



# General Assembly

Eleventh Emergency Special session

**17<sup>th</sup>** plenary meeting  
Wednesday, 22 February 2023, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Kőrösi ..... (Hungary)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**The President:** I declare the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly resumed. Members will recall that in paragraph 5 of its resolution ES-11/5, of 14 November 2022, the Assembly decided

“to adjourn the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly temporarily and to authorize the President of the General Assembly to resume its meetings upon request from Member States”.

In that regard, I should like to draw the attention of delegations to document A/ES-11/14, which contains the text of a letter dated 10 February 2023 from the Permanent Representatives of Albania, Australia, Canada, Guatemala, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Türkiye, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America and the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, addressed to the President of the General Assembly, requesting a resumption of the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly.

I intend to conduct the proceedings of this meeting in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and the past practices of its emergency special sessions.

## Agenda item 142 (continued)

### Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

#### Letter dated 14 February 2023 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/ES-11/15)

**The President:** In keeping with established practice, I should now like to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/ES-11/15, concerning Member States that are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes due note of the information contained in that document?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** In that connection, I should like to recall that at the 12th plenary meeting of the eleventh emergency special session, the General Assembly decided to follow the provisions of resolution 77/2 of 7 October 2022, by which the Comoros, Sao Tome and Principe and Somalia are permitted to vote in the General Assembly until the end of its seventy-seventh session and to also allow those Member States to vote in the eleventh emergency special session.

## Agenda item 5 (continued)

### Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations

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**addressed to the President of the Security Council  
(S/2014/136)**

**Draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7)**

**Draft amendments (A/ES-11/L.8 and A/ES-11/L.9)**

**The President:** Today we mark the grim first anniversary of the war in Ukraine, a year of despair, displacement, destruction and death on a scale not seen in Europe in decades. The staggering scale of loss defies humans' ability to absorb, with thousands of civilians and soldiers dead and countless more injured; 8 million refugees spread across Europe and beyond; 6 million internally displaced persons — two thirds of them women and children — with families separated, often not knowing about the fate of their loved ones; and the systematic targeting of civilian infrastructure, which has left millions of Ukrainians without energy, water and heat in the depths of winter.

To be clear, the targeting of civilian infrastructure is a direct violation of international humanitarian law. When those are the headlines of our day, we are indeed in a new chapter of history. We are facing stark choices about who we are as an international community and how we will rebuild the trust lost among us here in this Hall and in us by the peoples of the world. Those choices will either set us on a path of solidarity and collective resolve to uphold the tenets of the Charter of the United Nations or a path of aggression, war, normalized violations of international law and collapsed global action.

The General Assembly has condemned in the strongest terms Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its morally and legally indefensible war against its sovereign neighbour. For a full year, the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the international community have been consistent and vocal in calls to end the war and to adhere to the Charter and international law. But it bears repeating today that aggression is illegal. Invading a neighbour is illegal. Annexing another country's territory is illegal. Over the past year, every Member State represented in this Hall has been affected by these events, which have sparked an energy crisis across a continent, caused pernicious inflation far beyond that continent and unleashed a global food security crisis on those least able to survive one — from the drought-affected Horn of Africa to war-torn Yemen and the refugee camps of Syria.

I commend the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the efforts by the Secretary-General, Türkiye, Ukraine and the Russian Federation to ensure the clearance of food exports for global markets. I call on the parties to support the Grain Initiative's renewal in March and to expedite inspections. Its continued and timely implementation is critical to saving lives and stabilizing global prices. It offers a strong example of crisis management in action. Against that backdrop, the threat of nuclear warfare still looms large, as do the dangers of a nuclear accident.

*(spoke in Russian)*

That threat is an unthinkable one with potentially catastrophic global consequences. A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. I strongly support the important work being done by the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure nuclear safety in Ukraine. I underscore the urgent need to reaffirm the commitment to global disarmament and the non-proliferation regime.

*(spoke in English)*

No one can be complacent. To all who are suffering the consequences of this war, I say that they are not forgotten. We see them. We hear them. Across the United Nations system, we are working tirelessly to find solutions to their plight and to support them on the road to reconstruction. I commend Member States that have already begun to provide that assistance, and I call for further support to rebuild the country. In the General Assembly, there has been firm support for a political solution. Three resolutions adopted during the eleventh emergency special session have referenced political dialogue, negotiations, mediation and other peaceful means — a solution based on the Charter and international law that respects Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

This war will come to an end. And the time for reconstruction, reconciliation and transformation will come. We know it will not be easy. We know the scars are deep. Culture, family bonds, sports, arts and the acknowledgement of the shared destiny of humankind will certainly help the nations currently facing each other in the trenches.

*(spoke in Russian)*

Allow me now to address the leaders and the people of the Russian Federation. Russia has been and remains a major member of the community of nations. The rest of the Member States are waiting for Russia return to

the path of establishing and preserving peace in order to contribute to common stability and prosperity. May this anniversary — and the millions of people who have suffered before our very eyes over the past year — serve as a reminder to all of us here in this Hall that military solutions will not put an end to this war. Too many lives, livelihoods, families and local communities have been lost. Russia can end this aggression. Russia can end the war it unleashed. Russia must put an end to this infernal bloodshed.

*(spoke in English)*

I call on the parties and the international community to recommit to the values, principles and purposes of the Charter. Upholding and preserving our constitution for “we the peoples” must be the common interest of all Member States. There is no alternative.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

**The Secretary-General:** The one-year mark of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine stands as a grim milestone for the people of Ukraine and for the international community. The invasion is an affront to our collective conscience. It is a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It is having massive humanitarian and human rights consequences, and its impact is being felt far beyond Ukraine. As I have said from day one, Russia’s attack on Ukraine challenges the cornerstone principles and values of our multilateral system. The Charter is unambiguous when it states in Article 2, paragraph 4,

“All 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.”

The General Assembly has addressed, in the clearest terms, the attempt by the Russian Federation to illegally annex four regions of Ukraine — Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, Donetsk and Luhansk. In doing so, the Assembly reaffirmed long-standing principles of international law contained in its landmark 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, namely, that

“[t]he territory of a State shall not be the object of acquisition by another State resulting from the

threat or use of force [and] no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as legal” (*resolution 2625 (XXV), para. 1*).

The position of the United Nations is unequivocal. We are committed to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

*(spoke in French)*

The United Nations has remained on the ground working with humanitarian partners. Four of 10 Ukrainians are in need of humanitarian assistance. Vital infrastructure has been targeted. Water, power and heating systems have been destroyed in the middle of winter. United Nations agencies are also working with host countries, which have welcomed more than 8 million Ukrainians, representing the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War. Last week, the United Nations launched a \$5.6 billion humanitarian appeal for the benefit of the people of Ukraine. I urge everybody to provide their unwavering support. Since the war began, I have visited Ukraine twice, where I have heard accounts of grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. In this conflict, like others, the United Nations is committed to ensuring justice and accountability.

*(spoke in English)*

Even amid the brutality of war, we have worked in concerted and creative ways to forge solutions. In Mariupol, the United Nations helped evacuate civilians trapped in the Azovstal steel plant. The Black Sea Grain Initiative has shown that it is possible for Ukraine and Russia to advance global food security, with the support of the Government of Türkiye and the United Nations. Despite the ongoing challenges, the Initiative for shipping grain and other foodstuffs from Ukraine is making a difference. We are working hard to remove all remaining obstacles to the implementation of the memorandum of understanding between the Secretariat and the Russian Federation to facilitate exports of Russian food and fertilizer to global markets. This is also an important contribution to addressing global food insecurity, and we will continue to support such initiatives for the benefit of millions of people across the world, especially in the global South. Notwithstanding deep mistrust, the parties to the conflict have also worked out regular exchanges of prisoners of war, facilitated by regional actors. Those efforts can and must continue and expand as much as possible.

Over the past year, not only have we seen suffering and devastation grow, it is also becoming more evident just how much worse it could all still become. The possible consequences of a spiralling conflict are a clear and present danger. Every day we are reminded of the grave threat that haunts us all when irresponsible military activity continues around the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, the largest such facility in Europe. I commend the International Atomic Energy Agency for engaging the sides to ensure that the area remains safe. The security and safety of all Ukrainian nuclear plants must be guaranteed. The war is also fanning regional instability and fuelling global tensions and divisions, while diverting attention and resources from other crises and pressing global issues. Meanwhile, we have heard implicit threats of the possible use of nuclear weapons. The so-called tactical use of nuclear weapons is utterly unacceptable. It is high time to step back from the brink. Complacency will only deepen the crisis while further eroding our shared principles proclaimed in the Charter.

War is not the solution. War is the problem. People in Ukraine are suffering enormously. Ukrainians, Russians and people far beyond those countries' borders need peace. While the prospects may look bleak today, we must all work knowing that genuine lasting peace must be based on the Charter and international law. The longer the fighting continues, the more difficult that work will be. We do not have a moment to lose.

**The President:** I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine to introduce draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7.

**Mr. Kuleba (Ukraine):** The one-year mark since the Russian Federation began its full-scale aggression against Ukraine is approaching. I stood here at this very rostrum exactly one year ago (see A/76/PV.58). That was 23 February 2022 — 24 hours before the aggression began. A massive Russian force hung over Ukraine, preparing to deal a devastating blow to my country and wipe it off the face of the world map. The first strikes hit us early in the morning. Ever since then Ukraine has exercised its legitimate right to self-defence enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The Ukrainian people made a choice to fight for their lives. Against all odds, we were able to stop our much stronger aggressor and kick it out of half of the newly occupied territory of our country. But even after failing so badly and losing so many, Russia still wants to

destroy Ukraine as a sovereign nation. No one should be fooled by the Russians' empty calls for negotiations. The current situation on the front line proves that they want war, not peace. They are on the attack all along the front line, from the Dnipro River to the Russian border. They keep striking Ukraine's civilian infrastructure with salvos of cruise missiles and drones made in Iran.

That is why we have no choice but to keep fighting for our survival, as any Member State would do. The world has seen terrible atrocities committed by Russians in the occupied territories. The murder of unarmed civilians, torture and rape, looting, terror, political persecution and indiscriminate shelling, as well as deliberate attacks on civilian infrastructure and the forcible transfer and deportation of thousands of Ukrainian children and their subsequent adoption into Russian families in order to re-educate them as Russians. That is genocide, and that is what we face today. For Ukraine, giving up would mean that such atrocities would be committed all over our territory, and I am confident that any nation represented in this Hall would do the same in our place. It would fight.

I know that some still think and sometimes say, "We want to be friends with both Ukraine and Russia. Let it all just end soon with whatever result." I can understand that. The problem is that this war does not have two equal sides. It has an aggressor and a victim. I understand that there are still some countries that do not want to take Ukraine's side, for various reasons. But it is not about that. It is about taking the side of the Charter of the United Nations, of international law, of General Assembly resolutions. Those are our common rules, and we are all interested in upholding them, with the exception of the Russian Federation, which thinks that rules do not apply to it and exist only to be violated.

We are all talking about peace today. But what is peace? Is it the freedom of the occupier to rule over the land it has ravaged? Is it impunity for war criminals? Is it a respite and a chance to prepare for a new war and new crimes? We will only worsen the problem if we replace one ugly reality with another and call it peace. True peace came in 1945 not because the forces of good stopped fighting, but because evil was defeated. Peace means justice.

Three months ago, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy outlined our vision for ensuring comprehensive, just and long-term peace in Ukraine, as well as global security — the peace formula. The plan is based on 10 points — one, radiation and nuclear safety;



two, food security; three, energy security; four, the release of prisoners and deported persons; five, the implementation of the Charter of the United Nations to restore the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders; six, a withdrawal of Russian troops and a cessation of hostilities; seven, the restoration of justice, including with the creation of a special tribunal; eight, the prevention of ecocide; nine, the prevention of the escalation of war and a repetition of aggression; and 10, confirmation of the end of the war. That vision is realistic and true to the facts. It covers all areas where peace has to be restored. It addresses the real needs and challenges faced by the people who suffer from the war. Each of the steps can be implemented if there is a strong will for peace among many nations and if we all unite our efforts around the same goal. Instead of hiding behind the mask of neutrality, let us choose the side of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Never in recent history has the line between good and evil been so clear. One country merely wants to live in peace, and I represent that country. The other wants to kill and destroy, and it has its representatives too. There is no country in the world that wants peace as much as Ukraine does. We never wanted war. We never planned to attack anyone. Our troops are not standing on anyone else's land. We are exercising our legitimate right to self-defence and doing it pretty effectively. We know what we are fighting for. We are defending our land, our families and our homes. Can anyone say what the Russians are dying for in a foreign land? That is why the calls for ceasing the delivery of weapons and ammunition to Ukraine are badly misplaced. It is perfectly legitimate to help a nation that has been attacked and is justifiably defending itself. It is an act in defence of the Charter of the United Nations. It is an act in favour of ending the war sooner and achieving a lasting and just peace. Indeed, it is illegal and against the Charter of the United Nations to give military help to an aggressor. It is an act that escalates war and prolongs atrocities, destruction and suffering.

The principle of territorial integrity cannot be compromised. Is there anyone in this Hall who is ready to give away one square metre of its territory to a bloodthirsty neighbour? We all know the answer — no one is, and Ukraine is one of the people in this Hall. The world will drown in chaos if we allow borders to be changed by force in the guise of political expediency or sympathy towards an aggressor. With the support of the world, Ukraine can restore its territorial integrity

and respect for the Charter of the United Nations, and it will. And that will discourage Russia and other aggressors from wanting to attack other nations.

To achieve that noble goal, we need to send a strong and clear message that the Charter of the United Nations, including its principles of the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States, should serve as a basis for the process of peaceful resolution. I therefore call on the members of the United Nations to support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, entitled “Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine”. It will contribute to our joint efforts to bring the war to an end and protect the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter.

Exactly a year ago, I was standing here appealing to the nations united in this Hall about the need to prevent war. A year later, against all the odds, Ukraine is defending itself effectively against a much stronger enemy. My appeal to Member States is that this is a decisive moment to show support, unity and solidarity. It is the moment for all to prove that they stand for the Charter of the United Nations, in words and in deeds.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Belarus to introduce the draft amendments contained in documents A/ES-11/L.8 and A/ES-11/L.9.

**Mr. Rybakov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*):** The Republic of Belarus has the honour of submitting two draft amendments (A/ES-11/L.8 and A/ES-11/L.9) to the draft resolution entitled “Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine” (A/ES-11/L.7).

The purpose of these draft amendments, which members of the Assembly will see once they have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with them, is to rectify the inaccuracies in the text of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 with respect to the real reasons for the conflict. We have mentioned these reasons many times, but for some reason the genesis of the conflict and what it is about are not mentioned in the draft resolution at all; nor does the text include important language that would ensure that its content is in alignment with its title, which would send a powerful signal of the international community's genuine interest in ending the conflict in Ukraine as soon as possible.

The object of the first draft amendment we are submitting (A/ES-11/L.8) is to take the draft resolution

out of the grey area of half-truths, where the authors, in pursuit of lofty expressions, have distorted the facts. For example, the fifth preambular paragraph describes what is being done by Russia as a fully-fledged invasion into Ukraine, which in our view is not in line with the reality, because if Russia had not limited itself to conducting just a special military operation and not, as the draft resolution says, a fully-fledged invasion, especially if it used its full military potential, that would have been something no one would wish for. If Russia had not limited itself, I do not think any country on the planet would have been able to survive, not just several hours but even minutes. The leadership of Russia never said anything of kind in describing its goal for the special military operation.

We, the Republic of Belarus, believe that the only chance of ending the conflict is to immediately start negotiations without any kind of precondition, which was stated on several occasions by the President of the Republic of Belarus — basically in every statement he makes. Mr. Lukashenko has been doing this throughout the conflict for about a year now. Nonetheless, what is repeated yet again in non-consensual operative paragraph 5 in the text only takes us further away from the goal of attaining peace.

At the Security Council meeting on 17 February 2023 (see S/PV.9262), the Republic of Belarus quoted former Heads of State and Government of the Normandy Four who recently publicly and voluntarily acknowledged that from the very beginning they were not interested in peace in Ukraine at a time when they were working on the agreements contained in the Minsk II package in February 2015. We think that lying in the course of negotiations on a peace resolution, especially at such a level, is completely unacceptable, and we are convinced that the General Assembly should condemn the irresponsible acts of those politicians who played such a specific role in creating the preconditions for the current conflict.

The second draft amendment we are submitting (A/ES-11/L.9) has the goal of incorporating in the text the major elements needed for a peaceful settlement. We think that it is either a tragic oversight by the proponents and sponsors of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, or it is an intentional step to leave out of a draft resolution aimed at a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine an appeal to holding peace negotiations. The Republic of Belarus has been calling for peace negotiations since the very first days of the conflict; even prior to

the conflict, we have been saying the same thing. Let me just simply remind the General Assembly that it is thanks to the efforts made by the President of the Republic of Belarus in February and March 2022 that it was possible to organize several rounds of negotiations between Kyiv and Moscow in Belarus, and this, at the time, gave us all reason for cautious optimism. Bringing about the breakdown in these negotiations together with the continuous pumping of Ukraine with weaponry has resulted in protracting the confrontation. This in turn leads to the escalation of military activities, new victims and also delays to the prospects of peace in Ukraine.

We are equally concerned by the irresponsible statements made by individual politicians about their readiness to provide Ukraine with lethal weaponry up to and including weapons of mass destruction. If these plans are to be implemented, this would inevitably lead to a new spiral of escalation, countless victims and the very real prospect of a global conflict. This is not something we can allow to happen, which is precisely what the objective of draft amendment A/ES-11/L.9 is.

The draft amendments we are submitting have no hidden agenda, and we genuinely think that their goal is to end the conflict as soon as possible using peaceful means. But voting on these draft amendments we will consider to be a test whether members are truly interested in attaining a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): A little more than a year ago, Ukraine and its Western sponsors convened the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly. At the time, many of the States Members of the United Nations were disoriented and yielded to the collective West, which was claiming that nothing more terrible had happened in the history of humankind, which was why the reaction to what was being done by Russia was unprecedented. Since then, many Member States have better understood the reasons for what happened and what is happening now, and it has become much more difficult for the Western camp to mobilize States Members to support their crusade against Russia. This is quite obvious in the emptied out draft resolution that we have before us (A/ES-11/L.7), which nonetheless remains anti-Russia and harmful — a topic to which I will return later. The point is that the chances of getting support for something more substantive, given that Member States are much better informed now, are

increasingly remote, and what our opponents need, first and foremost now, are numbers and voices.

Let me therefore summarize and discuss what Member States have found out about Western thinking and how our world has changed over time. First of all, it became obvious that the main element of the anti-Russia propaganda campaign conducted by our former Western partners consists of accusing Russia of unprovoked aggression against its neighbour, which is the result of imperial ambitions and the desire to take hold of foreign territory and destroy Ukraine as such. Believing these absurdities is possible only if one forgets about the eight years that preceded our special military operations, which is how long the criminal nationalist regime that arrived in Kyiv as a result of an anti-constitutional coup supported by the West kept waging a bloody war against the people in Donbas, whose only crime was that they wanted to remain Russian, see their children as Russian, honour the memory of their ancestors and refused to glorify Nazis and their acolytes. Starting history on 24 February 2022, ignoring everything that came before it, is an intentional attempt by the collective West to confuse people and hide the real reasons for the conflict, when they are in fact key for understanding the prospects for its peaceful settlement.

Thanks to the well-known revelations of a number of retired Western leaders, today no doubts remain that under the cover of the Security Council-endorsed Minsk agreements, the West was deliberately preparing Ukraine for war against our country. With the connivance and complicity of Americans and Europeans, a truly authoritarian and oppressive regime was formed and steadily armed in Kyiv, gradually destroying any opposition and everything that could be linked to Russia, however remotely. In a country in which Russian is the native language for most of the population and that shared a cultural unity with us for centuries, such a policy effectively meant rupturing fundamental social ties and establishing an artificial paradigm with Ukraine as the anti-Russia.

During those years the Kyiv regime continued its inhumane policy of shelling the peaceful towns of the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics, killing civilians, including children. We regularly informed the Security Council and the General Assembly about it and convened meetings and events at the United Nations in which the people of Donbas themselves were invited to voice their views and talk about their tragedy.

Anyone who followed those meetings understands very well that we had no option but to defend the people of Donbas and ensure the security of our country by military means. In other words, we started the special military operation to stop the Kyiv authorities' eight-year war on the people of Donetsk and Luhansk.

We warned against the collective West's military development of the territory of neighbouring Ukraine, representing a direct threat to our national security. But time after time the West showed defiant scorn for Russia's concerns and continued bringing NATO's military infrastructure closer to our borders. The statements by some States blaming Russia for ruining the regional and global security system are hypocritical. Our Western colleagues prefer not to remember this now, but at the end of 2021 Russia put forward a range of initiatives for de-escalation and confidence-building in the Euro-Atlantic area and proposed that the United States and NATO sign agreements on security assurances, thereby giving diplomacy a chance. But the United States and its allies rejected it arrogantly, refusing point blank even to talk about our initiatives, which if implemented would have enabled us to avoid what we are seeing today.

And now we understand why they did so. At the time when we were proposing reaching an agreement on security assurances, the West was already working flat out to turn Ukraine into a full-fledged military base right on our borders. Considering that background, why should we have any reason to trust Western representatives' claims that they want peace? In my view, today, a year after the active phase of the Ukrainian crisis began, few doubts remain that Russia is fighting not Ukraine — which essentially exhausted its military potential in the first few weeks of the special military operation — but rather the collective West, in the form of the United States and its allies in NATO and the European Union. They are not only supplying Ukraine with arms and munitions but providing the Armed Forces of Ukraine with intelligence data and coordinating the targets for its missile strikes.

At the same time, the West that used to tell us reassuring tales about some kind of partnership and cooperation has now shown its true colours. Throwing decorum aside, the West has set itself the goal of arming Ukraine and ensuring Russia's strategic defeat, dismemberment and destruction. These kinds of plans are being openly discussed in a number of Eastern European capitals and in the European Parliament, and

slogans to that effect are being promoted by current American and European politicians. For the sake of that goal, the West has continued to turn a blind eye to the resurgence of neo-Nazism in Ukraine and its glorification of Nazi criminals.

It is becoming entirely clear that the Ukrainian crisis was merely a catalyst for bringing an underlying savage Russophobia to the surface that has now virulently infected the United States and European elites, who are now competing with one another to impose ever increasing numbers of sanctions on our country that in actual fact hit the developing world harder. In the rush to defeat Russia at any cost, they are willing not only to sacrifice Ukraine but to plunge the whole world into the abyss of war, because for them what is at stake is maintaining the hegemony of the United States and its allies. They do not want anyone else to be in control of our world, because they believe that the entire planet is their fiefdom. As Mr. Borrell put it, they are a beautiful garden and the rest of us are merely the jungle. However, the collective West has not responded to calls from seriously worried developing States to stop. Whatever quote-unquote peace plan that Kyiv or its Western sponsors put out into the information space boils down to one thing and one thing only, which is Russia's capitulation. That has long been obvious to everyone, and the real attitude of the Kyiv regime to negotiations is eloquently testified to by the Ukrainian presidential decree of September last year banning the conduct of talks with the Russian leadership.

Thanks to the revelations of Naftali Bennett, the former Prime Minister of Israel, no doubts remain that in March last year, when our special military operation was in its very early stages, the Zelenskyy regime, under pressure from its Western masters, repudiated its own ideas about lasting peace with Russia that it had shared with us during negotiations, which would have enabled us to peacefully resolve the issues that had forced us start the military operation in the first place. Of course, it was not to see Ukraine and Russia once again living in peace and security as good neighbours that Washington, London and Brussels had armed and fortified the Kyiv regime and made Ukraine the anti-Russia. Our African and Asian partners are well acquainted with a colonialist approach that pits neighbours against one another. That toolkit has never changed.

And what is the result today? We have a blazing crisis in Ukraine that the West is fuelling with ever

more supplies of weapons to fight its hybrid war against us down to the last Ukrainian. And now the people behind those decisions are not so much the politicians cherishing empty fantasies of defeating Russia on the battlefield and more the rapacious arms lobby reaping massive profits and a perfect testing ground for new types of weapons in combat conditions. Meanwhile, the West's involvement in the conflict is increasingly shifting from indirect to direct, with consequences that are visible everywhere, from the food and energy crisis provoked by Western sanctions to the explosion that blew up the Nord Stream gas pipeline, which will of course have to be answered for, whatever happens.

And we have the population of Ukraine suffering from the criminal Kyiv regime as they are used as cannon fodder for the sake of Western geopolitical ambitions. The Ukrainians who end up in the West become labourers with no rights, serving their Western masters and prey to violence and exploitation. That is why, more than anything, despite the rampant Russophobic propaganda, in order to escape the hostilities a majority of them go to Russia, where we love and respect the Ukrainian people.

As far as my country is concerned, we see all of this as a war with the West for our survival, for the future of our country, our children and our identity. Just as happened 80 years ago, this is a war in which we have been challenged by a cunning and mighty enemy that wants to take away our land and subjugate us. The Russophobia, the calls for dismantling Russia, the German tanks that are once again being sent to kill Russians and the calls to sew red stars on the clothes of those not willing to forsake their Russian identity only strengthen that impression. And the realization of that plan began not today but at least as far back as 2014, with the creation and reinforcement of a hostile regime at our borders. And Ukraine is nothing more than a bargaining chip in that plan.

And if that is the case, then as we all understand perfectly, the quest for a solution to the whole situation — which threatens hugely negative consequences for all humankind should there be a direct confrontation between Russia and NATO — should now be conducted not between Russia and Ukraine but between Russia and the collective West, and first and foremost Washington, which is supporting the Kyiv regime. We are willing to seek a serious and long-term diplomatic solution to the crisis and have said so repeatedly. However, our opponents have not



yet recovered from their futile illusions about the possibility of defeating a nuclear Power. That is why we had to use military means to address the reasons that compelled us to launch the special military operation a year ago.

I have one last question. How can the States Members of the United Nations help to advance a peaceful settlement of the dispute between Russia and the West that escalated a year ago? One thing we can definitely say is that draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, which is being put to vote today, will not help. It is designed rather to embolden the West in its actions and give our opponents a reason to back up their claim that Russia is supposedly isolated in the world, thereby enabling them to continue their militaristic Russophobic policies under the guise of Member States' alleged support. The Kyiv regime, of course, will use the draft resolution in its propaganda. In fact, it is already doing so — only yesterday Mr. Zelenskyy announced that the General Assembly was meeting to adopt a draft resolution in support of his notorious 10-point peace plan. And that is despite the fact that as we understand it, any mention of that misleading initiative has been removed from the draft at the insistence of a number of our colleagues at the United Nations. Unfortunately, the Kyiv regime's gift for deceit is incorrigible, and people here have no idea of its depths, which we are too familiar with.

Is it possible to rectify the situation and prevent the West from using this document for its own purposes, especially at a time when many Member States are under relentless pressure and blackmail from Washington and its allies? Yes, it is possible and it can be done by supporting the balancing amendments (A/ES-11/L.8 and A/ES-11/L.9) that my Belarusian colleague introduced just now. If they are rejected and the document remains as it is at present — one-sided and detached from reality — we urge all delegations to vote against the draft resolution.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission.

**Mr. Borrell Fontelles** (European Union): As everyone knows, this week marks one year since Russia started its illegal invasion of Ukraine. That was and remains a clear-cut case of aggression by a permanent member of the Security Council, namely Russia, as everyone knows. It constitutes a blatant violation of international law and the principles of the Charter of

the United Nations. The world needs peace in Ukraine and the people of Ukraine deserve peace after so much suffering. But it cannot be just any peace — we need a peace grounded in the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

That is why we are here in this Hall today and that is what draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, presented by Ukraine, is about. It is about reiterating our support for Ukraine and setting out the principles for peace. I want to stress that the war on Ukraine is not a European issue. It is not about the West versus Russia. No — this illegal war concerns everyone, North, South, East or West. It concerns the whole world. We are here today to reiterate our support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, as we would for any State Member of the United Nations. Indeed, sovereignty and territorial integrity are the principles that Russia is attacking in Ukraine every day. They are also the principles we have to uphold everywhere, every day. If we do not condemn and stop Russia's actions in Ukraine today, the risk that any other country, anywhere in the world, could face a similar aggression will increase. No one can feel safe in a world where the illegal use of force is normalized. According to Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, Ukraine has an inherent right to defend itself, just like any other Member State. Ukraine has a right to defend itself and protect its population against daily shelling by the Russian army.

The European Union has always been a peace project, and we have been quite successful at bringing peace to the European continent and promoting it around the world. It is central to the European Union's origins. It is in our DNA. When it comes to Ukraine, the real questions today concern the kind of peace we want, how to achieve it and how to end the war. The first obvious step towards peace is for Russia to stop its attacks. It must end all hostilities and withdraw its forces and military equipment from Ukrainian soil. It must do so immediately, completely and unconditionally.

Until then, the European Union will continue to give Ukraine the support it needs to defend its population, which is also in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. We will continue to provide humanitarian and financial assistance and work to hold Russia accountable for its actions and war crimes. As we know from experience, there can be no lasting peace without accountability. At the same time, we will continue to support Ukraine's wish for a just peace, in

line with the Charter of the United Nations, through two tracks — supporting Ukraine and searching for peace, which go hand in hand. They are not incompatible but rather complementary.

We all know about President Zelenskyy's peace formula, which the European Union supports. We will work to mobilize the broadest possible international support for it. Indeed, all of us have a responsibility to work for a just and lasting peace, as set out in the draft resolution introduced by Ukraine. The Secretary-General has offered his good offices to bring an end to the war, and we support him. Others have also contributed to diplomatic efforts to that end. The purpose of the draft resolution is to support and encourage the efforts seeking peace. The European Union has worked in close cooperation with Ukraine and its partners throughout the entire preparatory process, and we have been as inclusive and as transparent as possible. Amendments and comments made in good faith were duly considered and taken on board to the furthest extent possible. We thank those delegations that engaged with us, as that has without a doubt strengthened the text.

However, by putting forward additional amendments right now (A/ES-11/L.8 and A/ES-11/L.9), Belarus is trying to create confusion about the process. Given that the text before the membership is a simple call for peace in line with the Charter of the United Nations, those amendments were not made in good faith. They are manipulative and do not reflect the situation on the ground, which is the unjustified and unprovoked aggression by one Member State against another. We will vote against those amendments, and we call on all States Members of the United Nations to do the same and to support the draft resolution submitted by Ukraine.

The text before us today is very much in line with the Secretary-General's plea during his briefing to the General Assembly on 6 February (see A/77/PV.58), and even today, in his speech. As he rightly put it, the world needs peace, but peace in line with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

For all those reasons — simple reasons, evident reasons — I ask members to join us in sponsoring this draft resolution and to vote in favour, because this is a moment when every Member of the United Nations must stand and be counted.

**The President:** I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy.

**Mr. Tajani (Italy)** (*spoke in French*): A year ago, the Russian army invaded Ukraine. That invasion has led to tens of thousands of deaths, the destruction of infrastructure and unimaginable disasters as a result of an illegal invasion that violates the norms of international law. We are standing alongside the Ukrainians, who are currently suffering.

(*spoke in English*)

Italy's position has always been very clear. The ongoing aggression is a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and undermines international security and stability. No country can be safe if there is no accountability for such a violation of our common rules and principles.

On this anniversary, Ukraine still stands, and we stand in full solidarity with the country and its people. The daily attacks on their lives and critical infrastructure, with their devastating humanitarian costs, are unacceptable and must stop. But we want to work in favour of peace.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

There can be no peace without justice. Justice is the integrity, freedom and independence of Ukraine. There can be no peace without justice.

(*spoke in English*)

The Italian Government is in favour of agreements on specific issues, such as the establishment of a nuclear safe area around Zaporizhzhya and the renewal of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, as a necessary and urgent response to those threats and important steps towards building mutual trust and laying the foundations of a wider dialogue.

A comprehensive, just and lasting peace in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations is needed, as the draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7) brought to the attention of this eleventh emergency special session clearly states. Now more than ever, we need diplomacy to take account of the legitimate concerns and expectations of the countries of the Global South, which are bearing the consequences of that conflict. Italy is ready to do its part to that end. Now is the time to redouble our collective support for diplomatic efforts to achieve that goal.

Today, in this world parliament, where all States have equal representation, we have the opportunity and the moral duty to demonstrate that we can work together to achieve that goal, adopting a draft resolution for peace by a wide majority. Today we are called upon to defend the rules-based international order. The United Nations and, at this moment, the General Assembly are at the forefront of the quest for peace, security and human rights. For that reason, Italy is a proud co-sponsor of the draft resolution and calls on Member States to support a just peace by voting in favour.

*(spoke in French)*

Italy asks members to support the draft resolution and to vote in favour.

*(spoke in Spanish)*

We ask all members to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

**The President:** I now call on the Permanent Representative of the United States of America and member of President Biden's Cabinet.

**Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield** (United States of America): Today we are gathered to discuss an important, historic draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7), one that will promote diplomacy, dialogue and a lasting peace in Ukraine. The timing of this meeting is, of course, intentional. One year ago, Russia launched its illegal, unprovoked full-scale invasion into Ukraine. I remember that day clearly, as I know all here do as well.

That evening, I walked into the Security Council for an emergency meeting called by the United States, because we believed that Russia's invasion of Ukraine was imminent. At that point, we had been sounding the alarm bells for weeks. I had informed the Council in no uncertain terms about the buildup of troops along the border and what we thought it meant. Secretary Blinken had also come to the Security Council and laid out in detail what we expected would soon unfold.

A few days before the invasion, Russia's Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs told us to "stop the hysteria". On the very night of Russia's invasion into Ukraine, Russia's representative said in the Security Council that "the occupation of Ukraine is not part of our plans" (*S/PV.8974, p.12*). All Russia did was deny, deny, deny, as we have heard the Russian Permanent Representative do again today.

That cold February night one year ago today, I asked Russia to stop, to return to its borders, to send its troops, tanks and planes back into their barracks and hangars, to send diplomats back to the negotiating table. But it was too late. At that exact moment, I joined so many others in the Security Council and around the world in making a plea for peace. President Putin chose war.

That was an illegal, unprovoked attack on Ukraine, but it was also an assault on the United Nations. It struck at the very heart of the Charter of the United Nations. We all know what happened next and what is still happening now: the bombing of kindergartens, high schools and hospitals; the slaughter of innocent civilians; the worst refugee crisis in Europe since the Second World War; an unprecedented hunger crisis around the world; threats to nuclear and energy security; families forcibly separated; Ukrainian children relocated to Russia; mass suffering; and crimes against humanity.

This vote is a moment to remember why we are here. Of course, I cannot speak for everyone; I can speak only for myself. When I was sworn in for this role, it was exactly one year to the day of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Back then, I could not have known the existential threat that the Charter of the United Nations would face, but I did know what President Biden and the American people were sending me here to do: to represent my country to the world, yes, but also to uphold the Charter, to engage in dialogue and diplomacy and to lead us towards a more peaceful, more prosperous planet. That is what I am here to do today.

No matter what else members were sent here to do, I know we all share these same goals in common: to represent our countries; advocate for diplomacy; and push for peace. This vote is an opportunity to do just that.

We have before us a draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7) that calls on the nations of the world to support diplomatic efforts to achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace in Ukraine, a peace consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and consistent with its fundamental principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and self-defence.

This vote will go down in history. On the one-year anniversary of this conflict, we will see where the nations of the world stand on the matter of peace in Ukraine.

Earlier this week, President Biden visited Ukraine and made it clear where the United States stands. He stood shoulder to shoulder with President Zelenskyy to remind the world that one year later, Kyiv still stands; Ukraine still stands; and America still stands with Ukraine.

I, too, visited Ukraine late last year, and while I learned a great deal in my meetings and discussions, the most powerful lessons I took away were in the faces of the Ukrainian people. In President Zelenskyy, I saw resolve. I saw a leader determined to defend his people and defend his country for as long as it takes. In the faces of refugees and victims, I saw suffering and deep sorrow. Unimaginable pain was etched into their visages. It is hard to overstate how much unnecessary anguish and pain President Putin has caused.

But it was in the faces of Ukrainian children that I found hope. I met a 10-year-old girl, Milena, who lived in a facility where displaced families were gathering to prepare for the cold winter — a facility that had once been hit by Russian missiles. I asked Milena what she wanted to do when the war was over. She smiled. She told me, simply, that she wanted to go back to school and see her best friend again. Her face beamed with hope. I will never forget her shining eyes.

We should never give up on hope. We should never give up on the potential for diplomacy, or the power of dialogue, or the urgency of peace. We now have an opportunity to vote for that peace and to vote to uphold the Charter once more — a Charter that stands for sovereignty and territorial integrity, a Charter that stands for the inherent right of self-defence, and a Charter that aims to maintain international peace and security and end the scourge of war.

So I would urge my colleagues to vote against any and all hostile amendments that seek to undermine the Charter of the United Nations and ignore the truth of this war. I urge them instead to vote in favour of the draft resolution as it stands, to promote diplomacy and dialogue — yes, diplomacy and dialogue — to promote cooperation on the threats to global food security, energy, finance, the environment, nuclear security and safety; to defend the Charter we have all signed up to protect; and to support a just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada.

**Ms. Joly (Canada) (*spoke in French*):** One year ago, a founding Member of the United Nations and a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia, launched an aggressive military invasion by land, sea and air against its neighbour Ukraine. That war has had catastrophic consequences for the Ukrainian people and the world as a whole.

Russia's war against Ukraine is unjustifiable, illegal, cruel and inhuman; it must be stopped. It must be stopped.

(*spoke in English*)

We are called on today, as equal members of the General Assembly, to once again reaffirm our full support for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations; to ensure that those purposes and principles underlie a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine; and to affirm our support for international law and for accountability when the law is broken.

We have before us today a draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7) that does this. Its text has been drafted to reflect the views and concerns of members from all regions. For those reasons, Canada believes that it deserves the support of each and every member of the Assembly.

As we mark this grim occasion, the Russian Federation's further invasion and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine rages on. Russia is continuing its missile attacks against Ukrainian cities, killing Ukrainian civilians and destroying the country's critical infrastructure. Schools and hospitals have not been spared. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians have been killed, and even more have been injured. More than 14 million Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes.

Last week I was in Kyiv and heard first-hand some of the heartbreaking choices that this war has forced on the people of Ukraine. Those stories remind us of the true and brutal nature of Russia's war. This is not, and has never been, a so-called special military operation. President Putin is entirely responsible for this war, and his latest address proves that he remains unmoored from that reality. His address was nothing more than recycled absurdities, as repeated by the Russian Ambassador today in this Hall, and his suspension of the START Treaty is nothing short of reckless.



This is total war, aimed at punishing and destroying the free, independent and sovereign nation of Ukraine and its people. President Putin will not succeed.

*(spoke in French)*

Canada is unshakeable in its support for Ukraine. We are determined to support it for as long as necessary, from resistance to reconstruction. We have provided sizeable financial assistance, for training, military materiel and humanitarian assistance.

Beyond the appalling human suffering, the losses in Ukraine are valued at \$250 billion. The cost of the reconstruction in Ukraine will be double that, if not more.

*(spoke in English)*

We know that for reconstruction to be inclusive and enduring, it must address both the physical and invisible impacts of Putin's war. We must therefore tackle the psychological marks of the war on Ukraine's people with the same seriousness and urgency as we do the physical scars. The impacts of the war on food and energy security, supply chains and inflation have rippled across every corner of the world and have hit the most vulnerable the hardest.

Russia's war of choice is estimated to cost the global economy \$2.8 trillion.

A total of 51 million more people were pushed into poverty during the first three months of the war alone because of the soaring food and energy prices triggered by Russia's invasion. Those are lives and livelihoods destroyed by President Putin's war of choice and its impacts. We have heard the calls from many countries here in this Hall about the disastrous impacts of that war on their peoples and their economies.

But peace has to be built on security and justice. Russia needs to listen and respond to the demands of the Assembly to stop its war of aggression.

*(spoke in French)*

The fact that Russia is continuing that illegal war shows us what it really thinks of the United Nations and each of the Member States present in this Hall. Since the first convening of the eleventh emergency session, we have been very clear. We have recalled the obligations of all States under the Charter to abstain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other State. We have reaffirmed our commitment to the sovereignty,

independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters. We have explicitly asked Russia to immediately cease using force against Ukraine and to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its military forces from the territory of Ukraine.

*(spoke in English)*

Yet through its words and its actions, Russia is showing us very plainly that it does not respect the Assembly or the members represented here. Furthermore, it has expanded its illegal war of aggression. It has used its veto, its power and its privilege to sideline the Security Council. It has attempted to illegally annex Ukraine's territory through sham referendums. It has peddled misinformation and conspiracy theories online, in our countries and in this Hall. It has doubled down on its attacks against Ukraine's critical infrastructure, in clear violation of international humanitarian law. That is not the sign of a country that respects its obligations or its fellow Member States.

Russia would have us believe that this is about forcing us to choose sides. Today's vote is not about choosing sides. It is about choosing peace — a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine. It is about choosing to uphold the Charter of the United Nations. It is about respecting the right of every State in this Hall to chart its own future. It is about choosing rules over chaos and clearly stating that no one, today or in future, can disregard the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Canada encourages every member of the Assembly to choose peace and vote in favour of the draft resolution.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain.

**Mr. Albares Bueno (Spain)** *(spoke in Spanish):* It has been a year now since the beginning of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Today we are meeting here in the General Assembly, the organ that best represents the international community as a whole, in order to condemn once again — with a broad majority, I am sure — that aggression.

It is important that this meeting is taking place here, because the Organization was created to preserve future generations from the scourge of war. The Organization was built on a Charter that enshrines the basic principles of an international society that

holds the promise of peace and development for all our peoples. That is what we want for Ukraine: a just peace based on the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Russian aggression against Ukraine is not just an injustice for Ukraine and for Europe; it is a global threat, because it is a frontal attack against those principles: the principle of the sovereign equality of States; the principle of refraining from the threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity or the political independence of any State; and that of the obligation to settle international disputes by peaceful means.

That aggression can have no justification because it is an illegal war contravening the Charter of the United Nations. If that precedent is allowed to stand, tomorrow all of us will be facing a world that is more insecure and more violent. That is why this special session is of particular relevance. The Charter on which we agreed to base the international order requires today that we defend it and commit ourselves to it.

The methods Russia is using to try to win this war are also illegal. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, created by the Human Rights Council in March, has stated that war crimes and violations of human rights, including summary executions, illegal confinement, torture, ill-treatment and acts of sexual violence in areas occupied by the Russian armed forces, have occurred. Russia's treatment of prisoners of war and its attacks on non-combatants and basic civilian infrastructure violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the First, Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions and Protocol I Additional to the Conventions. We categorically condemn those flagrant violations of international humanitarian law. Those responsible for those crimes must be held accountable and brought to justice.

Spain demands once again the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian troops from all Ukrainian territory, as ordered by the International Court of Justice on 16 March. Over the course of this year, the Ukrainian people have faced with great courage, great dignity and great determination an invasion that is causing incalculable and unjust suffering. I think of the families of the tens of thousands of civilians who have been killed or wounded, the millions of internally and internationally displaced persons, all the victims of that unjust and illegal war, and I express to them

my full solidarity, support and respect. I reiterate that Spain stands shoulder to shoulder with them.

In the face of those horrors, Spain is the fifth country of the European Union in terms of the number of displaced Ukrainians being hosted. We have welcomed almost 170,000 of them as part of the Temporary Protection Directive. In support of Ukraine, Spain has approved the largest humanitarian package in its history for a single country, and we have committed €250 million for the reconstruction of the country through multilateral agencies. We are doing this without forgetting about the needs of other partners of Spain, such as in the Sahel or Latin America. We are not reducing but increasing our cooperation budgets for those areas of the world.

As is recalled in the draft resolution submitted to the Assembly (A/ES-11/L.7), the war has global impacts. It has worsened the food crisis, the financial crisis and the energy crisis following the pandemic. The Black Sea Grain Initiative, with the key involvement of Secretary-General Guterres, has prevented an aggravation of the humanitarian situation in many areas of the planet, particularly in Africa in the Middle East. Ahead of its upcoming expiry, on 5 March, we call for its early renewal.

Today, on this sad anniversary, we are meeting here once again to express our most robust condemnation of that continual violation by Russia of international law. Spain reiterates its wish and the need for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace, with full respect for international law and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. That is what is proposed in the draft resolution submitted today for consideration by the Assembly. Spain co-sponsored it and requests other States Members to vote in favour of the draft resolution in its entirety so as to unequivocally recognize the pre-eminence of the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations.

A vote in favour of this draft resolution today is a vote in favour not only of the right of Ukraine to exist as a State and of its security and its freedom but also of the foundational purposes of the Organization and the fundamental principles of its Charter, the first of which is putting an end to war and the preservation of peace.

**The President:** I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala.

**Mr. Búcaro Flores** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): A year ago, I had the opportunity to be in Kyiv to bear witness as a Latin American to the atrocities that that war has caused. That is why I am grateful for this invitation to the resumed eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly.

It is unfortunate that a year has passed already since that illegal, unjustified and unprovoked aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and that we are meeting again in order to address one of the greatest crises at the global level, one with unprecedented impacts. Having heard the statements that have been made, we see that this is likely to continue.

In the face of that aggression, Guatemala, from the very beginning of the conflict, has been emphatic about and has not hesitated to raise its voice in favour of international peace and security, which are the fundamental pillars of coexistence among us all, because we have an obligation to work together through multilateralism in order to be able to halt that unjustified and unprovoked attack by the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

We are facing an attack on the international rules-based order, which is based on the need for respect for the norms that we have agreed to and the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations, which we all have all signed.

Guatemala, as a founding Member of the United Nations, attaches the greatest importance to its founding Charter, which enshrines the ideals of multilateralism, promoting the fundamental principles of international law, respect for the sovereign equality of States and the principles of territorial integrity, political independence and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States.

That is why Guatemala co-sponsored draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, entitled “Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine”.

The Republic of Guatemala, as a peaceful State and a promoter of peace, reiterates the importance, in disputes among States, of prioritizing diplomacy; negotiated and civilized settlements; the peaceful means provided for under international law; and the non-use of force.

We cannot accept the idea of force and aggression being used by one State, particularly a permanent member of the Security Council, which has specific

responsibilities and obligations, because maintaining international peace and security is a duty that is incumbent upon all of us.

That is why we support the language of the draft resolution and believe that it is consistent and in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, reaffirming the commitment of the General Assembly to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We are convinced that the Assembly has the mandate and the authority to adopt that draft resolution on the basis of what is set out in Chapter IV of the Charter of the United Nations, which we have all endorsed. We know that this will also guarantee accountability for the serious crimes that we have all witnessed in Ukraine, crimes that shock the conscience of humankind.

We need to guarantee justice for all the victims of the conflict and prevent future crimes. That is why Guatemala co-facilitated negotiations on the creation of a register of damages and supports any and all initiatives that aim to create a special tribunal on the crime of aggression committed by Russia, which contravenes international law.

We are appalled at the terrible humanitarian consequences and human rights consequences caused by the hostilities against Ukraine, and we will continue to raise our voice until all unjustified attacks stop, because the devastating consequences for the civilian population cannot be tolerated.

Today all of us, with the votes that we will cast, will be giving a voice to those who do not have one. Today we must provide justice in terms of human rights. Today we must ensure that peace triumphs. We firmly believe that this is vital to fully respecting our obligations under international humanitarian law, with the aim of protecting that civilian population, as well as guaranteeing reliable humanitarian access in order to ensure that all attacks cease and that the necessities indispensable to the survival of the Ukrainian population are preserved.

My delegation reiterates unequivocally the urgent need to put an end to that aggression and find a peaceful outcome. For all the reasons I have mentioned, I would respectfully ask all Member States to vote against the draft amendments presented by Belarus (A/ES-11/L.8 and L.9) and to vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 in order to send a clear signal on the part of the Assembly and promote peace and justice in Ukraine.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia.

**Ms. Fajon (Slovenia):** In 1945, the United Nations was created to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The Charter of the United Nations reflected our collective vow to refrain from the use of armed force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

Aggression, the violation of territorial integrity and the illegal annexation of sovereign territories should have no place in the world order of the twenty-first century. Yet the principles enshrined in the Charter are being blatantly violated, and all those who had hoped for a peaceful, just and prosperous world almost eight decades ago would be deeply disappointed.

A year ago, Ukraine, a sovereign country, was attacked by its neighbour the Russian Federation. Sadly, despite the wide international condemnation and calls for an immediate withdrawal, the war continues along with its devastating consequences, especially for the civilian population.

I commend the bravery and courage of the Ukrainian people. Slovenia knows from its own historical experience what it means to fight for one's land. We know what is at stake when somebody uses force to deny one's independence and sovereignty.

Although we Slovenians are deeply concerned about wider security and the political and economic consequences of the Russian aggression, we also remain committed to assisting Ukraine and its people. We stand in solidarity with the women, men and children whose lives have been changed forever by that unjustified war. We are deeply concerned about the growing number of civilian casualties and the gruesome testimonies of sexual and gender-based violence used as a weapon of war. Especially heartbreaking are the accounts from children. Millions are displaced, many of them at risk of human trafficking, exploitation, conflict-related sexual violence and forced deportations. They are deeply traumatized by the war and the violence. Their childhood is over, forever.

The deliberate attacks by the Russian army on the civilian population and critical infrastructure constitute the most serious crimes and should not go unpunished. All those responsible must be held to account.

Slovenia supports all efforts to end impunity for the perpetrators of violations of international law,

especially the most serious ones. The principle of accountability must be upheld since it is the only foundation for life when the war and its atrocities end. It is the only foundation of justice, the only foundation for reconciliation and the only foundation that will enable the victims to move forward.

We strongly support the efforts of the Secretary-General as well as those of Member States to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine. We need to redouble our diplomatic efforts to de-escalate the current situation and end the fighting through political dialogue, negotiation and other peaceful means. All efforts towards peace that take account of who is the aggressor and who is the victim deserve our support.

Slovenia would like to stress that international law, the peaceful settlement of disputes and respect for the decisions of international tribunals, as well as their full implementation, are the building blocks of a world that is peaceful, stable and prosperous.

This war reminds us all just how globally connected and interdependent we are. Its consequences are being felt all over the world. I would like to state this very clearly: those are not the consequences of our support for Ukraine, or the consequences of our reaction to that illegal aggression. They are the consequences of the aggression itself; they are the sole and full responsibility of the aggressor.

With the staggering rise in food and energy prices and looming inflation, millions of people are faced with severe challenges. Disruptions to food-supply chains, energy and finance systems around the globe affect us all, but the least-developed and low-income countries suffer the most. We all must do better.

I would like to reassure our friends and partners worldwide that reacting to the Russian aggression on Ukraine does not mean that other conflicts, crises or challenges are forgotten. Our humanitarian response to other situations where people are in need is not being diminished; our solidarity and responsibility remain firm.

We applaud Ukraine for launching the "Grain from Ukraine" initiative. Despite the war, Ukraine extended a hand across the sea to people in need and those facing food insecurity. To facilitate grain exports, Slovenia has joined efforts to help and support that important initiative with its own contribution.



Let me conclude by saying it once again: any unprovoked invasion of any sovereign country is unacceptable. Violations of the international legal order that we have worked so hard to build cannot and must not become our new normal. Slovenia lends its strong support to today's draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7), on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia.

**Mr. Reinsalu** (Estonia): A year ago, the world watched in horror as Russia launched its full-scale, brutal, unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. Let me recall that Russia has waged war against Ukraine for almost nine years. A permanent member of the Security Council, whose mandate in that seat is rightfully being challenged, demonstrated its complete disrespect for the rules-based international order. By invading its sovereign neighbour Ukraine, Russia has trampled upon the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the obligation to refrain from using force against another State.

Russia has completely ignored several calls by the General Assembly to stop its aggression as well as the legally binding order of the International Court of Justice handed down last March to suspend immediately its military operation, as it calls it, in Ukraine. There have been no signs of de-escalation. We see the opposite as Russia's new offensive is unfolding. Russia continues to punish Ukraine for choosing its own sovereign path.

As we speak, Russian bombs continue to target critical infrastructure, including energy and water systems, with the aim of breaking the Ukrainian will by causing immense pain and suffering to civilians. We have witnessed Russia's massive air strikes on civilian sites, often in densely populated areas. Abounding evidence shows that the aggressor has also used sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war. That brutal war of aggression has already caused at least 19,000 civilian casualties, approximately 1,300 of them children.

Nearly 13.5 million people have had to flee their homes, while entire cities have been reduced to rubble. More than 17 million people in Ukraine are in need of humanitarian assistance. Over 1.6 million Ukrainians have been deported, among them thousands of children, for illegal adoption.

The truth of that should prevail. I therefore call on countries worldwide to recognize Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine as a genocide. Putin has not kept secret his intention to annihilate the Ukrainian nation and State. Let us be clear: Russia's full-scale war of aggression impacts us all, and it is therefore our duty to restore peace and justice and not let the aggressor go unpunished. Aggression as an instrument of international relations must be completely discredited. Russia must be held accountable for all atrocity crimes committed in Ukraine, including for the crime of aggression. To that end, we need to establish an international special tribunal to hold the Russian political and military leadership to account. The United Nations can protect the common values of States, enshrined in the Charter, by denying Mr. Putin the opportunity to take advantage of a judicial loophole. As we know, impunity today will only lead to more crimes tomorrow. Mr. Putin will face a tribunal and pay for the crimes he has committed.

*(spoke in Russian)*

Mr. Putin must be brought before a tribunal.

*(spoke in English)*

Ukraine deserves peace, a peace that preserves Ukraine's territorial integrity and upholds its sovereignty in accordance with the Charter of United Nations and international law. The only way towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace is the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces of the Russian Federation from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. The use of force to redraw national borders cannot be an option. I call upon the international community to support the 10-point peace plan put forward by Ukraine and commit to working together towards its implementation. Today's draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7) is an important building block on that path.

If the international community will not stop the Russian aggression, the global impact of the war on food security, the financial system, energy and the environment will become even more devastating. To stop that, a victim State also needs the power to defend itself. Estonia has given 1 per cent of its gross domestic product to military aid to help Ukraine to defend itself.

The date of 24 February is symbolic for Estonians. We celebrate the anniversary of the Estonian Declaration of Independence of 1918. Last year's anniversary reminded us in the most brutal manner how fragile independence and freedom can be. On behalf

of the Estonian people, I want to pay tribute to the immeasurable resolve and resilience of the Ukrainian people. They are defending not only their country and people but also our common values, the international legal order and the Charter of the United Nations. It is our duty as humans to keep standing behind Ukraine.

*Mr. Wallace (Jamaica), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

Based on my visits to Ukraine last year, I can say that the Ukrainians are truly the bravest people on Earth.

Russia's destructive and genocidal war of aggression, fuelled by its imperialist ambitions, has to be stopped. Estonia will therefore vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, entitled "Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine". I call on the whole United Nations community to do the same. *Slava Ukraini!*

**The Acting President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia.

**Mr. Darchiashvili (Georgia):** The United Nations was founded to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Unfortunately, that cause has been repeatedly challenged. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has been a brazen attack on the entire international rules-based order, shattering the global peace and security architecture. It has resulted in grave humanitarian consequences, the loss of lives and mass displacement.

A year later, we gather here once again to stand for the principles of the Charter on which the Organization is founded and for the fundamental norms and principles of international law.

It has been almost 15 years since Russia's full-scale military aggression against Georgia and the consequent occupation of 20 per cent of its territories, in blatant violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris. The Russian-occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia remain a constant source of insecurity owing to Russia's illegally stationed military bases.

Georgia remains committed to a peaceful resolution of the Russia-Georgia conflict that relies on the de-occupation of two Georgian regions by Russia on the one hand and reconciliation and confidence-building between the communities across the occupation lines

on the other. While Georgia remains in full compliance with the European Union-mediated 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement, a consolidated approach on the part of the international community is essential in urging Russia to comply with its obligations under the ceasefire agreement and withdraw its military forces from the territory of Georgia. In that regard, Georgia tries to utilize the existing negotiations format of the Geneva international discussions.

Ukraine needs peace; our countries and our peoples need peace. The world needs peace. We face global challenges of an unprecedented scale: climate change, natural disasters, pandemics, terrorism and unconventional threats that require our joint efforts and our cooperation. There is so much that the United Nations can and must do. We need to do so for our children. We need to do so for future generations.

But we will succeed only if each and every Member of the Organization stands firm in defending its founding principles, which we proudly recommitted to in the UN75 Declaration.

I would like to underline the importance of the Peace Formula initiative and reiterate Georgia's support for it. That initiative goes beyond the restoration of peace and the territorial integrity of Ukraine and has the more overarching aim of defending the core values of the United Nations.

Georgia fully aligns itself with the efforts of international organizations and stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine in these trying times. The Government of Georgia initiated and has delivered significant humanitarian support to Ukrainians on the ground as well as to displaced persons from Ukraine residing in Georgia.

Let me also use this rostrum to voice Georgia's strong support for the draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7) before us today, which once again sends a clear signal in defence of the core principles of the Organization — the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity — and calls for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

I would like to conclude by once again reiterating our strong and unwavering support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders.

**The Acting President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Affairs and Trade of Malta.

**Mr. Borg (Malta):** The General Assembly is called on today to focus on the principles underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine. We remain gravely concerned about the ongoing war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and reiterate that it is in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and its values and the rules-based international order.

The international community is continuously horrified by the daily reports, including those of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, of attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including homes, hospitals and schools; violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, against women and children; and the use of torture. Russia's disregard for international law must be condemned and denounced without reservation.

Notwithstanding the bravery shown by the Ukrainian people, the Russian Federation is further pushing Ukraine into a grave humanitarian crisis. Forty per cent of Ukraine's population is in dire need of assistance. Nearly 8 million people have fled to neighbouring countries, and 5.3 million are internally displaced or unable to leave illegally annexed regions.

The discovery of mass graves in areas regained from Russian occupation further underlines the gravity of the situation. We reiterate that all those who commit alleged violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law must be held accountable. Malta will continue to support all efforts by Ukraine and the international community to that end.

At every opportunity we have emphasized the implications of that aggression on the region, the continent and globally. We have put the spotlight on the humanitarian catastrophe that the Ukrainian people are being forced to endure and the suffering that the war has brought to people around the world.

We must continue to call on the Russian Federation to withdraw all its forces from the territory of Ukraine without further delay and to seek a peaceful resolution of all issues in accordance with international law and the principles of the Charter.

Malta reiterates that halting this war of aggression against Ukraine at once is the only way forward.

There is no other way. Ensuring accountability for the perpetrators of the atrocity crimes committed and justice for the victims, including victims of sexual violence and of the forced deportation of children from Ukraine, are a priority. We also reiterate our support for resolution ES-11/5, on the furtherance of remedy and reparation for aggression against Ukraine.

A fundamental principle set out in Article 2 of the Charter is the rejection of an international system where might is right. Today all States Members of the United Nations must stop, think about and ponder the gravity of the current situation and what might be the result if they do not speak out and reaffirm by their vote the importance of safeguarding a rules-based international order and the principles of the Charter. It is our individual and collective responsibility at this particular time to fight for those principles with all our might in support of the Charter of the United Nations.

Malta therefore urges all Member States to support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, which is being presented to the General Assembly. Let us vote in favour of peace.

**Mr. Launsky-Tieffenthal (Austria):** We gather here today to mark a sombre anniversary. Almost one year has passed since Russia launched an unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against its neighbour Ukraine — one year of human suffering, one year of missiles and drones raining down on Ukrainian civilians. I witnessed the destruction and horrors of that war myself during my visit to Ukraine last year.

No one who has visited Ukraine in the last 12 months, myself included, can return without having been deeply touched on a human level — visiting Kyiv and Irpin, looking into the faces of small children and their teachers, grateful for a simple generator so that the local kindergarten can be heated; or meeting citizens standing in front of their destroyed houses, grateful for basic equipment such as power banks so that they can stay in touch with their loved ones. Their faces reflect the cruelty, senselessness and human tragedy of that war. We are impressed by the tremendous courage and perseverance that the Ukrainians are demonstrating to us. Their destiny is our obligation.

We said it one year ago, and we repeat it today: an attack against one Member of the Organization is an attack on all of us. That is what the Charter of the United Nations and our system of collective security imply.

Austria relies for its security on respect for and the implementation of international law, treaties and

customs. That is exactly why we cannot stand on the sidelines even as the basic principles of our legal and security order are under threat. We are never politically neutral, and we will never remain silent when the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of a State is attacked.

In the past year, we have seen overwhelming support in the General Assembly in calling on Russia to stop that war, to stop the suffering of Ukraine's population, to stop the nuclear threats and to stop the blatant breaches of the Charter, including the illegal attempt to annex whole regions of Ukraine. We are encouraged by that overwhelming show of solidarity with Ukraine in the face of a brutal armed attack and by the overwhelming support for international law and for the Charter of the United Nations.

We also expressed grave concerns about the global consequences of the war — about the impact on food security, the rise in energy prices, the mass displacement of persons. It is crucial to alleviate those consequences. We commend the Secretary-General for his leadership and the efforts of the Government of Türkiye in facilitating the Black Sea Grain Initiative as well as the "Grain from Ukraine" initiative. Austria fully supports its continued renewal as well as its full and unhindered implementation.

We have listened to the concerns expressed and understand that we must not lose sight of other crises, which is why Austria is continuing its strong and persistent financial support for humanitarian efforts around the world.

Austria stands in full solidarity with Ukraine, the Ukrainian Government and the Ukrainian people. Austria has bilaterally provided €124 million in humanitarian assistance, with a focus on winterization, energy support and basic needs; much more has already been done.

In the past year, we have seen millions of lives uprooted and millions of people fleeing their homes to seek shelter. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for the outstanding support of the international community for the Ukrainian people and for the support of civil society, not only in Austria but also in all its neighbouring countries.

We must also be clear that there can be no peace without justice and accountability. Ukrainian cities such as Bucha and Mariupol have become synonymous with unspeakable human suffering, atrocities

committed against the civilian population, rape, torture and extrajudicial killings. All those crimes must be investigated and the perpetrators held to account. We fully support all efforts to do so, including by the International Criminal Court and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, based in Vienna.

One aspect that Austria condemns in the strongest possible terms is the repeated implicit but unmistakable nuclear threats made by Russia concerning the use of nuclear weapons. Nuclear risks are higher than they have been in decades, and their potentially devastating and global humanitarian and environmental consequences are a direct security threat to the entire international community.

We welcome the efforts by the international community to work together — foremost through the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) — to secure the nuclear-energy facilities that have become targets in that war. We welcome the proposals by its Director General, Rafael Grossi, to that effect and are grateful for the tireless work of the IAEA teams present on the ground at all nuclear power plants in Ukraine.

All that underscores the utmost urgency of progress on nuclear disarmament and of moving away from the nuclear deterrence paradigm, which is fraught with immense risks and uncertainties at the expense of the common security of all humankind. The international community must come together to ensure that the taboo against any use of nuclear weapons is not broken and that any threat or use thereof remains inadmissible.

Ukraine, like every independent State Member of the United Nations, is entitled to the stability and security of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, a peace based on international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

We call on Russia once again to stop this war, withdraw its troops from the whole territory of Ukraine and end the bloodshed.

The United Nations and other multilateral organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in Vienna, are indispensable forums for dialogue and peace in which Member States can resolve disputes through dialogue if possible. We must strengthen and preserve those organizations and enable them to fulfil their role.



The draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7) that will be adopted tomorrow in this Hall is aimed at bringing about an end to aggression against a sovereign nation, an end to the global consequences of the war and a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Austria therefore strongly supports that text and encourages all members to vote in favour.

**Mr. Bolbocean** (Republic of Moldova): It is deeply regrettable that the large-scale, illegal invasion of the Russian Federation against Ukraine has been going on for a year already. It is therefore more than critical that we strongly support the resumption of the emergency special session of the General Assembly to discuss and make decisions on the principles underlying the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

Twelve months of an unprovoked and unjust war of aggression have killed thousands of innocent people and pushed millions of Ukrainians to flee their homes — 12 months of blatant violations of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law by one of the permanent members of the Security Council, whose primary responsibility is to maintain peace and security worldwide.

Russia's illegal and unprovoked attack constitutes a direct threat to the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine and has destabilized European security and undermined global stability.

We express our utmost admiration to all Ukrainians for their courage, resilience and inner power to pursue their fight for survival, justice and freedom. The Republic of Moldova expresses its compassion for the families of the victims and stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine in these tough times.

The Republic of Moldova has firmly demonstrated its commitment and engagement in ensuring protection for those seeking refuge in our country. We continue to offer support and shelter to those Ukrainians who have fled the war. Approximately 700,000 Ukrainian refugees have entered the territory of the Republic of Moldova since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, and to date 80,000 remain in the country, almost half of whom are children. All of them are in need of special protection.

In that vein, the Government of the Republic of Moldova recently adopted a decision to introduce, from 1 March, a temporary protection mechanism

for Ukrainian refugees, thus contributing to a more efficient management of migration flows, legalization and access to fundamental rights. We will also continue to provide humanitarian support to Ukraine and facilitate the transit of goods through the Solidarity Lanes, which are key to ensuring food security at the global level.

Moldova has also felt the security consequences of the war in Ukraine. At least four missiles targeting Ukraine have crossed our airspace, and there have been several incidents involving missile debris landing on our territory. My country is also exposed to hybrid threats and various means of pressure. We are committed to further countering those risks in a systemic, legal and peaceful manner.

It is our moral duty as an international community to continue to support Ukraine. Ukraine is fighting today to keep all of us safe, to keep Europe safe. This war should not continue endlessly.

We stress the need to ensure accountability for the atrocities, the killing of civilians and damage to public infrastructure through timely, fair and independent investigations at both the national and international levels. That is of tremendous importance not only for ensuring justice for all victims of the war but also for preventing future crimes.

Ukraine and the entire international community need a way out of this war, which has triggered multiple crises. We believe that the peace formula proposed by President Zelenskyy is a comprehensive package and has all the ingredients necessary to achieving a lasting peace and preventing another war. We also consider that the United Nations needs to play a role in achieving and securing peace. In that regard, the Republic of Moldova has co-sponsored the draft resolution entitled "Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine" (A/ES-11/L.7), which we hope will garner the support of the Assembly.

In conclusion, we reiterate our call on the Russian Federation to immediately stop its war of aggression against Ukraine, withdraw all its forces and military equipment from Ukrainian territory and respect Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

**Mr. Cruz** (Portugal): We align our statement with the one delivered by the High Representative of the

European Union and would like to add the following points in our national capacity.

This week we are marking one year since the Russian leadership decided to invade Ukraine and to wage war against a sovereign country — a decision taken and implemented, let us not forget, while the Security Council was meeting to discuss ways to prevent it.

Since then, there have been 365 days of unprovoked and unjustifiable aggression, which grossly violates international law and in particular the Charter of the United Nations. We condemn Russia in the strongest terms for waging that war and for its irresponsible nuclear rhetoric.

The loss of life and human suffering caused by that war cannot leave us indifferent. The humanitarian situation is dramatic, having triggered the worst refugee crisis in Europe since the Second World War. The figures are staggering; thousands have died and millions have left the country or become internally displaced. The strategy of relentlessly attacking critical infrastructure, with a tremendous impact on the civilian population, is particularly reprehensible.

Portugal supports the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We will continue to provide assistance to its Government and its people, both bilaterally and in the framework of the European Union and the United Nations, for as long as it takes.

Portugal is fast approaching 60,000 requests for temporary protection, and our humanitarian aid continues to grow. We are also engaged in the reconstruction of schools, namely, in the Zhytomyr region.

Beyond Ukraine, the consequences of the war are being felt more severely by the most vulnerable populations, which are suffering from the combined impacts of the food, fuel and financial crises. This emergency special session offers an opportunity to highlight the important role that the United Nations has been playing in mitigating the global consequences of the war. Indeed, 1.6 billion people worldwide live in conditions of food insecurity, a number that will undoubtedly increase.

The Black Sea Grain Initiative has so far allowed the shipment of more than 21 million tonnes of grain to the regions where it is most needed. That is a remarkable achievement by the United Nations that is also due to the

personal commitment of Secretary-General Guterres. We hope that all parties will acknowledge the crucial importance of that initiative and ensure its continuity.

Many agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system are doing everything in their capacity to address the global consequences of the war. Let me mention just a few: the International Organization for Migration, which is dealing with an unparalleled refugee crisis in a remarkable way; the International Atomic Energy Agency, because the war has, sadly, revived the dread of a nuclear disaster; UNICEF, which has sought to minimize the impact of war on 7.5 million Ukrainian children; the Human Rights Council, whose establishment of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine is of paramount importance; the World Food Programme; and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs are among many others whose work has truly made a difference so far.

Since the beginning of the war, the General Assembly has adopted several resolutions with the support of a significant majority of its members. We must remain united in conveying our condemnation of the war and making clear that the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace would indeed constitute a significant — and necessary, I would add — contribution to strengthening international peace and security, as mentioned in draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 before us.

We gather here today to protect the multilateral system and uphold our respect for international law, human rights and the peaceful resolution of disputes between States. Furthermore, Portugal is fully committed to ensuring accountability and will continue to support initiatives aimed at preventing violations, fighting impunity and providing reparations to Ukraine.

Portugal supports all meaningful efforts to bring an end to this war of aggression. The path to peace is for Russia to act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and respect the sovereignty of Ukraine, withdrawing from its entire territory. We believe that the draft resolution before us is an important step in that direction, and we encourage all Member States to support it.

**Mr. Eyjólfsson (Iceland):** Iceland aligns itself with the statement to be made tomorrow by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the Nordic countries.

*The President returned to the Chair.*

This is a sad moment. The General Assembly is convening in an emergency session to mark the fact that one year has passed since Russia launched its unprovoked and unjustifiable full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, has with that horrendous act of aggression assaulted not only Ukraine but our common institutions, our common values and our basic human rights, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to which we all — including Russia — have subscribed.

Our admiration for the courage and resilience of the people of Ukraine grows with each day they valiantly defend their country. Their sacrifice and suffering must not be in vain. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Mr. Urmas Reinsalu, said here a while ago that the Ukrainian people were the bravest people in the world. I not only subscribe to that idea but will add to it by saying that the captain of team Ukraine, President Zelenskyy, is the bravest leader in the world and has changed the whole meaning of the word “leadership”.

The solution for ending the war is straightforward. Russia can and must stop this war today and withdraw all its forces from Ukraine, in full respect of Ukraine’s recognized right to independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and self-defence.

Let us also recall that ending the war is only first step. To establish a just and lasting peace for Ukraine is also of critical importance. Russia must and will be held to account for its actions. Accountability for the international crimes committed within the context of the war, including the crime of aggression, is vital to ensuring justice and reparations. There can be no impunity. Accountability is indeed the only way to ensure a lasting peace.

The warfare conducted by Russia against a Member State is an act of aggression that affects us all. Humanitarian concerns, food security, economic development — all those important issues that have so much weight on our agenda are being impacted by that senseless war. To sit idly by, on the fence, or even support the aggressor, is beyond comprehension. It is our collective responsibility to end the war, defend Ukraine and stand up for the values and principles that underpin the Charter of the United Nations and the work of the Organization.

We, the peoples, owe that to the people of Ukraine and all other innocent victims presently facing the scourge of armed conflict all over the world. We owe that to previous generations, which built the system of international law and the rules-based order from the ruins of two world wars and their unforgettable horrors. We owe that to our children, the generations that will follow us.

Iceland remains unwavering in its support for and solidarity with Ukraine. We are committed to playing our part, including in our role as the Chair of the Council of Europe, and we are a proud co-sponsor of the draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7) on a just and lasting peace in Ukraine. I call on all Member States to support that draft and to vote against the Belarus amendments (A/ES-11/L.8 and L.9).

**Mrs. Guillen** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica is attending this resumed emergency special session of the General Assembly one year after the illegal and unjustified invasion by a permanent member of the Security Council of a neighbouring country that in good faith had renounced its nuclear weapons and wagered on peace.

A year later, the guiding principles of the Charter of the United Nations continue to be violated. Our collective security system is being undermined, and we see with dismay the consequences of renewed polarization. All that comes at a time when what we need to do is build alliances in order to address the serious global challenges that humankind is facing.

Throughout this year, many serious violations of international law on the part of the Russian forces and their representatives have been documented in the occupied territories in Ukraine, including apparent crimes of aggression, apparent war crimes, violations of fundamental human rights and possible crimes against humanity. What we are seeing is a hybrid war that is characterized by its speed, its escalation and its intensity, facilitated by rapid technological change and global interconnectivity.

Over and above the kind of war that we are facing, all wars have a human face — that of millions of people, of entire families, women and children who have experienced a year of escalating violence, trauma, destruction and displacement. Children continue to be injured or killed, as well as profoundly traumatized by violence, which has led to displacements on a scale and at a speed not seen since the Second World War.

Costa Rica makes an impassioned call for an immediate ceasefire and urges all the parties to honour their international obligations to protect the civilian population, in particular girls and boys, and to ensure that humanitarian actors are able to travel securely and rapidly to wherever they need to go to provide aid.

Costa Rica also calls upon the parties to refrain from attacking civilian infrastructure on which the civilian population depends, including water and sanitation systems, health-care facilities, hospitals and schools.

Costa Rica regrets the approach that has been taken to the conflict, which continues to be a military one. We also deplore the fact that investment in weapons continues to increase at a time when we need those same resources so desperately for reconstruction, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and addressing the urgent challenges facing humankind, including climate change, migration and recovery from the coronavirus disease pandemic.

We deeply deplore also the fact that many States have still not recognized that the continual increase in military expenditures, combined with technological advances and the powerful military-industrial complex, are promoting the development of ever more powerful and advanced weapons systems as well as the military use of artificial intelligence and the development of autonomous weapons systems. Those destabilizing technologies call into question the most basic notions of accountability and responsibility in the taking of decisions under international law and wartime practices — hence the importance of the Regional Conference on the Social and Humanitarian Impact of Autonomous Weapons, to be held in Costa Rica on 23 and 24 February.

Finally, there can be no genuine or lasting peace without justice, which does not exist — cannot exist — when there is impunity. Costa Rica believes that we must investigate and, eventually, judge quickly, transparently and fairly the actions and omissions that could constitute crimes against humanity committed by the Russian forces and their representatives in the occupied territories of Ukraine, including apparent war crimes, violations of human rights and possible crimes against humanity, in particular torture, forced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, sexual violence and the forced displacement of civilians. All of that is necessary in order to ensure justice for all victims and create the conditions necessary for them to obtain reparations, including a guarantee of non-repetition.

The time has come to put an end to impunity. We must put an end to this era in which armies and the political leaders controlling them abandon the basic laws that govern war and that were agreed upon to protect civilians. That is why Costa Rica supports the investigation being carried out by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on possible war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well as the crime of aggression, committed in Ukraine.

Costa Rica co-sponsored and will vote in favour of the draft resolution on Ukraine (A/ES-11/L.7) tomorrow, because Costa Rica believes that peace is the path. Peace requires us to reorder our priorities and, above all, to renew our solemn commitment to “leave no one behind”, as well as that of “never again”.

*(spoke in English)*

Never again. We have said it too many times already; now it is time to deliver.

*(spoke in Spanish)*

Peace requires a robust multilateral system as well as greater cooperation and international solidarity. Peace is built at the negotiating table, not on the battlefield. The time has come to give peace a genuine chance.

**Mr. Al Hassan** (Oman) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), namely, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar, the State of Kuwait and my own country, the Sultanate of Oman.

The GCC countries are following with great interest the developments in the situation in Ukraine, especially the humanitarian aspects, in the light of the increase in the number of refugees and displaced persons; the loss of civilian lives, particularly those of women and children; and the other damage inflicted on the infrastructure.

The GCC Member States stress their firm positions calling for adherence to the well-established principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, which govern relations among States based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and respect for good-neighbourliness.

In that context, we would refer to Article 2 of the Charter, according to which all Member States



shall settle their disputes by peaceful means and refrain from using or threatening to use force in international relations.

The GCC countries also affirm that the solution to disputes and disagreements lies in resorting to dialogue and negotiation, and in resolving disputes and differences through peaceful and diplomatic means.

The GCC Member States have cordial relations with all parties. They encourage international and regional efforts to resolve that issue in accordance with the provisions of international law and on the basis of the established principles of the United Nations and its Charter. They also commend the efforts made by countries hosting refugees from conflict zones.

The GCC Member States call on all parties to abide by their obligations, in accordance with the provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, with regard to the protection of civilians by refraining from targeting or destroying any civilian installations. They also remind countries of their obligations under international humanitarian law with regard to the wounded, prisoners and missing persons; to facilitate rapid and safe access to humanitarian aid for all those in need; and to respect and protect medical and humanitarian workers.

In conclusion, on behalf of the States members of the GCC, we cannot but commend the relentless efforts made by the United Nations and humanitarian organizations in promptly responding to the urgent humanitarian needs of civilians. We also thank the Secretary-General and all parties involved for their efforts, which are appreciated, to ensure the success of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which has helped to restore stability to prices and food security for many countries, mainly developing ones, which are in dire need of those grains and crops. We hope that the initiative will be renewed in March.

**Mr. Prasad (Fiji):** I have the honour to deliver these remarks on behalf of the members of the Pacific Islands Forum with a presence at the United Nations.

I take this opportunity as well to offer the deepest condolences of our Forum family to the peoples of Türkiye and Syria following the devastating earthquakes on 6 February and again only this week. We salute the bravery of the rescue teams, local and international, that have battled to save precious lives despite significant aftershocks and danger to themselves. Such exemplars of our common humanity are relevant to the discussion

that brings us here today, on this sad anniversary of the illegal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

Like the climate emergency that threatens our Blue Pacific Continent and this Blue Planet, the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria remind us of the many global challenges that we need to face together as one United Nations family.

We cannot afford to remain lost in an endless sea of conflict, of might is right and of unilateral force, which tramples our shared values, so eloquently defined in our Charter of the United Nations, which we have all solemnly accepted as our guiding and foundational document.

Despite our distant geography, our Pacific family does not take that position from the comfortable seat of a spectator. Our peoples know well the scourge of war. Our Micronesian, Melanesian and Polynesian subregions have all seen sacrifice, in world wars and regional conflicts, as peacekeepers and defenders of the principles of sovereignty and human dignity.

Despite our remoteness, we also feel the impacts of the major disruptions to global food and energy systems caused by the war. The effects of the Russian Federation's illegal invasion of Ukraine travel farther than bullets can fly, far beyond Ukraine's internationally recognized borders. Those acts reach into our homes, making food and fuel unaffordable to our citizens, increasing the suffering of peoples and economies already weakened by the coronavirus disease pandemic, especially those at the margins of society.

We speak today on behalf of those further marginalized by that illegal invasion — those in our countries, those in Ukraine and around the world; those trapped in poverty, the disabled, children, the elderly, unable to flee that conflict or its effects. The Charter demands that of us.

In doing so, we do not forget those suffering in other conflicts in this world. Nor do we reject this invasion to support the pre-eminence of one geopolitical bloc over another. We remember the tragic results such thinking caused in the twentieth century, stained forever by two world wars. The Charter of the United Nations reminds us of that.

Instead, we recognize that this illegal invasion threatens our hard-won, fragile framework for peace and security, human rights, the rule of law and

development, which underpin the Organization. The Charter encapsulates this.

We take heart in the fact that we are not alone and welcome the efforts by the Secretary-General and all good-faith efforts by fellow Member States to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

We do not claim that the current world order has been perfected or that justice flows as freely as we all desire. However, we do claim that the rules-based international order offers the best path towards a better world, the best instruments to seek justice and security and the best hope for our common future.

We will support draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7. We ask that other members join us.

**Mr. Knutsson** (Sweden): I deliver this statement in my national capacity. Sweden aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by Denmark on behalf of the Nordic countries and the statement made earlier by the High Representative of the European Union (EU).

There are moments in history that have a before and an after, and 24 February 2022 is one of them. Today we mark one year of Russia's brutal, full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Today we pay our respects to those suffering the consequences of the war and those bravely fighting for their, and our, freedom. Today and every day, in this Hall and around the world, we stand united for Ukraine.

The Russian aggression is not only a war against Ukraine. It challenges the European — and global — security order. It is a flagrant violation of one of the most basic rules of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and it is being committed by a permanent member of the Security Council.

The General Assembly has in the strongest terms deplored the Russian aggression and repeatedly demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and reaffirmed the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. It has defended the Charter of the United Nations.

Today we must — again — reiterate a loud and clear message to uphold those rules, principles and values, including by adopting the draft resolution (A/ES-11/L.7) that has been submitted. It is in the interests of us all.

During the first half of 2023, Sweden will hold the presidency of the European Union. No other task is more important to us than strong and continued support for Ukraine and mounting pressure on Russia.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion, Sweden's support to Ukraine has increased, with €1.2 billion in the financial, humanitarian and military areas. The EU has contributed €50 billion. We will support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people against Russia's ongoing war of aggression for as long as it takes.

Accountability for the crimes committed as part of Russia's aggression against Ukraine must be ensured, and it will be. We continue to condemn Russia's violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The summary executions, the torture, the sexual and gender-based violence and the forced deportations are only a few examples of Russia's unacceptable violations of international law. All crimes must be investigated and those responsible must be brought to justice. That is crucial for redress and justice, both for Ukraine as a country and for the victims and survivors.

President Putin bears the primary responsibility for Russia's violations of international law. Russian decision-makers also bear individual criminal responsibility for the aggression against Ukraine. Impunity is not an option for Russia's blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

Ukraine and its people are paying the highest price for the Russian invasion. But the consequences are striking far beyond Ukraine and far beyond Europe. Russia's aggression affects the most vulnerable the hardest, adding to the already severe hardships brought about by climate change and the pandemic.

Sweden and the rest of the EU are working together to mitigate the global effects of the Russian aggression on food security, energy, finance, the environment and nuclear safety and security. We stand ready to listen, to engage and to continue providing support, as we have done consistently and significantly. We remain committed partners, including in terms of making progress on the Sustainable Development Goals and addressing climate change.

Today we gather in the Assembly to express our solid international commitment to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Russia must immediately and completely cease military operations, unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognized borders.

Russia can end this war. Russia must end this war, and it must do it now.

**Mr. Pérez Ayestarán** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to address the Assembly on behalf of the delegations of Belarus, Bolivia, Cambodia, China, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mali, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Syria, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

We are gathered here today in the General Assembly Hall at a time in which the world is facing a multifaceted crisis that is affecting all of us here today, albeit to varying extents. It is also a multidimensional crisis with environmental, food-security, energy-related, economic and financial impacts, among many others. There is also a crisis in terms of trust, leadership and values that is not only eroding multilateralism but also posing an increasing threat to the very existence of humankind as a whole.

The crossroads at which the world stands today is the result, inter alia, of a failure to uphold the commitments and obligations emanating from the relevant international agreements and treaties to which the members of the international community are parties. It is also the result of a failure to comply with other historical documents in the fields of security, development, climate change and human rights, among others.

Moreover, the continued violations of other sources of international law, including the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, which form the very basis of modern international law, have also played a role in bringing us to this deeply concerning juncture.

As we have previously underscored, we remain gravely concerned at the current growing threats against the Charter of the United Nations, given the growing resort to unilateralism; the continued attacks against multilateralism; the repeated attempts to make claims of non-existent exceptionalism; the ever-increasing

number of attempts to disregard and even supplant the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter with a new set of supposed rules that have never been debated in an inclusive or transparent way; the growing attempts to divide our world into blocs; and the selective approaches or self-serving interpretations of the provisions of that historic document, which stands as the code of conduct that has governed international relations among States for almost 78 years now, on the basis of timeless principles.

That situation, together with the illegal implementation of unilateral coercive measures against more than 30 countries, is negatively affecting the daily lives of more than one third of humankind. It has not only created a systemic crisis across the whole system of international relations but is also deliberately exacerbating the multifaceted global crisis while increasing uncertainty, instability, mistrust and tensions around the world, particularly when attempts are made to ignore the legitimate concerns that other members of the international community might bring to the table.

Given the realities I have outlined, we have come here today with a key message: that all of us, without exception, must strictly comply with the Charter of the United Nations both in letter and in spirit, so as to ensure that international peace and security, sustainable development and human rights can be a reality for all of us. In so doing, we will be honouring our promise to both present and future generations.

However, peace can be achieved only when we view one another as equals; when we not only recognize but also embrace diversity; when we respect one another and do everything in our power to give space to divergent views, positions and concerns; when we commit ourselves in good faith to tackling situations in which differences or conflicts may arise; and when we work constructively together in a spirit of compromise.

The repeated resort to incendiary rhetoric, divisive approaches or reckless actions such as supplying the means to prolong conflicts will never serve the purpose of achieving a lasting peace, nor will it prevent the emergence of fresh situations of conflict or crises that could imperil global peace, security and stability and the whole of humankind.

It is for that reason that as nations staunchly committed to peace, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and

appeal to all responsible members of the international community to once and for all offer an opportunity for peace.

To that end, it is necessary not only to put an end to confrontation, ever-deepening divisions and the imposition of dubious visions and agendas, including the agendas of those claiming to be neutral, but also to support dialogue and political negotiations as well as diplomatic efforts aimed at comprehensively tackling the root causes of conflicts and other crises and at establishing a global security architecture that is just, equitable, sustainable, inclusive and indivisible.

We urge the United Nations, including the General Assembly, to play a central and proactive role at this critical juncture for humankind, with a view to peacefully resolving disputes throughout the world, including in the current conflict involving Ukraine, while at all costs avoiding the misuse of the Organization to entrench a Cold War-era mentality or promote initiatives that would only further aggravate the situation on the ground and escalate tensions arising from the conflict. We therefore underscore that we shoulder the shared responsibility of preventing the conflict in Ukraine — through our action or inaction — from reaching the point of no return.

Let us now very briefly, in our national capacity, recall that, almost one year ago in this very Hall (see A/ES-11/PV.4), we warned the international community of the three-dimensional crisis unfolding in Eastern Europe, which, if not addressed in a balanced and cautious manner, could trigger a conflict of global proportions. Unfortunately, our warnings went unheeded and continue to be ignored. Far from past months having been used to advance constructive dialogue in good faith for the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine, we find ourselves today in a situation marked by a heightened level of confrontation. The situation is tense, and there do not appear to be any encouraging signs on the horizon. We underscore that, if we do not change course as soon as possible, we could be well on our way to a global conflict between nuclear Powers that would destroy humankind as we know it, with consequences that would take years to overcome.

In that regard, it is regrettable that the growing and uncontrolled arms race has diverted resources away from development and combating poverty and hunger, not only to fight the war but also to prolong the conflict irresponsibly, and has intentionally fostered a clash between blocs that has put international peace and

security in serious danger. In that regard, we reiterate that a definitive victory by one side is only an illusion.

The United Nations must facilitate a peaceful resolution of the conflict through dialogue, diplomacy and political negotiations between Russia and NATO in order to build a balanced, effective and sustainable European security mechanism, through which the legitimate concerns of all parties, including those related to security, are acknowledged based on the principle of indivisible security. The United Nations was founded in the aftermath of the greatest war in history in order to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security. To date, its greatest success has been to prevent the outbreak of a third world war. In situations of conflict, the role of the Organization has been to steer parties towards diplomacy in order to reach a peaceful resolution. That is our duty today — to make way for a road that will pave over the escalation of tensions in order to avoid blindly walking towards the point of no return, which will imperil the survival of current and future generations.

In conclusion, we reiterate our unwavering commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and we underscore from this rostrum that only through diplomacy, dialogue and containment, without pressure or sanctions, will we be able to end this conflict, which currently threatens all humankind and the impact of which is being exacerbated by growing unilateralist tendencies and the supremacist insistence on the non-existent concept of exceptionalism. Let us not allow the General Assembly to continue to be used to advance non-consensus initiatives, such as that proposed in draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, which will only move us farther away from the path that must unite us all equally today — the path towards peace.

**Mr. Gafoor** (Singapore): It is tragic that the General Assembly has to convene yet another meeting of the eleventh emergency special session, because that means that the war in Ukraine is continuing with full force, causing the loss of very many innocent lives and massive destruction to civilian infrastructure. Russia made the fateful decision to invade Ukraine in blatant disregard of the Charter of the United Nations one year ago. Since then, we have witnessed a war of attrition, with spillover effects that have touched all parts of the world — and it appears that the situation may worsen further.



Since the beginning of the war, Singapore has taken the clear and consistent position that Russia's unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine is a clear and gross violation of the principles of the Charter and international law. The Security Council, of which Russia is a permanent member, has regrettably been unable to discharge its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security because of the self-serving cynical use of the veto by Russia. The General Assembly has adopted five resolutions to date on the war in Ukraine, each of which is a clear message from the international community that the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine cannot be condoned.

We regret that Russia has ignored the clear and repeated calls of the General Assembly to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its military forces from the territory of Ukraine and to respect Ukraine's internationally recognized borders. Russia has also ignored the orders of the International Court of Justice to immediately suspend "the special military operation", which commenced on 24 February 2022 in the territory of Ukraine. We also underline the importance of resolution ES-11/4, which condemns the Russian Federation's organization of illegal so-called referendums within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders in September 2022. We thank the Secretary-General for his remarks earlier today, and we fully agree with him in saying,

"Russia's attack on Ukraine challenges the cornerstone principles and values of our multilateral system".

In addition to the remarks made by the Secretary-General, I should like to make the following additional points with regard to the important issue that we are discussing.

First, Singapore's clear and consistent position on Russia's invasion of Ukraine remains unchanged. We are upholding a fundamental principle. We are not taking sides. Our clear and consistent position reflects our firm belief in the need to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all States, big or small. We reaffirm Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter, which states unequivocally that

"All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State".

And let me add that, for small States like Singapore, the Charter and international law are not merely academic issues; they are a matter of peace and security and of existential importance. We therefore condemn in the strongest possible terms any violation of those principles, which are of fundamental importance to all Member States of the United Nations. Singapore co-sponsored draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 because we believe it expresses support for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine based on the principles of the Charter, and we hope that such a peace will come to pass.

Secondly, Singapore is saddened by the continued deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, with continuing indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, rising casualties and a lack of humanitarian access for those most in need. We share the grave concern expressed in the draft resolution about the high number of civilian casualties, including among women and children. We support the call made in the draft resolution for an immediate cessation of attacks on the critical infrastructure of Ukraine and of deliberate attacks on civilian objects, including those that are residences, schools and hospitals. We commend the work of various United Nations agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross in providing humanitarian aid to alleviate the suffering of the Ukrainian people and others affected by the war and its spillover effects. We also thank the International Atomic Energy Agency for its work to ensure nuclear safety and security in Ukraine despite the challenging situation on the ground.

Thirdly, Singapore shares the concerns expressed in the draft resolution about the effects of the war on global food and energy supply chains and prices. The spillover effects have dampened economic recovery and growth and set back the progress made in the global fight against poverty. In that regard, we commend the Secretary-General's tireless efforts to ensure a continued supply of essential exports through the Black Sea Grain Initiative. We call on the Secretary-General to continue his good-offices role by facilitating contact and dialogue with all relevant parties in order to support a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

The draft resolution before us today is a balanced one that reiterates the principles of the Charter and international law. It emphasizes the need to redouble support for diplomatic efforts to reach a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in accordance

with the principles of the Charter. We welcome the call it makes for a cessation of hostilities and for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal by the Russian Federation of all its military forces from the territory of Ukraine. Singapore urges all Member States to vote in favour of the draft resolution in order to demonstrate support for international law, the Charter and the rules-based multilateral system. The adoption of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 will send a clear signal to the world that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States must be respected, that internationally recognized borders cannot be violated by the rule of force and that a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine must be based on the principles of the Charter.

**Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein): One year ago, Russia decided to escalate its aggression against Ukraine in a manner that is both terrifying and carries very wide implications beyond the region. This past year has seen the perpetration of horrific crimes that are difficult to process in their scale and systematic nature. In the course of the aggression, Russian forces have systematically violated all the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law — military necessity, distinction and proportionality. Civilians, including children, have been forcibly abducted to Russia. Unable to score the expected military gains, Russia has resorted to a tactic of terrorizing the resilient civilian population into submission, including through a pattern of attacks on critical civilian infrastructure. Moreover, its leadership has sent hundreds of thousands of its own young men, many of them conscripted, to a senseless and unnecessary death.

The impacts of the aggression are being felt far and wide. Food security for tens of millions, while somewhat ameliorated by the progress of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, will be further set back this year, as Ukraine's natural environment is polluted with the detritus of war. The Doomsday Clock is now set at 90 seconds to midnight — the closest it has ever been — after threats by Russia's leadership of a nuclear apocalypse. Collectively, that aggression has seriously undermined global progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and contributed significantly to a world in which displacement and hunger sit at record levels.

Let us be clear about why we have this war. Ukraine did not want it. NATO did not want it. No peace-loving State wanted it. The political and military leadership of the Russian Federation — alone — wanted it and

chose to invade a sovereign neighbouring State. It did so in blatant violation of the founding principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental tenets of international law, with complete disregard for human life and the devastating resulting fallout for people around the globe.

The United Nations is a peace organization, created from the ashes of war in order to save future generations from experiencing its horrors. The Charter therefore outlawed the use of force, with two exceptions: authorization by the Security Council and self-defence. That aggression is therefore manifestly illegal. Ukraine's efforts to defend itself, on the other hand, are not only legal under Article 51 of the Charter but are also fully in line with its object and purpose.

We co-sponsored draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, on which the General Assembly will take action tomorrow. A just peace must be grounded only in the principles of the United Nations Charter, in particular that of territorial integrity. As this Assembly stated in March 2022 (resolution ES-11/1), Russia must immediately and completely withdraw all of its troops from all of Ukraine. Only then will it be possible to engage in genuine diplomacy and will there be space for credible and fully inclusive peace talks. We call on all States to support the draft resolution, which epitomizes the values of the Organization.

The draft resolution also highlights the role of accountability as a key element in a just and lasting peace, which includes, in particular, accountability for the crime of aggression, from which all the other international crimes committed in the course of this war flow. The General Assembly has recognized individual criminal responsibility for the crime against peace — the precursor to the crime of aggression — as customary international law as early as in 1946. In 1974, it defined, by consensus, what acts of aggression are (resolution 3314 (XXIX)). And in the past year it has twice determined, by an overwhelming majority, that the Russian Federation has committed aggression against Ukraine.

Ensuring individual criminal accountability for persons in political and military leadership positions in line with international law is therefore an obvious task for the General Assembly, both in line with the United Nations Charter and with its own landmark decisions from the past. We therefore appeal to all States to join the effort to create a special tribunal for the crime of

aggression and in so doing to live up to our commitment to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

**Mr. Maes** (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Luxembourg fully subscribes to the statement made by the representative of the European Union in its capacity as observer. Allow me to supplement it with some considerations in my national capacity.

We thank you, Mr. President, for responding to our request to reopen the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly. As the war continues to rage, it is urgent that the Assembly be able to take a decision on the draft resolution on the principles of the United Nations Charter that underpin a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine (A/ES-11/L.7).

Luxembourg has co-sponsored and will vote in favour of the draft resolution, which is the result of inclusive and transparent consultations. We call on all Member States to vote in favour of it. It is indeed in the interest of all of us to defend the Charter and stress the need to reach, as soon as possible, a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter, including in particular the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States. The Charter is our common asset. It is our bulwark against the onslaught of those who want the law of the strongest to prevail over the force of law.

By launching its large-scale, unprovoked, unjustified and unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022, not only has the Russian Federation attacked Ukraine, but it has also attacked the international order based on the rule of law, which rests on the fundamental provisions of the United Nations Charter. It is our responsibility to respond to this aggression by reaffirming the principles of the Charter and helping Ukraine to defend itself, in accordance with the inherent right to self-defence enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter. That was true a year ago; it remains true today more than ever.

The toll of this war of aggression launched by Russia with the involvement of Belarus is appalling. Tens of thousands of lives have been shattered. Women and children have been victims of sexual violence. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, more than 8,000 civilians, including 487 children, have been killed in the last 12 months. These are the cases that could be

verified; the actual number of civilian casualties is much higher.

The continued use of explosive weapons, including in populated areas, has resulted in thousands of schools, preschools and other educational facilities in Ukraine being damaged or destroyed, causing the interruption of education for over 5 million children in the country. Targeted attacks on schools and hospitals and other civilian infrastructure in Ukraine are a violation of international humanitarian and human rights law.

The draft resolution before us calls for an immediate end to these attacks. It reiterates the demand that the Russian Federation immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its military forces within the country's internationally recognized borders from Ukrainian territory. It also calls for a cessation of hostilities.

The draft resolution rightly emphasizes the need to ensure that the perpetrators of the most serious crimes under international law committed on the territory of Ukraine are held accountable and that justice for the victims is done. In this regard, Luxembourg welcomes and supports the work of the commission of inquiry established by the Human Rights Council and that of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The investigation conducted by the Prosecutor in cooperation with the Ukrainian judicial authorities will help bring to justice those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide.

While the ICC is not in a position to exercise jurisdiction over the crime of aggression in this case, we are among the countries that advocate the creation of a special court to prosecute those responsible for the aggression against Ukraine, as recommended by the General Assembly. There can be no impunity for the crime of aggression committed against Ukraine.

With the 10-point peace plan proposed by President Zelenskyy, Ukraine has shown the way to a just and lasting peace. In its courageous fight for freedom and universal values, Ukraine can continue to count on Luxembourg's full support and solidarity. Luxembourg will continue to resolutely support the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly.

**Dame Barbara Woodward** (United Kingdom): One year ago, we met in this Hall as 130,000 Russian troops amassed on Ukraine's borders and in illegally

annexed Crimea. Many of us called for de-escalation, dialogue and respect for the United Nations Charter. Russia claimed it had no intention to invade. The next day, Russia launched its full-scale invasion, with Belarus providing one of the staging grounds.

We are all aware of the devastating impacts: millions of civilians displaced, countless lives — Ukrainian and Russian — lost, hundreds of hospitals and thousands of schools destroyed, a generation of Ukrainian families scarred by abuses, trauma and forced deportation. And across the world, there have been increased food insecurity and energy prices affecting every country, really hurting those most in need.

In response, the General Assembly has now met in emergency special session six times in the past year. It has repeatedly called for Russia to end its invasion and withdraw from Ukraine. It has condemned Russia's illegal attempts to annex Ukrainian territory. It has reaffirmed our respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and demanded respect for the Charter of the United Nations.

Yet Russia continues with more indiscriminate attacks on Ukrainian cities and towns and endless systematic strikes on Ukraine's water, electricity and other infrastructure — a war on the Ukrainian people and their right to exist. Ukraine has resisted day in and day out for every one of the past 364 days, exercising its right of self-defence under the Charter. As Foreign Minister Kuleba said earlier, every country in the Assembly would fight to survive in the same way. But beyond its survival, what Ukraine really wants, indeed what we all want, what we have continually called for, is a just peace.

Tomorrow we will vote on draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, which underlines the need for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace — a peace that guarantees Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and ends Russia's constant aggression. A vote in favour of the draft resolution is a vote for peace and the United Nations Charter. We urge all Member States to join us in voting in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7.

**Ms. Hallum** (New Zealand): Aotearoa New Zealand reiterates its unequivocal condemnation of the Russian Federation's blatant aggression against Ukraine. One year into the illegal and unprovoked conflict, the repercussions for global peace, security and economic stability continue to reverberate around the world — terrible loss of life, a humanitarian crisis

and economic upheaval. Our resolve to stand against the Russian Federation's aggression is undiminished. Russia's actions are a direct attack on the principles that underpin global peace and security. The only way for Russia to rebuild its credibility as an international citizen is to end the war. We again call on the Russian Federation to commit to dialogue and act in the interest of peace and in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and the binding orders of the International Court of Justice. Russia has a duty to act consistently with its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Security Council. Aotearoa New Zealand strongly supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Our position is reflected in our response. Aotearoa New Zealand has acted swiftly, providing unprecedented diplomatic, economic and military support for Ukraine's self-defence.

As members of the General Assembly, it is our responsibility to do all we can to avoid the deadly consequences of war. The principles at stake in Ukraine — respect for international law and the United Nations Charter's defence of sovereignty and territorial integrity — are of critical importance for Aotearoa New Zealand and for the peace and stability of small States. The passage of time does not lessen our opposition to the Russian Federation's act of aggression against Ukraine. We call on all States to maintain pressure on Russia to show that its actions are not without consequence. Aotearoa New Zealand is committed to ensuring that there is legal accountability in Ukraine, including through the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. Aotearoa New Zealand chooses peace. We do not support the cynical amendments proposed by Belarus. We are pleased to co-sponsor draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 and urge other States to add their support. We stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine.

**Mr. Önal** (Türkiye): Let me start by thanking you, Mr. President, for reconvening the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly.

We have gathered at a sombre moment. The very fact that the war in Ukraine is entering its second year with little prospect of peace is disheartening. Yet it is a timely opportunity to take stock and reaffirm the fundamental principles that guide our policies. Since day one, Türkiye has adopted a principled position in terms of rejecting the war in Ukraine and calling it unacceptable. We also tried to facilitate diplomacy at an early stage, both in Antalya and Istanbul. We have



manifested our position by co-sponsoring or voting in favour of all relevant General Assembly resolutions. Indeed, our position is a natural extension of our opposition to the illegal annexation of Crimea.

One year on, Türkiye's position remains unchanged. We fully support Ukraine's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty. We continue to stand firmly against the war and reject the annexation of Ukrainian territories. We must ensure that the founding principles of the United Nations, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, are upheld. The repercussions of the conflict are being felt far beyond Ukraine, with profound global implications. The material and human cost is mounting. The war has had a negative impact through surging energy prices, high costs of living, supply chain problems and food insecurity. That is happening at a time when global governance is already struggling with the challenges posed by an interconnected, interdependent and digitalized world.

Therefore, the trajectory of the conflict cannot be decided only by the dynamics of the battleground. A clear vision for ending this war through diplomacy must be articulated sooner rather than later. We must focus our efforts on crafting the contours of a realistic, sustainable and, above all, viable peace. The Black Sea Grain Initiative has proved that diplomacy can indeed deliver results.

As we enter the second year of this conflict, Türkiye will remain engaged in all efforts to that end.

**Mrs. Narváez Ojeda** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, for resuming the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly.

"We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war." As we all know, that is how the Charter of the United Nations begins in the profound hope of eradicating the use of force from relations among States. Seventy-seven years have passed, and today in this very Assembly we meet to commemorate one year on from the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Such a violation of the norms of the Charter of our Organization in the twenty-first century should prompt us to reaffirm our deep conviction and commitment to its purposes and principles and the obligations that we have under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial

integrity of States and to always believe that the only solution to disputes is by peaceful means, and not by force.

Chile thanks the drafters of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, which is before this Assembly, for including and highlighting various elements linked to the principles that would underpin a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, also in accordance with our Charter and the international order that preserves us. We also acknowledge the flexibility and the acceptance of suggestions from the sponsors in the process of consultations on the draft text.

In particular, we stress its paragraph 3, which calls upon Member States and international organizations to redouble support for diplomatic efforts to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, consistent with the Charter of the United Nations.

Chile decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution, in line with our previous decisions at this emergency special session, as a clear signal of what are basic notions of international coexistence, peace and security, respect for which is the prerequisite for aspiring to the development of our peoples and dealing with the many global challenges that threaten us as a community.

Just as this war is taking place, we are witnessing the consequences of climate change, natural disasters, increasing poverty, inequality, food insecurity and terrorism, inter alia, which have a direct impact on the lack of prospects for the inhabitants of our countries, which it is our duty to improve. With regard to all those issues, the Organization and its agencies should prioritize their efforts to find solutions or mitigate such problems.

It is essential to stop the spiral of such a conflict, which shakes the foundations of the international system and, as a consequence, results in a loss of trust in multilateralism and democracy, as well as in our capacity for collaboration and solidarity, exacerbating polarization, divisions and hate speech when what we most urgently need is to foster unity.

We note with deep concern the deterioration in the arms control regime, built up over decades. We see an urgent need for a strategic security dialogue among nuclear-weapon States that enables stable and predictable relations, enhancing transparency and building trust, underpinned by robust and credible legal and verification regimes. We emphasize that

nuclear weapons are a source of insecurity and must be eliminated.

However, this bleak outlook should not discourage us and should instead be a catalyst for us, as an international community, to create the conditions for a peaceful solution to this conflict and to fulfil in good faith the obligations that we undertook.

At the same time, we encourage the work on the ground and the efforts made by different actors towards enduring peace and security for the entire population. We highlight the voices of friendly countries and regional organizations to achieve a substantive dialogue between the parties involved.

**Mr. Hwang** (Republic of Korea): We are once again gathered here today for a meeting of the emergency special session as we solemnly commemorate one year since Russia's illegal invasion against Ukraine and its people. For the past year, the war in Ukraine has created untold human suffering and countless tragedies. It is deeply troubling to see that there is little hope in sight for a peaceful resolution. How many more days must we bear witness to civilian casualties and the destruction of the beloved homes of ordinary people? It is simply deplorable that we have to discuss at the rostrum in the General Assembly Hall a war of aggression waged by a permanent member of the Security Council in the twenty-first century.

The impacts of this war are not constrained within Ukraine's borders. Rather, the international community is continuing to grapple with the far-reaching repercussions of the war.

In addition, there is fundamental damage occurring to all of us. Our common principles are being flagrantly breached and the rules-based international order is under attack.

Russia's armed invasion of Ukraine and its annexation of Ukrainian territories through the use of force are serious blows to the core principles of the international system that we have been upholding over the past seven decades. Those principles include our solemn obligation to refrain from the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

In that regard, the Security Council has failed to act in accordance with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security as a result of a veto cast by Russia. With the Security

Council still deadlocked on the situation in Ukraine, the General Assembly must advance a firm, unified voice on behalf of the fundamental principles that bind us together.

*Mr. Kimani (Kenya), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

The Uniting for Peace resolution 377 (V), which provides for the basis of today's emergency special session, is all the more meaningful to the Republic of Korea since it was born in 1950 during the Korean War owing to a veto wielded by the Soviet Union.

At the previous meetings of this emergency special session on the situation in Ukraine, we adopted five resolutions, which all demonstrated our strong commitment to the Charter of the United Nations. The Republic of Korea, as a nation that was founded, defended and then rebuilt with the crucial assistance of the United Nations, and as a nation that is adamantly committed to universal values such as freedom, human rights and the rule of law, proudly co-sponsored all those resolutions and once again is co-sponsoring draft resolution A-ES/11/L.7. My delegation expects all Member States to vote in favour of the draft resolution, which is principally about our common values and guiding principles. This is not about taking sides; this is about our joint commitment to upholding the Charter of the United Nations and the rules-based international order.

The Republic of Korea urges Russia to immediately and unconditionally withdraw its forces from the territory of Ukraine and to end its continuing violations of the Charter of the United Nations. The war can be stopped by Russia's choice, as the invasion one year ago was its choice. Extending the war will only strengthen international solidarity against Russia and will not serve Russia's interests. Russia should devise an actionable exit strategy for the sake of both world peace and its own interests, and the sooner it does so the better. In the meantime, we support Ukraine's exercise of its inherent right to self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. We reiterate our full solidarity with Ukraine and its people.

My delegation urges all parties to the conflict to abide by humanitarian and human rights laws. We believe that those who commit violations of humanitarian and human rights laws must be held accountable. My delegation also condemns all other illicit activities on the ground, such as the arms trade between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Wagner

Group, in blatant violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. As we enter the second year of the war, we are compelled to raise a key question: whose side is time on? The answer, we firmly believe, is that time is on the side of freedom, justice, human rights, the rule of law and the Charter of the United Nations — not on the side of mass atrocities.

**Mr. Pérez Loose** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President for resuming the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly to consider draft resolution A/ES/11/L.7, on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

In a few hours, we will mark the anniversary of this senseless war, and what better way to honour the memory of its victims than for the international community to send a sign that it is united and mobilized to achieve peace with dignity? In addition to the powers granted to it by the Charter of the United Nations, the Assembly has the responsibility conferred upon it by resolution 2623 (2022), by which the Security Council decided to convene this special session, which is now holding its seventeenth meeting. Since the beginning of the eleventh emergency special session, we have adopted five resolutions with key provisions on the defence of territorial integrity, the promotion of guarantees for humanitarian access, the protection of civilians and accountability. The General Assembly has the duty to promote respect for international law and compliance with the order of the International Court of Justice of 16 March 2022, through which the highest judicial organ of the United Nations ordered the Russian Federation to immediately cease its military operations in Ukraine.

In September 2022, from this rostrum in the main multilateral and most deliberative, representative and democratic forum of the United Nations, our Heads of State and Government almost unanimously committed themselves to peace and called for it to be defended. Since then, how many times have we heard the calls of delegations to silence the weapons and put an end to the military aggression? How many times have we invoked the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, whether with reference to Article 2, paragraph 4, by which States must refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of another State, or to Article 2, paragraph 3, on the peaceful settlement of disputes? How many times were we reminded that, 77 years ago, we determined to save succeeding

generations from the scourge of war and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours? Beyond the different nuances in the positions of the great diversity of States that comprise the Assembly, there are two essential principles that are shared by the vast majority: the recognition of the validity of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and the overriding objective of peace.

Ecuador is of the view that a comprehensive and sustainable peace is vital and possible. That is why we decided to co-sponsor draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, which among other key provisions calls for a cessation of hostilities and underscores the need to achieve as soon as possible a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine. We regret that the amendments submitted by Belarus seek to divide and undermine draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7. For the 8,000 civilian lives taken in the first year of the invasion, for seven-year-old Alisa, 10-year-old Polina and two-month-old Maksym and Darya, who will not see peace because they were buried by bombs and the fire of foreign missiles, for the girls and boys of their generation who have been displaced or have become refugees by the millions, and for those who are living in the spectre of destruction and anguish, Ecuador will reject the amendments and defend draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 by voting in favour of it.

**Ms. Kabua** (Marshall Islands): The Republic of the Marshall Islands strongly reaffirms the Palikir communiqué of the twenty-first Micronesian Presidents' summit of 13 February 2023, in which the five leaders of Micronesian island nations condemn the illegal, brutal and unjustified invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which is approaching its one-year anniversary. The Presidents agreed that the rule of law, the international rules-based order and respect for sovereignty and human rights must prevail. The Presidents also called on the international community to contribute to restoring peace and stability in that region.

The words of small island leaders in the vast expanses of the North Pacific Ocean, half a world away, are also those of democratic nations that are committed to accountability and fundamental human rights. We are as concerned by the Russian invasion as we are by the sharp tone of geopolitical confrontation in our own region. Moreover, as small nations of vulnerable populations, we rely closely on effective multilateral outcomes. In its aggression against Ukraine, Russia and its actors have committed documented atrocities

with such deliberate planning and on such a scale that it is difficult not to define them as crimes against humanity. The United Nations was founded out of a clear commitment to never repeating atrocities and preventing instability. The current Russian aggression against Ukraine has put us all to the test. A dysfunctional Security Council, held up by that very State's self-interest through its questionable veto power, will not silence the General Assembly.

The Charter of the United Nations is not neutral — it demands adherence to universal and fundamental human rights and does so to protect the most vulnerable countries and peoples, who are otherwise threatened by larger Powers. It is incumbent upon us, as Member States, to turn those noble words into reality. Today's vote is unambiguous and must send a clear and common message. The public credibility of the institution we all belong to rests upon it. In the past year, we have seen evidence of appalling atrocities, such as indiscriminate targeting, devastation, conflict-related sexual violence and the large-scale removal of civilians from Ukraine to Russia, including the abduction of children. Accordingly, accountability mechanisms are now at work. While those deliberate processes must take time, no one can ignore the overwhelming clarity and weight of documentation.

The international community finds itself at a unique moment in time. The post-Cold War era is long over and the boundaries of the new moment are uncertain. We are increasingly defined by coalitions and stronger group efforts. Issues that may once have divided us often no longer do so. Those committed to speaking out against war crimes and human rights violations are simply stronger now as a result of that experience. We are stronger together and we will not be divided. While some may still choose to vote only on the basis of politics, others vote to express moral character. Therefore, we are prepared to support all efforts until a just and lasting peace is reached. Today the Republic of the Marshall Islands will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, and urges others to do the same.

**Mr. Erdan** (Israel): For the past year, Israel has stood alongside the people of Ukraine in solidarity, both on the ground and here at the United Nations. Israel will continue our solidarity with Ukraine by supporting draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 and every

other draft resolution that reflects our position at the United Nations.

The State of Israel has always been and continues to remain wholeheartedly committed to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Ambassador Kyslytsya is a dear friend on a personal level, but that friendship extends far beyond us. It is shared between our nations as well. One of the most fundamental values in Jewish tradition is the sanctity of life. According to our sages, saving even one life is akin to saving the entire world. That is a principle that Israel, the Jewish State, holds dear, which is seen through Israel's support and aid around the world, whenever disaster strikes and whenever there are those in need. When Ukraine needed support, Israel immediately took action. Within one week of the outbreak of the fighting, more than 100 tons of humanitarian equipment and aid was delivered to our Ukrainian friends. In coordination with the Ukrainian authorities, thousands of coats, blankets, tents and sleeping bags were shipped. From then until today, medication, food, water purification systems, industrial-sized generators and much more have been delivered.

Just weeks ago, Israel delivered armoured ambulances to Ukraine. Israel was proud to establish a field hospital inside Ukraine's borders. It was at that hospital that 7,000 patients were treated in the direst of times. Staffed by about 200 doctors, nurses and health professionals, the field hospital included wards for men, women and children, as well as emergency-room, labour and delivery facilities, imaging and tele-health capabilities, mental health services and much more. Yet the field hospital was not the only Israeli hospital in which Ukrainians received treatment. Hundreds of Ukrainian patients have been treated in hospitals and rehabilitation centres across Israel. Whether giving critical care to children suffering from cancer or to providing wounded soldiers with state-of-the-art prosthetics, Israeli doctors and medical professionals have been wholly committed to helping Ukrainians in need. Mashav, Israel's agency for international development cooperation, has provided crucial training to thousands of Ukrainian professionals in the fields of emergency management, welfare and post-trauma therapy.

But now, one year on, is not the time to allow our support to ebb. That is precisely the commitment that Israel made last week with the visit of our Minister for Foreign Affairs to Ukraine. Israel remains steadfast



in continuing our support and, indeed in expanding it by advancing projects in health care and civilian infrastructure across Ukraine, as well as aiding in the development of a smart early-warning system to save Ukrainian lives from imminent rocket and missile attacks.

For years now, Israel has been warning the international community of the most dangerous threat to the Middle East — the Ayatollah regime in Iran. It is only now that the international community has begun to wake up. The Ayatollah regime is not merely a threat to the Iranian people, murdering protesters and women in the streets. It is not only a danger to the Middle East, with its public calls for Israel's destruction. It is attacks on maritime shipping routes and Iran's funding and arming of destabilizing terrorist armies. The Ayatollahs are a worldwide threat, and for Ukraine that could not be clearer. There are Iranian arms and weaponry wreaking havoc in Ukraine, killing innocent civilians and destroying infrastructure. And that is just the beginning. Ukraine has been a testing ground for Iran and its armaments are now being sold to some of the most dangerous international actors. If that is what the Iranian threat looks like today, I truly cannot imagine what it will be like should Iran become a nuclear-threshold State. Think about it — it is time for the international community to not just wake up, but to act against the Iranian threat, to act for the sake of the Iranian people, for the Middle East, for Ukraine and for the sake of the world. Iran must be stopped.

Israel stands strongly with our Ukrainian friends, remains committed to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and is fully devoted to saving lives in any way possible. Israel is proud to strengthen its mission of humanitarian support and looks forward to expanding cooperation and advancing more projects in order to assist Ukraine. I pray for an end to the violence and for peace — not only in Europe, but around the globe.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico)** (*spoke in Spanish*): One year after the start of the armed conflict in Ukraine, Mexico reiterates its principled position, as expressed both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council: States must act in full compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, always promoting actions aimed at avoiding the escalation of tensions and encouraging dialogue and negotiation until all options for the peaceful settlement of disputes have been exhausted.

The peaceful settlement of disputes is also a central principle of my country's foreign policy, enshrined in our Constitution. That is why Mexico is a peace-loving country that has always shown its diplomatic willingness to encourage the return of parties to the negotiating table. We submitted a formal initiative to the Assembly in that regard and have supported all the efforts of the Secretary-General and Member States to open channels to address critical situations — whether it is to mitigate the food crisis resulting from the conflict or to facilitate humanitarian assistance.

In our recent participation in the Security Council, we promoted, together with France, the draft text that served as the basis for resolution A/ES-11/2, adopted by the General Assembly on 24 March 2022, with the aim of reducing the suffering of the civilian population affected by the war.

We reiterate that violations of international law are unacceptable and must not go unpunished. In the interests of accountability, Mexico has unequivocally supported the judicial processes initiated both in the International Criminal Court and in the International Court of Justice, and we will continue to do so.

It is for all these reasons that Mexico supports draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, which is before us today. My delegation participated actively in the negotiations on this draft resolution, which expresses the commitment of the General Assembly to sustainable peace through respect for the Charter of the United Nations. The text also recognizes and supports the efforts of both the Secretary-General and Member States to achieve a just and lasting peace in Ukraine. It also reiterates the validity of the norms of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, while renewing our collective commitment to accountability.

With regard to the last-minute amendments, independent of their content, we regret that they were not submitted in sufficient time for their full consideration.

In conclusion, Mexico calls on the parties to renew their efforts to achieve a cessation of hostilities and to put an end to violations of Article 2 of the Charter and to actions that run counter to General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX).

Mexico recognizes the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and supports all efforts towards a diplomatic solution to stop the suffering of the civilian population.

**Mr. Fifield** (Australia): Australia is proud to stand alongside our partners to co-sponsor this draft resolution underscoring the need for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

And let me be clear at the outset — one year on, Australia continues to condemn Russia's illegal and immoral full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This aggression cannot be normalized, and it cannot be minimized. We strongly support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

We urge all Member States to support this resolution. Doing so demonstrates our unreserved commitment to upholding international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations. It confirms that we will not accept a situation where larger countries determine the fate of smaller countries.

It shows President Putin that Russia's prolonged war impacts all nations and all peoples. It is not only causing immense human suffering, but also exacerbating existing stresses in the global economy — constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains and heightening energy and food insecurity.

President Putin's destabilizing behaviour and nuclear threats are acts of hostility, threatening the peace and security of all. Mr. Putin's joint statement last year with the leaders of the other four nuclear-weapon States in January emphasized that a "nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought". That commitment should not be forgotten.

Australia calls on Russia to end its war and unconditionally withdraw from Ukraine's territory, consistent with the legally binding decision of the International Court of Justice. The ongoing injuries suffered by Ukraine as a result of Russia's violations of international law also require full reparation by Russia. Australia has imposed sanctions on Belarusian and Iranian targets involved in Russia's war efforts. We reiterate that those who provide material support to Russia will face consequences. For its part, the Australian Government has committed approximately \$655 million in assistance to empower Ukraine to resolve the conflict on its own terms and meet the immediate needs of the Ukrainian people. Australia continues to work with its partners to hold Russia accountable. We have imposed more than 900 targeted financial sanctions on those responsible, as well as comprehensive import and export bans. Australia continues to work with partners

to impose costs on Russia in the multilateral system to show that the invasion has severe consequences for its global standing.

*The President returned to the Chair.*

Australia again calls on Russia to immediately comply with its obligations under international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law. It is imperative that we ensure accountability for the commission of serious international crimes in Ukraine. That is why we continue to support the important work of the International Criminal Court and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine. On 24 February, Australia will make further announcements to mark one year since Russia's full-scale invasion. We will continue to call for the sovereignty of all nations, large and small, to be respected. Australia mourns the incalculable losses inflicted by the invasion and honours the resilience of the Ukrainian people. Russia's attack on Ukraine is an attack on all and reminds us how much we all have to lose if we fail to protect the United Nations system.

**Mr. Lippwe** (Federated States of Micronesia): My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier today by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum.

It has been one year since the eleventh emergency special session of the General Assembly adopted resolution ES-11/1, on the aggression against Ukraine. Since then, the war has only intensified, with disturbing human rights violations waged against the people of Ukraine by Russia. The ongoing unjust war has displaced millions of people, with insurmountable death and destruction. It is disconcerting to see Russia's utter disregard for the call of the international community for it to cease its hostilities towards the people of Ukraine and withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders. We once again express our appreciation to its neighbours, which continue to provide food, shelter and safety for the most vulnerable.

Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 tries to look towards the future, while underscoring the need to reach a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It reaffirms the Assembly's commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally

recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters. And it calls for full adherence by the parties to the armed conflict to their obligations under international humanitarian law. Micronesia supports draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 and is one of its sponsors.

**Mrs. Fyneah** (Liberia): One year ago, the world witnessed Russia's invasion of Ukraine. For me, that led to immediate recollections of Liberia's dark days, marred by heightened insecurity, displacements — internal and across borders — hunger, disease, fear, death and many forms of human rights violations. Those are just a few of the traumas of war, with effects often lasting a lifetime. Liberia, a country with first-hand experience of war, understands that very well — the feeling of uncertainty, constant fear and loss; leaving our homes and all we know, in search of safety and the basic necessities such as food, shelter and clothing; and waking up and not knowing whether we will survive another day. That is the daily reality of Ukrainians. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has recorded more than 18,000 civilian deaths and injuries as of 23 January. That includes hundreds of innocent children who lost the opportunity to grow up to reach their full potential.

The unprovoked and illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia not only threatens regional security, impedes development and contributes to widespread human suffering, but it also threatens the very fabric of this intergovernmental Organization. The fundamental principles of international law and the entire international system are at stake. It is time that we all demonstrate our commitment to upholding the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, we join calls for the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally cease hostilities in Ukraine and allow for a diplomatic approach to finding comprehensive, just and lasting peace. We live in a world of increasingly interconnected challenges. Therefore, Russia's aggression against Ukraine also has a global impact on economic growth and global supply, thereby aggravating the food and energy crisis for the most vulnerable States and people. Therefore, the world cannot, and should not, sit back idly to what is unfolding in Ukraine. Posterity will judge our actions today.

Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, which we will consider tomorrow, sends a clear message that the conflict has to be brought to an end by restoring respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter, including the principles of sovereign equality and the

territorial integrity of States. Those principles should serve as a basis for securing a just and lasting peace in Ukraine. It is not an approach limited to Ukraine. Adherence to the United Nations Charter is a viable and efficient recipe for addressing issues of global peace and security.

I also hasten to remind us that not speaking out, not acting now and not doing the right thing threaten the very fabric of this intergovernmental organ, of which we are all members.

Liberia is therefore a proud co-sponsor of this draft resolution, which is a further demonstration of our commitment to the principles of the United Nations Charter, the maintenance of global peace and security and solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We therefore urge all Member States to vote in favour of the draft resolution when it is considered tomorrow.

**Mr. Dang** (Viet Nam): It has been a year since the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine, but Viet Nam is saddened to see little hope in bringing it to a close sooner than later. Despite the passage of time, the situation in Ukraine has regrettably not shown any sign of de-escalation. The consequences of the conflict are devastating, with immense loss of life and destruction of infrastructure and resources for countries.

The impacts of the conflict are felt globally, especially by the most vulnerable groups. The prospects of negotiations seem beyond reach. The conflict has negatively affected the region and the world. At the same time, it has hampered efforts aimed at promoting international cooperation and addressing global challenges.

If the situation persists, the chances of peace are even more remote. It is all the more disheartening at a time when the world should work collaboratively for peace and development. Billions of dollars have been spent on wars, while resources for peace, development, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change adaptation are lacking.

We reiterate that it is essential to promote peace, security, stability and cooperation by upholding international law and the Charter of the United Nations, including the fundamental principles of respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and refrainment from the threat or use of force. All disputes should be resolved by peaceful means, through comprehensive and durable solutions.

We urge the party concerned to put an immediate end to the hostilities and avoid actions that may lead to further escalation. We also call upon the parties concerned to urgently resume peaceful dialogue and negotiations to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, taking into account the legitimate interests and needs of the parties, in line with international law and the United Nations Charter.

Those are the most pressing priorities at hand. The international community should redouble support for such efforts. Only by doing so can international and regional peace, security and stability be maintained.

Furthermore, a focus must be placed on protecting the safety and security of civilians, responding adequately to the urgent humanitarian needs of those impacted by the hostilities and safeguarding civilian facilities in Ukraine, in particular civilian infrastructure. In that process, international assistance is crucial. We urge the United Nations, Member States and international partners to continue to join hands and increase humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflict in Ukraine.

Viet Nam supports the international efforts and initiatives, including those by the United Nations and the Secretary-General, to bring all parties together. In that vein, the results of ongoing initiatives, such as the Black Sea Grain Initiative, should serve as the foundation for finding a comprehensive solution to the conflict.

Within our capacity, we re-emphasize our readiness to make contributions to diplomatic efforts and to the reconstruction, recovery and assistance in Ukraine.

**Mr. Ugarelli (Peru)** (*spoke in Spanish*): The historic Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States of 24 October 1970 stresses that the territory of one State shall not be subject to acquisition by another State by the threat or use of force, that no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as lawful and that any attempt to undermine, in part or in whole, the national unity and territorial integrity of a State or country or its political independence is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Charter of the United Nations, the founding instrument of this Organization, sets out the rights and obligations of Member States, such as unwavering respect for the principles of non-intervention and

non-aggression and respect for the territorial integrity of States. The independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of a State must therefore be respected. Any dispute must be settled by peaceful means, in accordance with international law.

Those are the necessary commitments that regulate the international security system. There is the obligation not to engage in aggression and the obligation to resolve differences by peaceful means, through dialogue and diplomatic negotiations. That is a commitment made by all Member States present here today.

We are committed to the maintenance of international peace and security. We have a commitment to take collective measures to prevent and eliminate threats to peace and to suppress acts of aggression.

That is why Peru is participating today in this meeting of the emergency special session of the General Assembly. However, we do so with great concern one year after the escalation of a conflict that has claimed thousands of human lives, caused forced displacements and disrupted regional and international security in a multidimensional manner. The global impact of the war on food security, energy, the economy and the environment is profound, and its consequences will be long term. A cessation of hostilities is therefore necessary.

As the United Nations, we are gathered here today to demand that the commitments made be honoured and to cooperate in a spirit of solidarity and in good faith. The will of the parties to the conflict to achieve peace must materialize. The desire to put an end to hostilities, to prioritize and give priority to human life over political interests, the right to live in peace and harmony and the right of children and of present and future generations to live today and tomorrow in comprehensive, just and lasting peace must be demonstrated.

In accordance with its State policies, Peru upholds the sovereignty of States, their territorial integrity and their borders created since their establishment as independent States. It upholds respect for international law and the United Nations Charter. It upholds the right of peoples to live in peace and security. On that basis, we firmly believe that the peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue is the only option for a just and lasting solution.

The crisis triggered by the conflict confirms the structural problems of the international order. The absence of an immediate and effective solution to



maintain international peace and security calls for the strengthening of the Charter of the United Nations and optimizing and revitalizing the management of its organs. The veto cannot be used selectively, especially in cases that undermine the sovereignty and integrity of States or in those that violate human rights, humanitarian rights or the peace and security of nations.

Peru resolutely joins the call for a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, under the principles of the Charter, within the framework of respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, because only with peace and security can there be development, because only with peace and security can there be a future. We are in the process of conducting an exhaustive evaluation of what has been achieved in relation to the goals set out for development. That process has been severely interrupted by the impact of the coronavirus disease and seriously disrupted by the effects of the war. There are collateral effects and structural consequences, which can be remedied. What cannot be remedied are the victims and the impact of the war on the lives of the people who have been, and continue to be, affected. Only peace will be able to chart a new path, a new tomorrow, a new future. We urge the parties to build it. We call for dialogue to achieve lasting peace.

For all those reasons, Peru has co-sponsored draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, entitled “Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine”.

**Ms. Vea** (Tonga): We gather to mark the passing — already — of one year since the unlawful invasion of Ukraine by its neighbour, the Russian Federation. Tonga again joins others in support of a peaceful resolution. A year is a long time, a year full of pain and unnecessary suffering. We must remember, though, that there is always time to return to diplomacy, to seek peaceful means, peaceful means as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

More than ever, we must reaffirm our commitment to the spirit of togetherness, unity and solidarity. Seventy-seven years ago, having lived the horrors and destructions of war, our predecessors gathered to establish this body. It was all about hope, the hope for a humankind capable of creating, sharing and safeguarding lasting peace for all through international peace and security.

That is why we support the draft resolution before us, entitled “Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine” (A/ES-11/L.7). We support the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We support the assertion that violations of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of a Member State are inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We support the obligation of all States under Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations to

“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.”

And we support the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means. We call for the cessation of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine and the restoration of lasting peace in Ukraine.

On that note, allow me to reiterate what had been alluded to by our delegation in the same session last year (see A/ES-11/PV.4), and in alignment with the Pacific Islands Forum statement (see A/ES-11/PV.2), by calling upon the good conscience of all parties to pursue every possible means available to return to the path of diplomacy. It is never too late to return to diplomacy, to seek peaceful means.

We all agree with the Secretary-General that the United Nations is being tested like never before. It was made for moments like this. We now must prove that the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations remain relevant and should therefore be upheld.

**Mr. Pieris** (Sri Lanka): It is said that you do not make peace with friends, you make it with unsavoury enemies, if it has to be.

These talks are always a complex mix of strategic calculation and human emotion. It has been the experience of those working on peacebuilding programmes and researching peace and conflict that it is important to pay attention to both factors to understand why talks may or may not succeed.

Between 1946 and 2005, only 39 of 288 conflicts, or 13.5 per cent, ended in peace agreements, according to research initiatives. The others ended in victory for one

side, or an end to fighting without a peace agreement or a straightforward victory.

There is also evidence that even failed peace agreements reduce the intensity of future conflicts. But even when warring parties fail to reach a peace agreement, talks reduce civilian casualties through temporary ceasefires or the establishment of humanitarian corridors to deliver supplies or evacuate civilians. Peace talks can create a foundation for an eventual agreement to end conflict. They can also reduce harm to communities. We must therefore strenuously exploit the crisis and explore the mechanisms of peace negotiations to their utmost with optimism, if we are to succeed in this instance. The easy path of enforcing majoritarian decisions does not, I say respectfully, address the inequities in the dispute resolution mechanism when it comes to peace talks.

Sri Lanka therefore remains deeply concerned about the situation in Ukraine. We call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint and work towards the cessation of hostilities in order to bring about peace, security and stability in the region. Sri Lanka emphasizes the need for concerted efforts to resolve the situation through diplomacy and dialogue in the pursuit of peace. As someone said, the spiral of death and devastation, which is growing on a daily basis, does nothing but destroy even the little trust and hope there is between the parties to the conflict that peace is achievable.

We must appreciate that globally it has had an impact on the recovery of economies post-coronavirus disease and on peoples' livelihoods. And all countries, including my own, Sri Lanka, are affected by increased food prices, energy prices, high inflation, a debt servicing crisis and increased levels of migration.

It is important that both sides realize that, despite being prejudiced by the status quo, they cannot have any tangible military advantage. The only logical way forward, then, is through negotiations. It is in negotiations that we must place our trust. We believe that negotiations supported by neutral mediators must be pursued in order to arrive at some version of a solution whereby both parties feel that they have won something. They must endeavour to craft an agreement that creates an environment of mutual gain, whether it be political or material.

We need to be sensitive to the reality that negotiators must not only reach an agreement, but also sell that

agreement to a community that is bitter, traumatized and surely grieving. We must also be aware that there are always strong reasons to include women, community organizers and various ethnic leaders in peace talks. Inclusion means that public acceptance of any peace deal grows as negotiations proceed. It is known that women, youth and community leaders bring a different dimension that is far more conciliatory, as they are more sensitive to the needs of our future generations.

Talking with the generals on the battlefield and the political leaders alone may not yield the best results, but historically, of course, that is the common model we see. That model may well be the case for Ukraine and Russia, whereby it would still be up to a few elite men to negotiate an agreement that might not work as best it ought to.

Two billion people live in countries affected by conflict and humanitarian crises. I do not need to stress the importance of peace, for without peace no progress is possible. I am reminded of an observation of the Holy Father Pope Francis when he said that there is a global famine of peace. That is the pitiful state to which we have successfully brought the world in the prosecution of our greed for global power. I believe it was Sir Thomas More who asked: "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?"

We have convened once again, approximately a year since the conflict in Ukraine broke out into aggression, creating manifest woeful consequences both in Ukraine and around the world. During that time, the Assembly has met five times and adopted a number of resolutions by a vote. After one year, we have not reached a solution, or, respectfully, do we see one in sight. Instead, the negative consequences of war and conflict continue to reverberate around the world.

If we are to find the much-needed respite for all concerned, we must not give up on diplomacy and our hope for a future based on peace and prosperity. We therefore appeal to the principal parties and the universal community to turn, without any further delay, to other mechanisms that include genuine dialogue and a sincere search for peace. The talks will likely be long and arduous and require smaller confidence-building steps, but the dispute can surely be brought to an end if we genuinely address the fundamentals that triggered it.

The draft resolution before us, entitled "Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine"

(A/ES-11/L.7) is before the Assembly for consideration. It is imperative that such initiatives address not just the effects and the outcome — which are evident — but the root causes that lead to conflict. If such root causes are left unaddressed, any peace — let alone a comprehensive, just and lasting one in Ukraine — will be elusive. It is Sri Lanka's hope that our decision today will contribute towards that endeavour, and not be used as another step towards recriminations and posturing that would aggravate an already inflamed situation.

**Mr. Vučinić (Montenegro):** It has been one year since Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine, which has caused death and destruction on a scale not seen since the Second World War. It has been a year of indescribable suffering and bloodshed for the Ukrainian people. Tens of thousands of Ukrainians have died, including women and children, and millions of civilians are refugees or internally displaced. Countless war crimes have been committed by Russian troops, as we heard this morning.

We once again reiterate our strong condemnation of the brutal aggression, including the deliberate shelling of civilians, journalists, media actors and medical personnel; civilian infrastructure; medical facilities; schools and educational institutions; and cultural heritage sites in Ukraine. There can be no impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other atrocity crimes. We welcome and support the ongoing work to investigate any allegations or evidence of violations of international humanitarian law in terms of crimes committed in Ukraine.

The fact that a permanent member of the Security Council and a nuclear-weapon State exercised brutal force, breaching the territorial integrity and sovereignty of its neighbouring country, should make everyone's blood run cold. The Russian invasion has placed the rules-based order upon which we rely for peaceful co-existence under attack. International peace and security — the grounding 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 before seen in the post-Second World War period.

The terror and crimes in Ukraine have plunged us into a dark era of brute force in international relations, factoring in hard power as a way of promoting self-centred national interests. Such aggressive behaviour challenges the international order as we know it today, which remains 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.

As many speakers before me have said, the ramifications of the Russian aggression in Ukraine are translated into growing energy, food and financial crises across the globe, severely impacting the most vulnerable groups in the world's least developed countries. Therefore, we firmly believe that multilateralism must be further bolstered and that global action to address those outstanding challenges be swiftly and carefully crafted and carried out.

Montenegro will continue to stand with Ukraine and its people against Russia's aggressive acts for as long as it takes and reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters. We will not accept Russia's illegal invasion of a neighbouring State. In support of Ukraine and in defence of the Charter of the United Nations, our values, our democracy and the rules-based order, we must act decisively.

For the reasons I outlined, Montenegro co-sponsored and will vote in favour of the draft resolution as it stands (A/ES-11/L.7) and calls on others to do the same.

**Mr. Ladeb (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*):** We meet again today, one year after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, which has claimed many lives and caused untold suffering to millions of civilians. Moreover, the world is facing shocks and crises due to the continuation of this war, which has exacerbated the difficulties from which the majority of countries around the world are suffering, particularly developing countries. We appreciate the efforts made by the United Nations and the international community to bring an end to the war and to contain its effects. Nevertheless, we regret the shutdown of any communication between the parties to the conflict, as well as the continuation and intensification of military operations, which could have catastrophic consequences for the region and the world.

As we already said in previous occasions, military options can never resolve any issue. There is no alternative to dialogue, negotiations and peaceful means to resolve all disputes and to reach consensus-based settlements based on the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. That would allow ending escalation, restoring peace and security and preventing any further deterioration that would cause more crises and human suffering.

As it adheres to its commitment to the peaceful means of resolving disputes and to the principles of international law, Tunisia reiterates today our call on the two parties to the conflict and the international community to intensify efforts to end escalation and hostilities and to prioritize peaceful solutions, dialogue and negotiations. Our collective responsibility is to place peace, security and the protection of lives at the top of our list of priorities, above any other consideration.

Efforts must be continued, and all means available by international law must be used, to end the war, curb its effects and create conditions conducive to a lasting solution. We cannot achieve recovery, resilience, sustainability, sustainable development and the changes needed to bring about a more peaceful and safe world as long as wars and conflicts continue in several parts of the world. That runs counter to the objectives for which the United Nations Charter was established. That also runs counter to the rules of multilateral action and the principles of international cooperation and solidarity.

Moreover, we underscore the importance of seeing the international community address any issues related to occupation, disputes and human suffering that have been continuing for decades with equal interest, given that the concept of peace and security is the same and indivisible pursuant to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.

**Mr. Sabbagh** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of Like-Minded States. We would like to make the following remarks in our national capacity.

It has become clear that Western countries insist on promoting political polarization within the United Nations. They are deepening division among its Member States by repeatedly calling for such meetings, which seek only to fuel the West's hostile agenda against the Russian Federation.

Based on its constant keenness to resolve regional and international problems through diplomacy and dialogue and to support efforts to maintain security and stability in any area of tension in the world, the Syrian Arab Republic had hoped that the General Assembly would play a positive role to that end. We had hoped that the Assembly would spare no effort to ensure a peaceful settlement of this dispute and avoid

any initiatives that could aggravate it and prevent its peaceful resolution.

The recent statements made by some of the leaders of the Normandy Format about their actual intentions behind the Minsk agreements, namely, to give Kyiv enough time to enhance its military capabilities, are inconsistent with the objective of those agreements, namely, achieving a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions.

That hostile approach is confirmed by the relentless flow from those countries of various types of weapons into Ukraine — from missile systems to air defence systems, let alone various tanks and other war machines — in order to fuel and prolong the conflict and impose a strategic defeat on the Russian Federation. Paradoxically, it is those same countries that are threatening and intimidating other countries in order to prevent them from standing by the Russian Federation in its legitimate defence of its security and immediate borders. Such irresponsible policies have undoubtedly proven that those countries seek a bloody clash within the European continent, with catastrophic repercussions that may be difficult to contain.

Western countries' criticism of the Russian Federation and their hostile campaigns against it lay bare their political hypocrisy and reflect their policy of double standards. Those countries pay lip service to the need to respect international law, uphold the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and prevent aggression. Nevertheless, they have violated the Charter time and again. Some of them have launched acts of aggression against other States, including my own, under the pretext that my country is a threat to their security, despite the fact that we are thousands of miles away.

Other States deliberately turn a blind eye to Israel's violations of the United Nations Charter as Israel continuously perpetrates aggression against the Palestinian people, who have been living under the yoke of occupation for more than seven decades, and against the Syrian people in the occupied Syrian Golan since 1967. Israel's aggression has also reached civilian and vital facilities in many parts of Syria. The most recent such aggression was three days ago. We have not heard any condemnation of the Israeli aggression from those countries in keeping with their professed keenness to uphold the Charter and its principles.



It has become crystal clear that some Western countries that stand behind advancing draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 are exploiting the General Assembly forum to launch a propaganda campaign against Russia. Unfortunately, it has become common practice for those countries to target Member States that do not follow their political agenda.

Today we are once again presented with another divisive draft resolution on the crisis in Ukraine. That gives rise to several questions. Will that draft resolution help to resolve the crisis peacefully? Does it respond to the concerns of all parties? Does it reflect the contribution of the General Assembly in that regard? Obviously, that is not the case.

The draft resolution follows a series of unbalanced, biased and provocative resolutions aimed at tarnishing the Russian Federation's image. Its sponsors did not call for consultations. They did not address the important concerns that were raised. Instead, they have insisted on pushing the General Assembly to adopt a biased draft resolution that will not contribute in any way to achieving sustainable peace in Ukraine.

In view of what I just said, my country rejects all attempts to exploit and manipulate the organs of the United Nations. My delegation therefore reiterates its rejection of the current version of the draft resolution under consideration. We call on Member States to be aware of the dangers of such biased texts. My delegation supports the amendments proposed by Belarus in documents A/ES-11/L.8 and A/ES-11/L.9, calling for addressing the root causes of the conflict in Ukraine and rejecting efforts leading to isolation and antagonism, as well as policies based on double standards. Unless those amendments are adopted, my delegation will vote against draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7.

**Ms. Squeff** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Once again, we are gathered in the General Assembly to address the grave situation in Ukraine and defend the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. They form the bedrock of peaceful coexistence, which includes respect for international law, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes and unconditionally upholding human rights, that we have committed ourselves to achieving since 1945. Therefore, the Argentine Republic reiterates its firm condemnation of the aggression against Ukraine and urges the Russian Federation to immediately cease its illegitimate use of force and military operations on Ukrainian territory.

Diplomacy and dialogue remain the only way forward to prevent further suffering.

We support the efforts of the Secretary-General and other actors who continue to work towards facilitating constructive engagement between the parties. One example of such efforts is the Black Sea Grain Initiative. The agreements have been a beacon of hope for those of us who believe in dialogue and diplomacy as a means to find a solution to the conflict. A year has already gone by since the beginning of the war, and, despite continued calls for respect for international humanitarian law, we continue to see attacks on the civilian population and civilian infrastructure. In such a situation, humanitarian aid becomes critical to ensuring survival, especially of those most vulnerable. We reiterate our call to allow for unrestricted access to all civilian-populated areas, including those under occupation. The international community has established clear principles regarding weapons of mass destruction, in particular the use of nuclear weapons. While advocating the peaceful use of nuclear energy and non-proliferation, we must move towards the total elimination of a class of weapons that threatens the total destruction of the planet.

War does not mean that combatants can act with *carte blanche*. There are limits to waging war, and they must be respected. Compliance with international humanitarian law in the conduct of hostilities is imperative. Respect for international law is not optional. The world wants peace in Ukraine — peace that is sustainable and in line with the Charter and international law. That is why Argentina has co-sponsored draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7, with the understanding that the General Assembly must reaffirm the need to achieve peace as soon as possible and encourage the entire international community to redouble its support for diplomatic efforts in that regard. The war has been catastrophic for Ukraine and its people, it has had extremely serious ramifications for the whole world. Argentina will continue to promote dialogue and a peaceful settlement to end the conflict.

**Ms. Seid** (Palau): We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Fiji as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum. I make the following statement in my national capacity.

A year is a milestone that we often associate with celebrations — a baby's first birthday, a complete cycle of seasons or the Earth's full rotation around the sun. It is unfortunate that today we are commemorating the one-year anniversary of Russia's illegal unprovoked

invasion of Ukraine, a year during which hundreds of thousands have died, whole cities have been razed and civilian homes and infrastructure have been turned into rubble. Six million people in Ukraine have been internally displaced, and 8 million people have fled to other parts of Europe. That is nearly the population of this very dense city of New York. Many of those who have been displaced or fled are women and children. It is also a war that has inflamed an energy, inflation and food security crisis in every corner of our world.

On this day, we commend the bravery, strength and valour of the Ukrainians who have stood their ground and defended their independence and homeland. Russia may have projected a quick victory, given its size and power, but, instead, in the pulverized ruins of Donbas and in bomb shelters across Ukraine, Ukrainians have forged themselves anew into a unified, more resilient democracy. It is a demonstration that there are few forces more powerful than ones' spirit in defence of home. We also mourn the sons and daughters and mothers and fathers from Russia who have been sent to fight in the senseless war — men and women with potential, who have been sent to die in defence of a false ideology. Sanctions and an exodus of its best-educated citizens and private multinational corporations and institutions have sapped Russia's long-term economic prospects. Yet our colleague from Russia stood here earlier and recycled false statements that have been refuted by independent institutions with the aim to deflect and gaslight us. But, to Palau, there is simply no justification for an unprovoked invasion of sovereign territory. When we became a United Nations Member State and promised to uphold the Charter of the United Nations, it was not in vain. We reiterate our solidarity with Ukraine and call on Russia to end its aggression within Ukraine's territorial borders.

Many of us are fatigued by this war. In the middle of the triple-planetary crisis and our work on reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, we have had to dedicate many hours of scarce diplomatic resources to this issue. But we must not falter in our defence of the Charter. Therefore, when we become tired, we should think of Andrii, a fighter pilot, who finally took a break after almost 19 hours of defence measures, too exhausted to fly any more, his commanding officer spooning stew into his mouth to revive him. Think of Vitálii, who ignored warnings that his name was on a list of people whom Russian forces had been instructed to kill and set about turning his anti-corruption organization into a network to support the armed forces. Think of the

Ukrainian children who live in terror of being shot, shelled or abducted into Russia. Think of 64-year-old Nataliia, who shivers without heat in the bone-chilling Ukrainian winter. Think of them, but also be reminded that the way this war plays out will set a precedent for our world order going forward. It could be in Member States' own home countries where a larger aggressor takes its chances, buoyed by the inaction of the world to defend internationally recognized territorial borders.

As Russia's offensive campaign and illegitimate claim to sovereignty over several areas of Ukraine show no sign of abating, it is critical that we, Member States, sustain those institutional measures and deepen our commitment, not only to securing a just resolution of the conflict in which Ukraine's territorial integrity is maintained, but also one in which victims of the many grave violations that have been committed are able to obtain justice and redress. If Ukraine thrives, so does a rules-based international order, and the lesson will reverberate around the world. It will be the prologue to a more stable peace. Palau will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-11/L.7 as it stands. We call on all Member States to join us.

**Mr. Aliyev** (Azerbaijan): After one year since the eruption of armed hostilities, the situation in and around Ukraine remains a matter of profound concern, as it continues to pose a serious threat to peace and security at the regional and global levels. Of particular concern is the ever-increasing humanitarian impact, as civilians — mainly women, children and the elderly — continue to bear the major burden of prolonged armed hostilities.

In that connection, Azerbaijan takes consistent steps in its national capacity to help the people of Ukraine alleviate the dire humanitarian consequences and continuously provides humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. Azerbaijan stands for the earliest settlement, exclusively through peaceful diplomatic means, and in full compliance with the norms and principles of international law guiding inter-State relations, including respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders, and encourages the dialogue between the parties to that end.

**Mr. Sekeris** (Greece): It is truly inconceivable that we are here today in this Hall to discuss an unprovoked, unjustified war that started a year ago — a war launched by Russia against Ukraine, in stark violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and all the principles and values that unite us; a war

that has shaken this Organization to the very core of its foundations. For Greece, there are no grey areas in this war. The situation is as simple as black and white. There is a side that attacks and a side in defence. Greece has stood on the right side of this war since the first day of Russia's invasion, in full solidarity and support of those who have been called to fight for the sovereignty, independence and freedom of their country.

In the face of such aggression, we commend the courage and determination of the Ukrainian people — a people who are fighting against a threat that must be confronted by the international community as a whole. From the very beginning, there was an assumption that the European Union (EU) would fail to remain united in the face of this crisis. But the exact opposite happened. The EU and its member States represent a region where human rights and respect of international law are invited to thrive. Those core principles are at the heart of Greece's foreign policy. If we fail to defend them, we will be shooting ourselves in the foot.

In that spirit, along with our EU partners and NATO allies, we fully support the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. As such, we condemn and do not recognize the Russian Federation's illegal annexations of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. Neither do we recognize the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics.

Immediately following Russia's invasion, my country was among the first to respond to Ukraine's request for military assistance. Greece also fully implements extensive EU restrictive measures against Russia regardless of the serious repercussions for its economy. Greece continues to provide humanitarian assistance, medicine and other supplies, both in Ukraine and to Ukrainian refugees hosted in neighbouring countries. My country is committed to being present in the reconstruction efforts and to assisting Ukraine on its European path.

The war has also taken a heavy toll on the Greek populations that have been present in the Black Sea region for millennia. A once thriving Greek community lived mostly in areas that are now under Russian occupation, in particular in the city of Mariupol, which Greece's Foreign Minister, Mr. Nikos Dendias, visited only a month before the launching of the Russian invasion. To my knowledge, that vibrant city, with its busy commercial port, today is a ghost

town. An important Greek community is still living in Ukraine today and is greatly suffering.

The recurrent Russian attacks against Ukraine's critical infrastructure, energy, heating and water supply systems, houses and medical facilities are unacceptable. Under no circumstances can civilians be legitimate targets. The violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes must be investigated, and their perpetrators must be held accountable. If not stopped, Russia's military aggression against Ukraine may find imitators willing to pursue anachronistic revisionist agendas. Allow me to repeat that we stand in full solidarity with our partner, Ukraine, and we will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

**Archbishop Caccia (Holy See):** As this emergency special session observes the one-year anniversary of the escalation of the war in Ukraine, let us never forget that peace is possible. In that regard, all parties must remain open to dialogue, lest they risk closing off the only reasonable door to peace. Subscribing to the illusion that this war has a military solution through attrition will lead to no peace other than the dreadful peace of death. With that in mind, Pope Francis has made the following heartfelt appeal: may weapons be silenced, and may conditions be sought for the start of negotiations that will lead to solutions that are not imposed by force, but consensus-based, just and stable.

The inhumanity of modern warfare is on display in Ukraine for all to see, as each life lost leaves behind a grieving family, with parents forced to bury their sons and daughters, and children left orphaned, a status that has no nationality. Particularly reprehensible is the reliance on tactics that treat soldiers as expendable objects rather than as human beings with inviolable dignity. Throughout the war, Pope Francis has reaffirmed his closeness to the innocent in Ukraine, who suffer the martyrdom of aggression. In that regard, the Holy See duly recalls the obligation of all States, according to international humanitarian law, to refrain from evacuating children to foreign territory without a compelling medical reason and the written consent of those responsible for their care, or from changing their personal status.

In addition, the Holy See insists on the importance of family reunification, including of children with their extended family, and calls on all States to ensure

the best interests of the child at all times. Children must never become the pawns of war or be used for political propaganda.

In the light of the attacks against critical infrastructure, the Holy See reiterates that any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.

In the face of civilian suffering, my delegation renews its gratitude to those Governments, organizations and individuals that have embodied the ethic of solidarity in providing shelter, food and medical care to those displaced within Ukraine and in neighbouring countries. For its part, the Holy See has provided aid to those in need in Ukraine through the Dicastery for the Service of Charity, while the wider Catholic Church — through religious orders, lay communities and faith-based organizations on the ground — has delivered assistance to millions of those in need, including refugees of war.

The repercussions of the present war extend far beyond Ukraine, having spurred energy, food and financial crises that particularly affect those in the poorest countries. In this regard, the Holy See welcomes the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative and commends the continued work of the Secretary-General and Türkiye in ensuring the success and full implementation of the accord, which demonstrates the viability of dialogue to lessen the suffering caused by war.

Absurdly, the present war portends the risk of nuclear disaster, either through deliberate escalation or by accident caused by inadvertent damage to nuclear facilities. With regard to the former, the Holy See cannot help but condemn any rhetoric threatening the use of nuclear weapons as morally repugnant, given that their indiscriminate effects violate the laws of war and would have devastating consequences for all humanity. In this regard, the Holy See supports the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency to create a protection zone for the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.

The present conflict makes plain the significant dysfunction present in the United Nations security architecture as well as that of the entire multilateral system. Addressing such dysfunction demands comprehensive reform that upholds the principle of

sovereign equality of all States. However, institutional reforms alone cannot save us from the scourge of war, which originates from within the human heart corrupted by sin. It is time to refrain from any rhetoric or actions seeking to escalate this conflict and engage in concrete dialogue and diplomacy in a sincere attempt to put an end to this heinous war. No effort must be spared to end the suffering of the Ukrainian people and all those somehow affected by this atrocious conflict.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

**Mr. Beresford-Hill** (Sovereign Order of Malta): War undoubtedly has the effect of breaking down the structures of society, the very structures that are there to protect us, and in so doing, war imposes on human beings, in the words of philosopher Thomas Hobbes, a human condition that is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” — conditions that are equally shared by both the victim and the aggressor.

Over the past 12 months of escalation of hostilities in Ukraine, the internal and external displacement of over 8 million people, with millions more living in daily fear through their lives, the humanitarian and national and international aid community has been a key lifeline and a link between a deteriorating human condition and the possibility of hope. And that hope is enshrined in the words of Secretary-General António Guterres when he said we want our world to be defined by the values enshrined in the United Nations Charter: peace, justice, respect, human rights, tolerance and solidarity. And this remains our strongest tool in achieving harmony, not only between human beings — between Ukrainians and Russians — but also between us and our planet.

Extending that idea, I would like to quote Pope John XXIII, who said, in his seminal encyclical *Pacem in Terris*:

“Since [we] are social by nature, they must live together and consult each other’s interests. That [we] should recognize and perform our respective rights and duties is imperative to a well ordered society.”

The past 12 months have seen an almost total breakdown in this social contract in a part of the world formerly marked by promise and industry — the breadbasket of the world. Not only have we witnessed the devastating destruction of Ukraine, but we have also seen a breakdown in the wider context of international civil discourse. The crucial question is, can we put it right?



We all have a role to play in contributing to a better world tomorrow. It is a challenge for each of us right now. Sadly, it seems that this war is giving no sign of slowing down. Therefore, we must all maintain our humanitarian support for the people of Ukraine. Is it not time for more of us to turn our swords into ploughshares?

Like many armies of aid agencies, the Sovereign Order of Malta and representatives of other religious, Catholic and faith-based organizations maintain a presence at the Ukrainian border and does our work within the country, providing 24-hour assistance to refugees, families, displaced persons, individuals trapped by conflict through medico-social projects, psychological support, the provision of health, hygiene products, food and housing — and we have recently announced an increase in psychosocial support and aid programmes across our teams.

This year of conflict has led to social, financial, political and environmental effects that have reverberated across the planet. Back in 2015, when the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were introduced, it was a moment in time representing a more conscious attitude towards global development and diplomacy, one that encouraged transparency and accountability — not only in how we work for our future, but more importantly why it is essential to work for our future.

With continuing crises requiring the international community's attention, the devastating effects of this war sadly represent a marginal level of problems we continue to face as a collective humanity. The recent tragedies in Pakistan, Türkiye and Syria remind us that natural disasters and their consequences remain out of our immediate control while inhibiting our success in achieving 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

And while Russia's aggression in Ukraine has created the world's largest displacement crisis, countries in the Horn of Africa continue to face droughts that have led to a catastrophic rise in hunger. Moreover, we have witnessed entire generations across the world being pushed into extreme poverty, as well as horrifically high death tolls from the 26 other conflicts that are being perpetuated across our landscape.

Climate change continues to wound countries that are without the infrastructure to deal with it sufficiently, and the Sustainable Development Goals continue to extend further out of reach to those who most need them. Next month sees the United Nations Water Conference in New York, and while access to clean water is an issue faced more often than not by developing countries, due to the war in Ukraine, more than 6 million Ukrainians have either limited or no access to clean water.

We must all recognize that the setbacks that nature continues to throw in our path are already enough to keep us from reaching the targets of the SDGs. Simply put, we cannot afford any type of war if we want to meet the climate battle for ourselves and make it for our future generations. If we fail to find a workable solution to the war in Ukraine, and if our ploughshares of aid and humanitarian assistance continue to run out or be compromised, then a Hobbesian image will become ever more real, and peace and security will give way to something that is cruel, brutish and short.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item for this evening. We shall hear the remaining speakers Thursday, 23 February, in this Hall at 10 a.m.

*The meeting rose at 8.50 p.m.*