historic memory of the Ukrainian people, while extremist nationalist movements exploited the situation to fuel animosity against the Russian Federation.

It is hard to imagine that each and every day we hear some Western countries speak about accountability for various events while saying nothing about the accountability of the extreme nationalist movements in Ukraine. Indeed, the NATO States have had their hand in that. They have played an instigating role and made numerous promises to the nationalist extremist movements in Ukraine to incorporate Ukraine into NATO and the European Union. They have promised Ukraine protection and military assistance if it stepped up its aggression and threats against the Russian Federation.

The United States and its allies in NATO have clearly confirmed those policies by covering up the discriminatory and inhuman practices of the Kyiv authorities against the people of the Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics and other Russian-speakers who have historically lived in the Donbas and elsewhere and have suffered terribly over the past eight years. Eventually, those people chose liberation and freely and voluntarily joined the Russian Federation.

My country appreciates the Russian Federation's efforts to ensure the stability, safety and security of the Russian and Ukrainian peoples. Russia is also hosting tens of thousands of refugees, providing humanitarian

aid and opening safe humanitarian corridors. It has also agreed to allow ships transporting grain and food.

Lastly, my country's delegation voted against the motion proposed by Albania (see A/ES-11/PV.12) pertaining to the method of voting on draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, not because it is against transparency in the work of the General Assembly, but because it is aware of the immense pressure exerted by Western countries on Member States to adopt that imbalanced and hostile draft resolution against the Russian Federation. In that regard, my delegation totally rejects that approach and cautions other delegations against the dangers of being dragged behind it. We urge them to reject efforts leading to isolation, antagonism and policies of double standards.

Ms. Šćepanović (Montenegro): At the outset, Montenegro aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/ES-11/PV.12). However, I would like to further highlight several issues in my national capacity.

We have gathered here today to shed light once again on the importance of upholding the Charter of the United Nations and international law as the pillars of the rules-based international order. International peace and security, the foundational principles that gathered our predecessors to build the world back from the ashes and establish the United Nations, are most severely endangered, arguably to an extent never seen in the post-Second World War period, due to the unprovoked, unjustified, and premeditated war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

The fact that a permanent member of the Security Council and a nuclear State has exercised brutal force, breaching the territorial integrity and sovereignty of its neighbouring country, should make everyone's blood run cold. The terror and crimes in Ukraine have brought us back to a dark era of brute force in international relations, factoring in solely hard power as a way of promoting self-centred and self-obsessed national interests. Such aggressive behaviour challenges the liberal international order as we know it today, standing as a pivotal piece of the mosaic that guarantees the equal rights of each country, along with the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

Montenegro firmly rejects and most seriously condemns the attempted illegal annexation by the Russian Federation of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson regions. We do not and

will never recognize the illegal so-called referendums organized by the Russian Federation nor their falsified and illegal results. Our position is clearly reflected in the joint statement of the Presidents of the Central and Eastern European NATO member States on Russian attempts to illegally annex Ukrainian territories. We call on all States and international organizations to unequivocally reject this attempted illegal annexation.

The brutality of Russian actions is clearly seen in the recent massive missile attacks against Ukrainian cities, including Kyiv. The terror and violence that the people of Ukraine are exposed to must stop immediately. The perpetrators must not go unpunished for unleashing such brute force and for violating international peace and security. There can be no impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other atrocity crimes. The people of Ukraine deserve justice.

I join many of my colleagues who have repeatedly pointed out from this rostrum that an attack on the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine is an attack on all of us, on the principles and goals of the United Nations Charter, and on our right to freely choose our own future. Russia will not stop in Ukraine. We have previously warned that the malign activities of Russia and its proxies in the Western Balkans represent a clear threat to the Western Balkans as well. As in 2016, when an attempted coup d'état was organized by members of the Russian intelligence services and others in the region, nowadays Montenegro is again subject to Russian spying and other destabilizing malign activities against its sovereignty and democracy. The goal of that harmful and hostile Russian interference is to destabilize my country, thereby undermining our European path.

For the reasons outlined, Montenegro co-sponsored and will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, to be adopted today, and call on others to do the same.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): It is a difficult proposition to accept that might should be right, and as we meet once again in this Hall on the question of Ukraine and for the cause of peace, it is necessary to recall that the relative stability of the present world order, forged in the aftermath of the horrors of the Second World War, has been built on our collective commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and our common respect for the rules of international law. Such commitment to the Charter and respect for international law, as required of all peace-loving Members of the United Nations, is not

a passive responsibility but an active duty requiring our engagement in support of peace, especially at moments of great challenge.

Today the world is not in a good place, as my President, His Excellency Mr. Nana Akufo-Addo, said to the Assembly a few weeks ago (see A/77/PV.7). The war against Ukraine, which commenced on 24 February, has challenged our common principles and the purposes for coming together as a United Nations. Its further execution threatens to not only send us into the abyss of a possible nuclear confrontation, but also, as the present reason for our gathering, the disintegration of State entities in ways that could unravel many fragile State situations around the world. We therefore believe that we have a responsibility as Members of the Organization to help the parties come to the table of peace and keep the ship of global order on an even keel.

That aspiration for peace cannot, however, be ad hoc or unilateral but must rest upon the established principles of the Charter and international law. It must begin by an affirmation of the rights of all Member States, no matter how small. It is in that context that Ghana reaffirms its full support for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine and considers the referendums and subsequent annexation by the Russian Federation of the Ukrainian territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya to be void and of no legal validity. We said so at the 22 and 30 September meetings of the Security Council (see S/PV.9135 and S/PV.9143, respectively) and repeat it here directly to all Member States.

In our principled position against the threat or use of force by any Member State in the acquisition of State territory, we have not misunderstood the initial security concerns stated by the Russian Federation or its evolving *raison d'être* offered for the war and the present annexation of territories. Those justifications are, however, matters that we believe should be addressed through the appropriate, specific mechanisms, as nothing can justify a resort to war as an instrument for pursuing a State's relations with others. Indeed, that is why we cannot share the arguments that some have sought to make by referring to unacceptable past actions of other Member States in justifying the present unacceptable actions. Apart from the inappropriateness of using historical wrongdoing to justify present unacceptable actions, how can we tolerate the death and

destruction being wrought against an independent State that did not first seek the pursuit of war?

In the face of the threats to our collective security, as an Assembly we must forge a role for creating an environment that is conducive to diplomatic engagement, including confidence-building measures and constructive good-faith dialogue between the parties. In that regard, we urge the parties to embrace the good offices of the Secretary-General, whose impartial role in the ongoing aggression against Ukraine is geared towards the restoration of the authority of the Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security. We also request the parties to strongly consider the peacemaking role that the International Court of Justice can play in resolving aspects of the dispute in a way that can de-escalate the ongoing conflict. States with influence on either party must also sustain their engagement for a settlement of the conflict.

While the task of bringing an end to the war has so far proven difficult, we cannot give up. As the collective custodians of the peace of our world, we must take every necessary action to strengthen the present fragile order. That includes using these debates to send a clear, unified message of support for the Charter and international law, the bases for a stable international system. Not doing so would lead the world towards a historical path of division and an unsustainable situation for peace and progress that would fly in the face of the aspirations of our populations for the resolution of the many complex and interrelated global challenges that demand strengthened multilateralism.

We therefore urge the good-faith implementation of global actions to address the knock-on effects of the aggression against Ukraine. Besides addressing the food security situation, including sustaining and enhancing the Black Sea Grain Initiative and arrangements to facilitate the export of Russian fertilizers and agro-products to areas where they are critically required, there is an urgent need to address the destabilization of the energy and financial markets, which is taking a heavy toll on people, especially in developing economies. The well-being of our populations must compel us to chart bold and decisive solutions through dialogue and cooperation as we face one of the most trying times of our generation.

Ultimately, however, the resolution of the challenges of food insecurity and the financial and energy crises being experienced globally is linked to the just

resolution of this unnecessary war. The barrel of the gun has proven no more than its ability to kill, maim and cause harm. The war in Ukraine must therefore end now to save us counting any more losses. We stress the prioritization of civilian protection and strongly urge an immediate end to targeted attacks on civilian populated areas, civilian infrastructure and critical infrastructure. We join others in calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities, and once again call on the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally, in line with its international obligations, withdraw its forces from the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine.

In conclusion, I re-echo our call for a united front in pursuing peace and stability in Ukraine and bringing hope and restoration to its people.

Mr. Ke (Cambodia): In upholding respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all Member States enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, Cambodia has cosponsored draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 and will vote in its favour.

The forcible annexation of regions from a sovereign country is a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and international law, which is not acceptable. In that regard, Cambodia urges that Ukraine's internationally recognized borders be fully respected. In ensuring the maintenance of international peace and security, it is indispensable that all Member States fully adhere to the principles and values of the only truly universal global Organization.

Since the war in Ukraine occurred in February, it has generated enormous challenges to international peace and security and the world economy at large, in particular through its negative impacts on food and energy security. The humanitarian consequences and suffering caused to the Ukrainian people are unimaginable. Cambodia joins other delegations in calling on all parties to resolve the conflict peacefully, with all possible means through negotiation and diplomacy, in order to find acceptable solutions to the conflict, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law.

There will be no winner in this war. The only terrible things that we will continue to see will be more human casualties, suffering, destruction and threats to use nuclear weapons in the conflict, which are of great concern to all of us. Therefore, the best way forward is to end the war as soon as possible, before it is too late.

Mr. Nzongola-Ntalaja (Democratic Republic of the Congo): The Democratic Republic of the Congo will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5, as we did for the first three resolutions on Ukraine, based on our commitment to the principles of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as our respect for the Charter of the United Nations, all of which the Russian Federation has violated in Ukraine. It has violated the independence, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Ukraine, and that should end.

At the same time, we deplore the politics of double standards of the powerful of this world when it comes to Africa. While a lot of time, money and weapons have been spent on Ukraine over the past eight months, very little attention is paid to my country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where over 7 million people have died as a result of aggression from neighbouring countries.

To cite just one example, Rwanda and Uganda invaded the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1998 and occupied large parts of eastern Congo until 2003. In 1999 and 2000, they even confronted each other militarily on three separate occasions in the city of Kisangani, leading to many people being killed by stray bullets. Today Rwanda continues to plunder the mineral and other natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and occupies the city of Bunagana and several other locations in North Kivu province. For 24 years, the international community has taken no strong action against that aggression. No Security Council or General Assembly resolution has been adopted to impose sanctions on Rwanda.

We support Ukraine. We want to see the war ended, but we would like to see the international community take similar action with respect to other situations in the world in which countries are being invaded and occupied.

Ms. Seid (Palau): Palau full aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (see A/ES-11/PV.12). We additionally make the following statement in our national capacity.

It has been eight months since the war in Ukraine started, and we are reconvening this emergency special session against the backdrop of brutal missile attacks against civilian infrastructure and cities across Ukraine that have killed many innocent civilians. Palau strongly condemns those attacks and would like to remind

everyone that indiscriminate attacks on innocent civilians are war crimes.

Palau also condemns and unequivocally rejects the illegal attempted annexation by Russia of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson regions, in addition to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. We do not recognize the sham referendums that Russia uses to justify it. At the start of this emergency special session, Russia attempted to blur transparency and sow confusion into a democratic process, and when that did not work it attempted to silence healthy debate by Member States before a historic vote. If we were all a bit confused at the onset of this session, one can only imagine how those referendums were conducted.

In addition to witnessing the horrors of war in Ukraine, we have also felt the pangs of war in our own countries. Children and families are going hungry from food inflation. People are unable to get to work due to rising energy prices. In countries like ours, which are hotter than ever as a result of climate change, people are at times unable to cool themselves because our energy prices have shot through the roof, and in temperate countries people, families and children will suffer from the bitter chill of winter because they will have no heat. That goes to show that, in our increasingly globalized world, we are all one and that an attack on one of our Member States is an attack on us all. It is those who are the most vulnerable, those who have already taken a heavy beating from the coronavirus disease pandemic, who must take another hit to their lives without respite.

Today I would like to tell a story about an incredible individual I recently had the distinct pleasure of meeting — Lewis Pugh. Lewis swims in the most vulnerable ecosystems on Earth to call for their protection. He was the first to swim across the North Pole and the first to swim the full length of the English Channel to convince the United Kingdom to join the 30x30 Initiative. In 2015, he took on the challenge of swimming in the Ross Sea in Antarctica, in an attempt to convince Russia to sign on to the treaty to turn the Ross Sea into the world's largest marine protected area — an initiative on which Russia had been the only holdout for five years — and he did it in nothing but a Speedo, a swim cap and goggles. On his experience of swimming in the Ross Sea, he says:

“At -37°C, which is -35°F, the air was so much colder than the freezing sea. Each time I lifted my

arm out of the water into that air, it was a drop of more than -35°C. The pain in my arm was more excruciating than the burning agony I felt in the rest of my body. With each stroke I watched myself freeze. After 100 metres, the first digits of my fingers were completely white. After 200 metres, the white had spread up to the second knuckle. At 300 metres, I could not feel my hands. I had undertaken the most southerly swim in the world. On that day, my message about the desperate need to protect the Ross Sea came to life.”

Pugh then flew from Antarctica directly to Moscow and began a two-year process of trying to convince the Kremlin to join the treaty. Because of his swim, he received widespread media attention in Russia and went on a highly publicized tour. He was able to become friends with Russian hockey legend and Sports Minister Slava Fetisov and his message got through to the Kremlin and to Putin, who, after blocking the treaty for five years, signed on. When he received the phone call that Russia would sign the treaty, he said it was the happiest day of his life. His dedication had helped create the world's largest marine protected area.

I tell this story because those of us who are fortunate enough to be here do not have to swim in sub-zero waters to reach the halls of power. But to enact change we have to do things that are uncomfortable, to have the hard conversations, to push our leaders to act and attempt to broker peace, and do what we can so that our individual actions aggregate into a collective world that cannot be ignored — because it is our collective energy that will shift the world.

My call to action today is directed at the Member States that have remained neutral — those that have chosen not to vote or to abstain. The reasons are varied. Some do not want to be embroiled in what has been touted as a geopolitical war of influence. Some have strong socioeconomic ties to Russia. Some have said that they want to remain neutral so as to allow Russia to come back to dialogue. However, after eight months of bloodshed, which has been escalating by the day, we all know that that is ever more unlikely.

Palau therefore asks for their vote today in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 in order to codify the premise that we do not live in an age where we allow countries to annex other countries through sham referendums, and to uphold the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations that govern relations

among nations in the twenty-first century. That includes respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity — the notion that nations do not simply redraw borders or make decisions at the expense of their neighbours because they are larger or more powerful.

To those countries that are close friends with Russia, we say that, in life, true friends are those who have the courage and conviction to tell you the truth and to urge you back on the right path when you have gone wrong, even when it is uncomfortable. Only through collective action can we change the trajectory of the war and allow the world to get back on the path to peace, not just for the benefit of Ukrainians, but also for those most vulnerable in all our countries who have been made to suffer as a result of Russia's aggression. It has often been said that the moments that challenge us the most define us. What will be the legacy of the United Nations? The water will be cold, but let us all jump in.

Mr. Nunes (Timor-Leste): Timor-Leste joins other delegations in expressing its full support for the convening of this emergency special session on Ukraine.

Ukraine is sovereign, independent and a Member of the United Nations. We share the Secretary-General's view that any annexation of a State's territory by another State resulting from the threat or use of force is a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It is our moral obligation to defend the sacred principles of sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. The supremacy of international law must be upheld to ensure peace and stability. For Timor-Leste, upholding the international rules-based order and the United Nations Charter is not an option; it is a must.

Timor-Leste is deeply concerned with the escalation of war in Ukraine. We have been witnessing for almost eight months the killing of innocent people and the destruction of hundreds, if not thousands of elements of critical infrastructure and facilities in Ukraine, as well as the explosion of the Nord Stream 1 pipeline and the bridge that links Crimea and Russia. The French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre said, "When the rich wage war, it is the poor who die".

Timor-Leste believes that the only way to settle the conflict is through a genuine diplomatic solution in an amicable way, aimed at mutual benefit. Experience shows that war destroys communities and families

and disrupts the social and economic development of nations, rather than generating peace and prosperity. Timor-Leste believes that peace is possible. We have to work on it and make it happen. The Russian Federation and Ukraine are brothers and neighbours. Mutual respect and understanding are prerequisites to creating peaceful coexistence. We therefore call upon all countries to help the two States to construct peace and to live peacefully, side-by-side, as good neighbours.

To conclude, allow me to quote the statement of the President of the Republic of Timor-Leste, delivered in the Assembly Hall on 23 September during the general debate:

"Russia, Ukraine and NATO countries must swallow their pride, review the past policies that have led to this mutual suicide, back away from each other's borders, let the Ukrainians rebuild their country and their lives and let Russia retreat in security to its borders." (*A/77/PV.10, p.3*)

Mr. Geisler (Germany): We the peoples of the United Nations founded the Organization to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Today a permanent member of the Security Council, with a particular responsibility to maintain international peace and security, has brought that scourge back upon us all. Russia's playbook is simple. It denies its sovereign neighbour the very right to exist and has launched a war of aggression. Russia has seized land. To secure its land grab, Russia organized what it calls "referendums" in several Ukrainian territories. Russia now threatens to keep the territories it illegally attempted to annex by any means necessary. It does not even shy away from making nuclear threats against a country that has voluntarily given up its own nuclear arsenal.

Therefore, I am asking today: Does the Russian Government still subscribe to the declaration from 3 January by the leaders of all five nuclear-weapon States, reaffirming the central principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought?

Today it is Ukraine; tomorrow it could be any of us. The sovereign equality and territorial integrity of any of us would be at the mercy of our neighbours or of whoever feels they have a territorial claim or a historical grievance. The sham referendums and Russia's illegal annexations are null and void. We are all under a legal obligation to refuse to recognize them — not now, not ever. The Charter of the United Nations is crystal clear — we have an obligation to "settle... international

disputes by peaceful means”. Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.5 recalls that obligation while reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

On 2 March, 141 States members of the Assembly voted in favour of resolution ES-11/1. By doing so, they voiced their strong support for the founding principles of the United Nations and called on Russia to stop this war. That was a great moment in the history of this noble Assembly. Now is the time to stand by our principles and to show once again our passion and support for the United Nations Charter.

Many United Nations Member States have recently voiced their wish that this war be settled by means of diplomacy. That is reflected in the text of the draft resolution. We are grateful for the many valuable contributions to the text from across the globe.

The Secretary-General has been clear that Russia’s decision to annex

“cannot be reconciled with the international legal framework. It stands against everything the international community is meant to stand for. It flouts the purposes and principles of the United Nations. It is a dangerous escalation. It has no place in the modern world. It must not be accepted”.

Let us heed that call of the Secretary-General. Let us stand by the United Nations Charter. Only a clear and principled commitment to the Charter can serve as a basis for future talks. I count on everyone to vote in favour of the draft resolution on the table.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Ms. Silva-Leander (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance): The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) continues to strongly condemn the unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine waged by the Russian Federation, violating the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which states that

“[a]ll Member States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations”.

We reiterate to the Assembly that the war and the atrocities committed in Ukraine, a sovereign nation and a democracy, are in breach of international law, international agreements, the United Nations Charter and the rules-based international order.

International IDEA deplores the illegal and illegitimate holding of referendums in Ukraine’s occupied territories on joining the Russian Federation. Staged to imitate the pursuit of self-determination of people, they are an egregious abuse of that direct democracy tool by a hostile occupying Power and an illegal attempt to modify the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine.

The referendums violate the Constitution of Ukraine, which states that the organization and procedure for conducting referendums “are determined exclusively by the laws of Ukraine”. They are conducted in gross violation of established principles of international humanitarian and human rights law. In the context of Russia’s continued assault and ongoing occupation, the organization of a referendum aided or organized by occupying forces presumptively violates the Hague Regulations of 1907 and the Fourth Geneva Convention. In no circumstances can those referendums be considered as an exercise of a right to self-determination through remedial secession.

International IDEA calls on the international community to condemn the referendums as illegitimate and illegal and not to recognize the forcible and illegal annexation of the territories by Russia.

We also deplore Russia’s use and abuse of the veto power in the Security Council, a body created to guarantee international peace and security, not to enable war and its perpetrators. The systematic abuse of veto powers in the Security Council calls for profound reform of that organ to ensure that it can truly uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter.

We also wish to remind the Assembly that the conflict is not only about sovereignty, but also about democracy. The survival of democracy in Ukraine is not an add-on in the territorial defence of the country, but a fundamental aspect of it. Russia’s war of aggression is also an attack on a democratic political system that securely places the destiny of the country in the hands of Ukrainian civilians and out of the reach of Russia. We therefore also urge members of the Assembly that will support Ukraine’s reconstruction process to place democracy at its centre.

We reiterate our firm belief that international crises should be addressed through the means of multilateral diplomacy and resolved on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter.

We urge Russia to immediately end its full-scale unlawful invasion of Ukraine and we demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all its military forces from Ukraine. We welcome the adoption and enforcement of sanctions by the international community against the Russian Federation until the withdrawal of its forces from Ukraine and the full restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity.

International IDEA will continue to do its part, in collaboration with the United Nations, our member States and other democratic Governments and organizations, to protect, in Ukraine and elsewhere, the principle that every country has a right to freely determine its own fate

on the basis of the will of the people, freely expressed. Democracy's institutions and processes, such as free and fair elections and democratic referendums, are the best means to protect that right. They must not be manipulated for authoritarian purposes.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the award of the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize to the Ukrainian human rights organization Center for Civil Liberties, to human rights advocate Ales Bialiatski of Belarus and to the Russian human rights organization Memorial. That award acknowledges the importance of civil society in resisting the authoritarian assault. It is also a way of stating that, in this time and age, the quest for global peace — which is at the heart of the mission of this organ — demands the protection of democracy in Ukraine and elsewhere.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.