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Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. França Danese/Mr. Moretti	(Brazil)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania	Mr. Hoxha
	China	Mr. Geng Shuang
	Ecuador	Mr. Pérez Loose
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon	Mr. Biang
	Ghana	Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
	Japan	Mr. Ishikane
	Malta	Ms. Gatt
	Mozambique	Mr. Kumanga
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
	United Arab Emirates	Mr. Abushahab
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Czechia, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and Ms. Joyce Msuya, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite Her Excellency Mrs. Hedda Samson, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

Ms. DiCarlo: On Thursday, 5 October, the small village of Hroza, in the Kupyansk district of Ukraine's Kharkiv region, suffered one of the deadliest attacks on civilians since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February of last year. At least 52 people were reportedly killed when a missile hit a shop and café. Several others were injured. The attack wiped out a sixth of Hroza's population. No family in that small community was left untouched. Among the victims were mourners gathered at a memorial service for a local man killed during Russia's occupation of the area. United Nations human rights experts on the ground have been able to collect the names of 35 people who were killed — 19 women, 15 men and an 8-year-old boy. The accounts they received indicated that the location where the attack occurred was of civilian character. I reiterate the Secretary-General's strong condemnation of that heinous attack.

Shockingly, less than 24 hours later, civilians in the Kharkiv region were hit again. This time, missiles struck buildings in the centre of the city of

Kharkiv — Ukraine's second-largest city — reportedly killing a 10-year-old boy and his 67-year-old grandmother. Twenty-eight people were reportedly wounded, including an 11-month-old infant. Those attacks took place in an area surrounded by restaurants, apartment buildings and other civilian infrastructure.

The recent attacks in Kharkiv add to an already unbearable toll of civilian casualties resulting from Russia's invasion, a war launched in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

As of 5 October, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) had verified that 9,806 civilians, including 560 children, have been killed as a result of the war. The number of civilians that OHCHR has verified as injured stands at 17,962, including 1,196 children. The actual figures are very likely considerably higher and, tragically, will continue to rise if current patterns continue.

Indeed, in recent weeks, civilians and civilian infrastructure across Ukraine have remained under nearly constant fire. Residents of Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, Dnipro, Lviv, Sumy, Donetsk, Odesa, Kyiv and other regions continued to face unrelenting and often indiscriminate attacks. On Friday, a Russian drone attack damaged a grain silo in the Izmail district of the Odesa region. That was the latest in a series of strikes on Ukrainian grain infrastructure. Combined with Russia's withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, such attacks not only destroy the livelihoods of Ukrainian farmers but also risk impacting the lives of millions of food insecure people around the world.

We are also concerned about the renewed attacks against Ukrainian energy infrastructure in recent weeks. The Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator will provide more details about the United Nations response to support the affected population.

The immediate impact of such attacks is clear. Just as clear is the fact that international humanitarian law obligates parties to armed conflict to protect non-combatants. It unambiguously prohibits attacks targeting civilians or civilian infrastructure. We will not tire of condemning such attacks. And we will not waver in calling for accountability for anyone responsible for harming civilians during hostilities.

OHCHR's latest report on the situation in Ukraine paints a grim picture of serious human rights violations across the country, most of them attributed to the

Russian armed forces. They include of acts of conflict-related sexual violence reportedly committed by members of the Russian armed forces and penitentiary services. The report, covering the period between 1 February and 31 July 2023, indicates that those cases are consistent with previously documented patterns of sexual violence by Russian forces and services.

OHCHR reports that arbitrary and incommunicado detentions of civilians have continued in Russian-occupied territory, and documents that 996 civilians have been subjected to such detention since February 2022. Eighty of them died in detention or were found dead with signs of violence on their bodies, and 468 remain in arbitrary or incommunicado detention. OHCHR also documented cases of arbitrary detention by Ukrainian forces, mainly law-enforcement authorities, taking place during the reporting period. OHCHR interviewed 26 Russian prisoners of war, all of whom were men. Twelve of them said they were subjected to torture or ill-treatment during interrogation at unofficial places of internment and evacuation before they were brought to official internment locations.

OHCHR is also concerned about recent legislation enacted in the Russian Federation that would effectively grant amnesty to Russian servicepersons for an overly broad range of crimes, potentially including gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law. Under international law, the Russian Federation has an obligation to investigate and prosecute potential war crimes and gross human rights violations committed by its forces in Ukraine. In its latest update, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine also found continued systematic and widespread use of torture and reiterated its deep concern about the scale and gravity of violations that have been committed in Ukraine by Russian armed forces. The Commission emphasized the need for accountability.

From the beginning of this senseless war, we have warned about the grave risks it poses to Ukraine, the region and the world. In recent weeks, the impact of the war has expanded in the Black Sea, with reports of the widespread use of sea mines, which could threaten civilian navigation. A military incident in the Black Sea, whether intentional or by accident, could further destabilize the region. We therefore reiterate our call for restraint in order to avoid any action that could worsen an already volatile situation.

In his remarks to the Security Council last month (see S/PV.9421), the Secretary-General not only discussed the suffering that the war has inflicted on the people of Ukraine but once again sounded the alarm about how the invasion is aggravating geopolitical tensions and divisions and threatening regional stability. As was predictable and as was predicted, the conflict is doing visible, serious damage to global peace and security. Before 24 February 2022, the world was already facing an extremely challenging conflict landscape, to use a clinical euphemism. But the risks have grown exponentially since then and the cost is measured in lives and destruction — in Ukraine most of all, but also beyond. Is the damage irreversible? We have no choice but to continue to try to stop the slide towards more devastation and suffering.

During this year's General Assembly, we heard a clear recommitment across the United Nations membership to the principles of the Charter, including respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all Member States. A just solution to the war lies in adhering to that basic obligation with deeds, not just words. We know the dangers of abandoning our founding principles and disregarding the norms that bind us. It is not too late to restore the integrity of the Charter and international law. We fail to do so at the world's peril.

The President: I thank Ms. DiCarlo for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Msuya.

Ms. Msuya: Last Thursday's attack on the village of Hroza in the Kupyansk district of the Kharkiv region was one of the deadliest since the escalation of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, 593 days ago. We have all seen the brutal and tragic images coming from that small community, which is 40 kilometres from the front line. In total, 52 civilians were killed and more were injured. Many homes were damaged or destroyed. Entire families were wiped out. Until last Thursday, Hroza was home to around 300 civilians. With the high numbers of casualties, everyone in that small community has been affected. That is exactly what the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Ukraine, Ms. Denise Brown, heard from residents when she visited the community on Friday, less than 24 hours after the callous attack. Since then, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations have been on the scene alongside local authorities to ensure that people receive some support in the face of those atrocious attacks. Aid

workers have provided immediate assistance, including psychosocial support to survivors. Emergency repair materials have been delivered to people whose homes were damaged, and medical, maternity, reproductive health, hygiene and household items have been brought in. People are also being registered for cash assistance.

Yet again, civilians are paying a devastatingly high price for this horrendous war. As of 8 October, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 27,768 civilian casualties have now been recorded across Ukraine, including the deaths of 560 children. We know that the true toll is likely far greater. I echo the Secretary-General's strong condemnation of the attack and his demand that all attacks on civilians stop immediately. I also join him in stressing once again that under international humanitarian law, attacks directed at civilians or civilian objects or that are indiscriminate are strictly prohibited. The parties must take constant care to spare all civilians and civilian objects, including homes, schools, hospitals and other essential infrastructure, as well as humanitarian facilities and assets.

It is not just civilians who are paying the price. Attacks on humanitarian workers, as well as their facilities and assets, have risen dramatically since the escalation of hostilities began in 2022. The number of humanitarians who have reportedly been killed in the line of duty has almost tripled, from four in 2022 to 11 so far this year. That is despite the fact that humanitarian organizations continue to notify both parties of their movements and the facilities they use, so that the parties can factor them into military operations and avoid harming or impeding humanitarian personnel.

Moreover, the war continues to send shockwaves way beyond Ukraine's borders. Russian strikes against Ukraine's port infrastructure and grain storage facilities on the Black Sea and the Danube River continue, as do threats to merchant shipping in the Black Sea. Food exports from the Russian Federation and Ukraine passing through the Black Sea remain critical to global food security and the stabilization of global food prices. In a world of intensifying food insecurity, all sources of food must be safely and sustainably connected with global supply chains. Ukraine's Black Sea ports must be able to operate at their full capacity, and safe navigation must be assured for inbound and outbound traffic, especially for food. The attacks on ports we continue to see — the latest incident was last Friday — as well as the threats to shipping are therefore entirely unacceptable and must stop.

As long as the war persists, humanitarian needs in Ukraine will endure and will continue to increase. Winter is yet again upon the people of Ukraine. Temperatures have already started to drop and will soon be below freezing across most of the country. As the Council will recall, the attacks last year on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, including on its power stations and heating plants, left millions of civilians without access to heat, electricity and water in the harsh winter months. It is disturbing to see that similar attacks have already been reported over the past weeks. Women and girls in particular continue to be disproportionately affected by the conflict. They continue to face pervasive levels of gender-based violence and exacerbated risks of sexual exploitation and abuse. There is a growing need for sexual and reproductive health services in response.

Despite those vast challenges and threats, the humanitarian community remains committed to making every effort to get civilians the support they need, for as long as it takes. In the first eight months of 2023, some 8.3 million people received humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. And ahead of winter, our winter response plan and preparedness efforts are proceeding at full speed. The support we received from donors has been crucial to ensuring that our humanitarian work in Ukraine can continue. Thanks to such generosity, the humanitarian response plan for Ukraine is almost 52 per cent funded to date. Almost 500 humanitarian partners — the majority of which are local organizations, including grass-roots women's organizations — will continue to provide life-critical aid, including protection services. They aim to reach 11.1 million people in 2023. I have deep appreciation for their bravery, endurance and commitment to the response in extremely challenging circumstances.

However, there is much more to do. The international community must do more to advocate for humanitarian access for all those who need aid across Ukraine. That includes the nearly 4 million people who live in areas under the military control of the Russian Federation and whom we are unable to reach.

More than anything, the people of Ukraine need concerted action to make this devastating war — with its unceasing death, destruction and suffering — come to an end.

The President: I thank Ms. Msuya for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): Allow me to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings.

Imagine the scene: in a quiet and modest village in Kharkiv oblast, peaceful people are participating in a wake after a funeral, united in their grief at the loss of a son from the village. The café had been closed since the start of the war; it reopened only for that funeral service. A moment later, the café was obliterated, the place was filled with thick smoke and the air burdened by the unbearable smell of dead bodies torn to pieces. Death came again from the sky from a precision ballistic missile. A total of 52 civilians — one sixth of the pre-war population of that village, as Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo mentioned — was wiped away, massacred in a place of no strategic importance whatsoever except for having been on the target hit list of the Russian army.

The Hroza massacre was not the first. It may unfortunately not be the last, as there is no sign that this war will end soon. But it underscores once again the terrible price civilians are paying 20 months after the Russian invasion. The 10,000 civilians who have already died and the many more injured have done nothing to deserve it except for being Ukrainian.

Just as in many other similar cases, we may hear again: it was not Russia. Yet Russia is the country that started and continues this unprovoked deadly war. It is the country responsible for horrible crimes, the country that has broken the law. And in this specific case, it has also broken the universal ancestral law of absolute respect for those mourning.

Instead of doing the only right thing they have been urged to do and heed the calls to stop the war, the Kremlin is trying desperately to convince the world that black is white through a relentless propaganda machine in full swing that is holding nothing back. Every absurdity is fair game. News anchors, pro-Kremlin mouthpieces, various officials compete with one another to vociferate daily threats of all kinds and spread false information with scripts flipped upside down. We are all familiar with the frequent rants of a former President detailing his favourite nuclear threats. We thought an all-time low had been reached; in fact, it had not.

The Nobel Prize for absurdity, if it existed, would certainly go to the Deputy Chair of the State Duma, Anna Kuznetsova. She said:

“Our soldiers have found documents on the sale of children and human organs from which Ukraine gets 7 per cent of its national budget, with the support of private British military companies and Coca Cola”.

There is really something special about that Russian obsession with fabricating stories about organ trafficking. For those who do not have the time to do the math, 7 per cent of Ukraine’s budget for 2022 amounts to \$4 billion, and Ms. Kuznetsova did not dwell on retail prices. No one can do better in combining ridicule with depravity. Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, this time a real and respected Nobel laureate, had long warned:

“We know they are lying, they know they are lying, they know we know they are lying, and still they continue”.

Only a few days ago, the President of Russia said that his aim is to change the world. For us, change means going forward, learning from past mistakes, strengthening peace, cooperation and friendship, investing in human rights and open societies, improving the life of people and, by doing so, making the world a better place for all. But if change means disrespecting international law and the Charter of the United Nations, attacking and destroying one’s neighbour, violating human rights, suppressing freedoms, applauding, supporting and embracing dictators, we do not want any of it. That Russian-style change means simply going backwards, undoing progress and achievements, returning to times long since passed.

Let me conclude with an important reminder. Tomorrow the General Assembly will vote to elect the new members of the Human Rights Council. It may look like one of those numerous election processes in New York, which most often are uneventful. This one is not. It is rather a defining moment, one to test once more the strong and high moral grounds of the United Nations. Those who think that human rights have a meaning, those who celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as one of the most consequential developments in human history, those who care for the credibility of the Human Rights Council and its work — they all should think twice before casting their vote. And I say to United Nations colleagues here and outside the Chamber: beware — the aggressors of their neighbours, the killers of innocent people, the deliberate destroyers of civilian infrastructure, ports and grain silos, those

who deport children and take pride in doing so, those who use torture and sexual violence as weapons and those who blatantly disrespect human rights law have no place in the Human Rights Council. Therefore, the same General Assembly that has shown the world that it does not condone aggression has an important choice to make to demonstrate that it is not ready to take an arsonist for a firefighter. Decisions always have consequences. And there is no wrong time to make the right ones.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings.

Last Thursday, we witnessed yet again the tragic consequences of Russia's senseless, illegal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. This time, the Russian Federation struck a café in Hroza, a village of 330 people in the region of Kharkiv with no evidence of military sites. Fifty-two people were killed as a result, including a child. Several others were injured. This was one of the deadliest attacks on civilians since the beginning of Russia's aggression. One sixth of the population living in the village was wiped out. Every single family was affected. The harrowing images that came out of Hroza illustrate the devastating impact this war is having on Ukraine's civilian population. They should serve as a stark reminder of the consequences of war and the consequences of resigning ourselves to living in a world in which might is right.

Malta condemns such deplorable acts against civilians and civilian infrastructure in the strongest possible terms. There is no justification for them. Intentional attacks against civilians are prohibited under international law and amount to war crimes. The perpetrators of such atrocities must be held accountable, and we support all efforts to that end, including the ongoing International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice processes. We stress that international humanitarian law and the rules on the conduct of hostilities must be fully respected.

In conclusion, we once again underscore our conviction that to achieve a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, Russia must immediately cease all hostilities. It must unconditionally and completely withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. Until then, we will continue to stand in solidarity with Ukraine and its people.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Under-Secretary-General and the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator for their briefings.

Once again, the Security Council is meeting to respond to a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law by one of its permanent members, Russia. As the Secretary-General did just last Thursday, France has firmly condemned Russia's missile strike against civilians in Hroza, in the Kharkiv region, which killed at least 51 civilians. We express our condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims.

What was the goal of the Russian armed forces, in striking a café and store where Ukrainian civilians had gathered for a meal to mourn a loss? Why would they deliberately strike the Ukrainian civilian population yet again? There can be no justification for such acts, which constitute war crimes. By targeting civilians in such a way, Russia is pursuing a strategy of terror and seeking to break the morale of the Ukrainian nation, which has been combating that aggression bravely for more than 19 months. Russia continues to blatantly violate international humanitarian law.

This unacceptable act joins the long list of atrocities committed by Russia since it launched its war of aggression, of which the people of Ukraine are the victims every day. The briefers just aptly reminded us of the enormous human cost of the conflict. While Russia alone is responsible for that tragic toll, it is our collective duty to do everything in our power to put an end to this aggression, as the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States have repeatedly demanded. Ukraine's future is at stake, in addition to the credibility of our Organization and respect for the principles of collective security enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Russia's repeated violations of international law only add to its isolation. Ukraine, on the other hand, continues to unite more and more countries around its vision of a just and lasting peace. Together with our partners, we will continue to provide the Ukrainian people with all the humanitarian, economic and military support they need to exercise their right to self-defence, as enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter, and to preserve their freedom.

France will pursue its commitment to respect for international humanitarian law, particularly with regard to the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure. This attack, like all the crimes committed by Russia,

will not go unpunished. The perpetrators will be held accountable for their actions. France will continue to support Ukraine's courts and the International Criminal Court in the fight against impunity for such crimes.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings.

As we have learned from the briefings, a serious attack took place in a village in Kharkiv last week, causing heavy civilian casualties, which China finds concerning. The protection of civilians should be a paramount priority under all circumstances.

In previous deliberations on this matter in the Security Council, China has repeatedly called on the parties to the conflict to exercise calm and restraint, respect international humanitarian law, strictly abide by the principles of necessity, distinction and proportionality, and make every effort to ensure the safety of civilians and civilian infrastructure. Today we reiterate those calls once again.

China is deeply worried about the continuation of the Ukraine crisis and its mounting spillover effects. We are deeply saddened that the flames of war and conflict continue to exacerbate the suffering of civilians. We urge all the parties concerned to respond actively and positively to the international community's call for peace, step up engagement, forge consensus and create the conditions, step by step, for the early resumption of peace talks. Countries that have significant influence over the situation should also play a constructive role, refrain from exacerbating the tensions and create an environment conducive to peace. We call on the international community to work together to ease the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and to provide more assistance to the civilians affected, to help them to deal with the crisis.

China will always stand on the side of peace and dialogue and work actively to facilitate peace and negotiations. We stand ready to strengthen dialogue and communication with all parties concerned and to play a constructive role in achieving a final political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

Mr. Pérez Loose (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting, at the request of Ukraine, in accordance with Articles 34 and 35 of the Charter of the United Nations. I acknowledge the presence of the Permanent

Representative of Ukraine in the Chamber. I thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Ms. Joyce Msuya, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, for their briefings.

Every day that passes in this war — this senseless invasion — means yet another day of mourning. During the high-level week of the General Assembly, the delegations of the Security Council and the Member States of the Assembly sent a strong message to put an end to this military aggression, to withdraw the occupying forces and to establish a peace based on respect for territorial integrity. Today we once again urge the Russian Federation to put an end to its invasion, which continues to cause so much pain and destruction.

We reject in the strongest terms the recent attacks in Hroza in the Kharkiv region, which hit residential areas, destroyed civilian infrastructure and killed more than 50 people. In the face of such events, accountability is essential. In that context, we wonder how much more critical infrastructure needs to be destroyed? How many more children's parks or playgrounds need to be destroyed? How many children have to die before the Russian Federation ends this absurd invasion? We demand compliance with international humanitarian law.

Lastly, and in view of all of this, we insist once again on the need for the Council to equip the Secretary-General with better tools to contribute to a peaceful settlement based on respect for the sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including its territorial waters.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Joyce Msuya for their presentations.

Once again, Russia's military aggression against Ukraine has led to numerous civilian casualties. Last week we heard that at a time when many residents of the village of Hroza were gathering for a funeral, the mourning in that village in the Kharkiv region was multiplied by yet another devastating attack. Tragically, more than 50 civilians, including a child — one sixth of the population — lost their lives, and many others were injured. The entire village is reeling from the consequences of the attack, which struck in the middle of the afternoon, and Switzerland firmly condemns it.

On behalf of my country, I would like to offer our most sincere condolences to the victims and their families. I would also like to pay tribute to the tireless efforts of the emergency personnel and humanitarian workers who mobilized to come to their aid in the wake of the attack — just as they have after so many others and in particularly difficult and traumatic circumstances.

This attack is one of the deadliest since the aggression began. We are once again witnessing the terrible consequences of a military engagement that shows total disdain for the lives of civilians. We note that overall, the indiscriminate attacks have not stopped. On the contrary, they have increased over the summer. People in all regions of Ukraine continue to live in daily fear of the next missile strike, which could hit residential buildings, a school, a nursery or — as was the case last week in Hroza — a café and shop, or, as in Berislav, a hospital. The day after the attack in the Kupyansk district, another took place in the centre of Kharkiv, where residential buildings were hit and destroyed, causing more casualties.

These recurring strikes on civilian infrastructure, including essential infrastructure, are all the more worrying as winter approaches. We reiterate that the parties to the conflict must distinguish between civilians and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives at all times. Furthermore, when military objectives are attacked, the principles of precaution and proportionality must be respected. Indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks are prohibited by international humanitarian law and must cease immediately. We therefore reiterate our call for respect for international humanitarian law, particularly as regards the protection of civilians, as well as international human rights law.

We also demand justice and accountability for all perpetrators of crimes at all levels when those obligations are violated, and therefore for ensuring credible and timely investigations, documentation and criminal prosecution of those responsible for violations of international law. The deployment of a field team by the High Commissioner for Human Rights to investigate the attack in Hroza is an important and concrete step in that direction, and we welcome the announcement of in-depth investigations by the Independent International Investigation Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine into attacks using explosive weapons, attacks on civilians, torture, sexual and gender-based violence and strikes against energy infrastructure.

As long as this war continues, civilians will pay a price that is far too high. We urge Russia to de-escalate the situation, cease its combat operations and withdraw its troops from Ukrainian territory. Switzerland remains fully committed to supporting efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in accordance with international law, particularly the Charter of the United Nations.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing.

As we have heard, last Thursday we woke to news of yet another Russian attack on Ukraine. This time, Russia was responsible for the deaths of more than 50 people in the small village of Hroza, when a missile struck a café. We would like to extend our condolences to the bereaved. As my Prime Minister said, the attack demonstrates the depths of depravity that Russian forces are willing to sink to. Then on Friday, Russia struck Kharkiv. A 10-year-old boy was killed and more than 20 people were injured. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported last week that Russian air strikes between February and August this year killed at least 262 civilians, injured 990 and inflicted further broad economic and social damage.

The same OHCHR report addressed the attack on 28 July 2022 that killed more than 50 Ukrainian prisoners of war at Olenivka. Contrary to Russian claims that have been made many times in the Council, OHCHR found that the attack was launched from Russian-controlled territory and that Russia was holding those prisoners in a manner that contravened international humanitarian law. Nevertheless, today our Russian colleagues will once again drag us into their world of disinformation, where facts are dismissed as lies and lies are presented as facts. Russia's words in the Council are worthless to those who want to understand Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its true cost, so let us remind ourselves of some facts. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is illegal, as is Russia's control of Ukrainian territory inside Ukraine's internationally recognized borders. The body of evidence of Russia's breaches of international law and international humanitarian law in the course of its invasion continues to grow. Just as Russia's claims about the attack at Olenivka have been disproved, the truth will catch up with Russia's lies.

We praise and admire the bravery and resolve of the Ukrainian people in the face of this assault on its sovereignty and territorial integrity. We thank the United Nations staff whose record of Russian human rights violations and abuses and violations of international law shows the reality of Russia's invasion and supports future efforts towards justice. We will continue to support Ukraine in the exercise of its right to self-defence and as it brings together Member States in support of our shared goal of a just and lasting peace, in line with the Charter of the United Nations. We call once more for Russia to end its illegal invasion and withdraw from Ukraine's internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant-Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings today.

The town of Bucha, a theatre in Mariupol, a restaurant and train station in Kramatorsk, a shopping mall in Kremenchuk, a cathedral in Odesa and now a café in Hroza. Thousands of civilians have been killed in those attacks. Schools, hospitals and apartment buildings have been hollowed out by Russian forces. The international community must continue to demand accountability and justice. Last Thursday, a Russian strike killed more than 50 people and injured scores of others when it hit a café and store in the Ukrainian village of Hroza. One of the victims, as we heard earlier today, was 6-years-old. According to authorities, people were gathered in the café for a wake following a funeral. Those were people gathered to mourn a death. I want everyone here to take a moment and let that appalling fact sink in. People gathered to grieve their loved ones must now be grieved themselves. This is one of the deadliest strikes by Russia against Ukraine since the beginning of its full-scale invasion last year. As the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator has noted, the images coming from the locality are absolutely horrifying. We express our support for the work of the United Nations human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine and local investigators who travelled to Hroza to gather information and collect possible evidence of war crimes.

Hroza is a village of 350 people. As a result of Russia's aggression, in just one morning, 15 per cent of its inhabitants have been laid to rest. We need look no further than Russia's own actions to understand the depth of cynicism and insincerity when its leaders speak of seeking a negotiated peace. Russia's missiles

speak louder than words. As Russia continues to trample international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, it now asks countries to support its election to the Human Rights Council after the General Assembly suspended it for committing gross and systematic violations of human rights, as well as for its violations of international humanitarian law committed during its aggression against Ukraine.

The Human Rights Council is the principal United Nations body charged with promoting respect for, and the protection of, human rights worldwide. Russia's re-election to that body while it openly continues to commit war crimes and other atrocities would be an ugly stain that would undermine the credibility of the institution and the United Nations. After its suspension last April, Russia could have ceased its flagrant disregard for human rights. Instead, it has doubled down. Despite its attempts to deny and shift blame, let me be clear: it is Russia's own actions that make it unfit to serve on the Human Rights Council. What further evidence does the international community need? Every day, the massive death toll in Ukraine rises. Every day, new unspeakable horrors are discovered. Every day, children live through dire pain and suffering, including after being separated from their families. Every day, the humanitarian crisis grows. Every day, havoc reigns supreme as Russia's missiles and drones leave wanton death and destruction in their wake.

Let me conclude by making clear that international law prohibits the intentional targeting of civilians and civilian objects and requires that all attacks comply with the principle of proportionality. The United States again calls on Russia to end its savage attacks on Ukraine and withdraw its forces from Ukraine's internationally recognized territory. Russia alone has the power to end the war it so senselessly started.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates): I begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant-Secretary-General Msuya for their valuable briefings today. I also welcome the participation of Ukraine in today's meeting.

The United Arab Emirates expresses its deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of those lost in Hroza and Kharkiv. As we heard from our briefers, the strike on Hroza, which occurred during a memorial service, was one of the deadliest attacks on civilians in Ukraine since February 2022. According to the United Nations, nearly 20 per cent of the town's population

was killed within seconds. Hroza and Kharkiv are the most recent examples of the unacceptable toll that this war has wrought on civilians. In both locations, children and the elderly were among those killed. In less than two years, there have been more than 27,000 recorded civilian casualties in Ukraine. Those numbers, although shocking, do not reveal the true cost of the conflict, including the thousands of people and families whose lives have forever been altered. International humanitarian law is unequivocal. Civilians and civilian objects can never be the target of attacks, and the fundamental principles of proportionality and distinction must be respected.

The extensive damage and destruction of critical infrastructure throughout Ukraine is a further concern, particularly with winter approaching. The provision of electricity and heating during the coming months will be critical for the health and safety of civilians. We recall the importance of protecting objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population and the Council's call, in resolution 2573 (2021), on all parties to armed conflict to refrain from attacking, destroying, removing or rendering useless objects that are indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. First responders and humanitarian organizations continue to provide vital services to those wounded and displaced by this conflict. We stress once again the importance of facilitating their life-saving work and underline that all relevant authorities must ensure that humanitarian actors and humanitarian facilities receive the protections afforded to them under international humanitarian law.

Only peace will bring a definitive end to the suffering. And so, the pursuit of peace must be our ultimate goal. Two weeks ago, world leaders made that call in the General Assembly Hall. Every country has a part to play in turning those words into action. The United Arab Emirates remains resolute in its support of all serious efforts to achieve a just and sustainable peace that is based upon the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, while respecting Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

Mr. Kumanga (Mozambique): I thank the presidency of Brazil for convening this briefing. I also thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Ms. Joyce Msuya, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, for their briefings.

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine tests the most basic foundations of the notion of collective security, which is the *raison d'être* of the United Nations. Therefore, we are all compelled to contribute to finding a common acceptable solution to this conflict, in line with the Charter of the United Nations and the responsibility that falls on the Security Council. It is against that background that the Council, as per its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has insistently and consistently called for the cessation of hostilities since they started.

Despite all our calls for the cessation of hostilities, we note with regret that this conflict persists and is even worsening, which poses a serious threat to local, regional and international peace and security. The longer the conflict persists, the more catastrophic its consequences become, including with regard to the difficulties in protecting civilians. In that regard, we once again call on the contending parties to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of civilians, public infrastructure and livelihoods, in line with relevant international humanitarian law and instruments. As a matter of fact, the protection of civilians during armed conflict is a cornerstone of international humanitarian law.

The great majority of casualties in the present-day conflict are civilians. We are convinced that the most sustainable way to protect them is to prevent the outbreak of conflicts and, when they do occur, to solve them peacefully. With that in mind, Mozambique, while reiterating its principled position on this conflict, appeals to the parties involved to immediately cease the conflict; resume direct negotiations between the main parties, without preconditions and in good faith; and adopt a constructive, inclusive and results-oriented approach, focusing on mutual benefit rather than a zero-sum perspective.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya for their respective briefings.

The 52 people killed in the village of Hroza adds to the terrible and unbearable list of suffering of the deadly war in Ukraine. In recent weeks, the bombings and the drone attacks have intensified in Ukraine, indiscriminately targeting civilian populations and infrastructure. We are concerned about the allegations

of the risk of destroying the electrical system as winter approaches, plunging innocent populations into appalling conditions and further aggravating the already alarming humanitarian situation. Such a situation would be unacceptable.

We reiterate that war is not a lawless situation and call on the belligerents to show restraint and strictly respect international humanitarian law by sparing those who are not parties to the fighting, refraining from using weapons of mass destruction and threatening to use nuclear weapons.

The information relating to the conclusion of new military alliances and the reversal of certain countries' arms policies are worrisome signs of the extent of the retreat from international commitments to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In that respect, my country endorses the call by the Secretary-General, which was conveyed and confirmed by the International Committee of the Red Cross, for States to impose new international rules on autonomous weapons systems.

We are convinced of the urgent need to define new red lines on a global scale and to more strictly regulate the use of certain types of weaponry in order to reduce their inhumane effects. We call once again on the parties to strictly respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, to facilitate the movement of humanitarian workers and to allow unhindered access to areas and populations in need of humanitarian assistance.

We reiterate our call for dialogue and encourage all parties, including the regional and subregional organizations to which the warring parties are members, to create the conditions for negotiations in good faith with a view to achieving a cessation of hostilities and guaranteeing lasting peace and peaceful coexistence in Ukraine.

Ms. Opong-Ntiri (Ghana): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya their sobering briefings on the deeply concerning and persisting humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

The intense military contestations of the warring parties in Ukraine continues to create grave concerns for the safety and security of civilians in several parts of the country. Given the wide international support and appeals for the peaceful settlement of the conflict, it is most unfortunate to witness the further hardening

of the conflict into a war of attrition, with worsening security and humanitarian consequences.

The missile attack on the village of Hroza in the Kharkiv region, on 5 October, is another painful reminder that innocent Ukrainian civilians continue to be in the crosshairs of the conflict and pay the highest price of the war with their lives and livelihoods. We take this opportunity to express our deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their lives.

We condemn all attacks targeted at civilians and civilian infrastructure and once again emphasize the obligation of warring parties under international law to refrain from causing harm to civilians. We stress that humanitarian principles of distinction, proportionality and necessity must be respected at all times without variation.

Unfortunately, the attack, which has claimed the lives of more than 50 people, including a young child, is not an isolated incident but one of the many brutalities which have characterized the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and for which there must be accountability. We therefore urge independent, transparent and thorough investigations into the attack and note in this respect, the speedy response of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in deploying a field team to gather relevant information.

As we have stated in previous meetings of the Council, there is no alternative to winning the peace in Ukraine. It stands in our common interest to help end the carnage that the war has brought in its wake and the global impact it has created. We urge the United Nations and the international community to devote resources and steadfast efforts to secure the cessation of the military hostilities. Ending the hostilities is necessary and most urgent to pave the way for a political solution, as there can be no military solution to the conflict. We continue to believe that diplomacy and dialogue offer the best chances of a comprehensive and lasting resolution of the conflict and affirm our support for all international peace efforts.

In conclusion, we take this opportunity to reiterate once more our call on the Russian Federation to end its aggression against Ukraine and respect its sovereignty and territorial integrity in line with the norms and principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to start by once again expressing my bewilderment at the presence at our meeting as speakers not only of the representative of the European Union (EU), but also the representatives of Czechia, Romania, Poland and Latvia. I would also like to ask a question. What added value will we obtain from their statements, being carbon copies of one another? We have already mentioned this many times. I would be interested to know how many EU members will sign up for the meeting we are organizing on 13 October on arms transfers to Ukraine, a topic to which they are directly related.

A month ago, on 8 September, in this very Chamber, a previous anti-Russian spectacle played out in connection with our alleged attack on a market in the town of Kostiantynivka (see S/PV.9414). Then Western colleagues waxed lyrical, detailing what happened in every which way. For example, the British Permanent Representative began her statement by saying:

“Let me first condemn another appalling Russian missile attack earlier this week on a market in Kostyantynivka, in eastern Ukraine.”

The Permanent Representative of France did not far much better, stating:

“Russia continues to disregard international law and relentlessly and intentionally bomb cities and civilian infrastructure, which constitute war crimes. The recent attack on the Kostiantynivka market ... further attests to that.”

I will not even mention the Estonians, Poles and the like. They will take every opportunity to exercise their Russophobia. All of those accusations against our country are reflected in the record of the meeting I just mentioned.

Today we know clearly that the massacre in Kostiantynivka was organized by Ukraine, either through another blunder of its missile defence or a deliberate missile launching against a civilian target. It would be nice, of course, to find out, but of course the Kyiv regime does not intend to conduct an investigation. That follows directly from the words of Mr. Podolyak, Adviser to the President of Ukraine:

“It is clear to us that the missile was Russian. Do we have to check every piece of rubble simply because someone came out and said that Ukraine is attacking itself?”

Do my Western colleagues not understand that the Kyiv junta is simply using them and retransmitting fake news through them, which is then convincingly debunked? Or, what is even worse, they are doing it deliberately, becoming accomplices in this unprecedented propaganda and mendacious anti-Russian campaign. Unfortunately, the Secretariat also plays along sometimes. The representative of the Secretariat also rushed to blame Russia, during the meeting I just mentioned, for the attack on Kostiantynivka. We all know where the information comes from and on the basis of what the Secretariat makes such conclusions.

As part of this meeting in the Security Council, we have already listened to ignominious insinuations about a missile attack on the Kramatorsk station in April 2022, which, as everyone now knows — and this is documented — was carried out by the Ukrainian armed forces, about the destruction of the Transfiguration Cathedral in Odesa, which was hit by a Ukrainian air defence missile, the explosion of a drama theatre in Mariupol, blown up — as is now absolutely clear — by Azov Battalion fighters, and the destruction of a maternity hospital in the same city, repurposed by Ukrainian nationalists as a firing point. Cases of Ukrainian air defence missiles hitting civilian targets number in the dozens, if not hundreds. They are documented and published on social networks by the Ukrainians themselves, thus leaving Zelenskyy and his clique no chance to deceive the public.

Of course, another vile provocation pertains to Bucha, which was never properly investigated. Neither did the Secretary-General ever provide us with the names of the unfortunate people whose bodies were neatly laid out on the streets by Ukrainian fighters after the withdrawal of Russian troops as a gesture of goodwill, against the backdrop of the successful peace negotiations under way in Istanbul. By the way, the Kyiv regime withdrew from those negotiations, including under pretext of a provocation it organized.

It is also worth recalling how the Kyiv regime tried in every possible way to spin for its own purposes the episode with the fall of a rocket in the Polish village of Przewodów in November 2022, which killed two people. It called the incident an attack on a NATO member State, trying to provoke the alliance to retaliate, going as far as invoking article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. But at the end of August, Polish Minister of Justice Zbigniew Ziobro drew a line under this incident, officially confirming the obvious — it was a Ukrainian missile that fell on the Polish village.

We could cite dozens of similar episodes, in each of which the Ukrainian Government tries to shift the blame to Russia for attacking civilian targets, after which the Kyiv regime's narrative was exposed as a lie.

There is another common thread that runs through most of these episodes, mainly the most high-profile incidents. By magical happenstance, they coincided precisely with the visits of high-ranking Western politicians to Ukraine or when Zelenskyy went abroad to beg for money or weapons.

That was the case with the strike on the market in Kostiantynivka on the eve of Zelenskyy's meeting with United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken, on 6 September. A similarly monstrous strike, on Kramatorsk, was dealt on the day of the visit of the EU delegation, led by Mr. Borrell Fontelles and Mrs. Von Der Leyen, on 8 April 2022. They also tried to convince a high-level African delegation of the danger of Russian attacks on Kyiv, with the help of a theatrical production that included blaring sirens.

And now, the tragedy in the village of Hroza, which became the reason for today's meeting, occurred exactly at the moment when Zelenskyy was convincing the European Union to extend support to the Kyiv regime at the EU summit in Spain. Word on the street among Ukrainians is that they also have to beware of not only Ukrainian air defence missiles, but also Zelenskyy's foreign visits and visitors.

Immediately after those events, the Ukrainian delegation demanded the convening of a meeting of the Security Council, and Western countries pushed the Council to meet immediately.

If we return to the incident in the village of Hroza, there are a number of points that immediately leap out. As we know, at the time of the strike, there was a funeral being held there for one of the high-ranking Ukrainian nationalists. Of course, his neo-Nazi accomplices were in attendance. It is no coincidence that, in the photographs published on social networks immediately after the strike, the majority of the bodies belong to men of military age.

We have already seen such situations many times. The Kyiv regime wrung its hands over civilians killed as a result of attacks on hotels, dormitories, cafés, shops and other places and then a large number of obituaries of foreign mercenaries and soldiers appeared. What

a coincidence. We are certain that will also occur with Hroza.

We remind the Council that if the Kyiv regime concentrates military personnel in a certain place, it becomes a legitimate target for a strike, including from the point of view of international humanitarian law. But the placement of heavy equipment and air defence systems in residential areas is a gross violation of international humanitarian law and leads to the types of tragedies that we have talked about today. We once again underscore that Russia does not carry out strikes against civilian objects and does not target civilians. Our high-precision weapons are used exclusively to destroy the military capacity of the Zelenskyy regime and related objects. And if Ukraine is using granaries and port infrastructure to store ammunition and Western equipment, then they too will be destroyed.

We also must note that even as they highlight the victims of the attack on the village of Hroza and call for its condemnation, our cynical Western colleagues do not notice anything happening in other parts of the world. On Friday they blocked our proposed draft Security Council press statement in connection with the terrorist attack on the graduation ceremony at the military academy in the Syrian city of Homs, in which more than 100 people died?. That attack, incidentally, was carried out through the use of French-made drones. Similarly, Western pseudo-human rights defenders do not notice the regular strikes of the Ukrainian armed forces on peaceful areas of the cities of Donbas, Zaporizhzhya and the Kherson region, where there are no military installations. Such strikes have also long been carried out with Western weapons, since the Ukrainian Armed Forces have long run out of their own. There has not been a single meeting of the Security Council convened by the Western members of the Council on such occasions. They simply do not notice them.

Our American colleague spoke about the funeral ceremony in Hroza. Does he by any chance want to recall the wedding in Iraq shelled by valiant American forces, or numerous other crimes of the American military against civilians in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Yugoslavia? It seems that the main phobia of our American colleagues today is the election of Russia to the Human Rights Council. It is no coincidence that, as we all see perfectly well, it is the Americans who are leading a campaign in favour of our competitor, Albania, having finally discarded their masks, deviating from

the basic standards of courtesy and unashamedly using the platform of the Security Council to agitate others against Russia.

The task of our Western colleagues is to cover up — by hook or by crook — the Kyiv regime, to which they have given *carte blanche* for any crimes and violations of human rights since 2014 and which they are helping today with weapons, ammunition and intelligence, trying in vain to delay its inglorious end. We will talk about that in detail at the meeting we requested for 13 October. Our special military operation seeks to stop the regime's bloody war against the civilian population of Donbas. We will be implementing that goal through military means if Kyiv and its Western backers do not agree to a resolution through peaceful means.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. I also thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings.

Along with other members of the Council and the international community, we are stunned to hear that at least 52 civilians were killed in the Kupyansk district of the Kharkiv region of Ukraine. We express our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and wish a speedy recovery to those injured. We echo the Secretary-General's call to condemn this attack in the strongest terms. However, that is not an isolated case. As Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo explained, there have been cases of attacks on cities, civilians, grain silos and energy infrastructure, and of arbitrary detention, torture and gender-based violence, and so on. The terrible list of egregious acts continues to expand, and the number of casualties, including among women and children, continues to increase.

After Russia launched its unprovoked war of aggression, there have been numerous civilian casualties. As stated today, more than 9,800 civilians have been killed. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, statistics show that 111 people were killed and 443 were injured from 1 to 24 September alone. We need not reiterate here that international humanitarian law prohibits attacks against civilians.

Russia agreed to the Group of 20 leaders' declaration last month, which includes the following statement:

“We call on all States to uphold the principles of international law, including territorial integrity and sovereignty, [and] international humanitarian law”.

Russia's attempts to gloss over its acts will never succeed. We reiterate here that accountability cannot be avoided for violations of international law, including of the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law.

This situation would not have happened in the first place if Russia had not started its illegal aggression against Ukraine in violation of international law, including the United Nations Charter. Japan will continue to stand with Ukraine to realize a just and lasting peace in Ukraine that will uphold all the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. We urge Russia to withdraw immediately and unconditionally from the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine, and not to cause further atrocities.

Japan has been and will continue to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Brazil.

I join other members in thanking Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings.

Brazil learned with dismay and serious concern the news of last Thursday's attacks in the region of Kharkiv. We express our solidarity with the families of the deceased and the dozens of people injured. That act is yet another example of the immense burden imposed by the war on the civilian population. Similar tragedies have been repeated with unacceptable frequency. We reiterate our call on all parties to respect international humanitarian law and the fundamental principle of the distinction between combatants and civilians.

It is urgent that the parties also engage in a sincere effort to de-escalate hostilities without further delay. Continuing military operations will not bring about solutions to the multiple and complex causes of the conflict. Brazil urges the parties to resume contacts, either directly or through the good offices of third parties, with a view to opening direct negotiations that could bring an end to the conflict and a lasting solution to the disputes that originated this terrible war. That is the hope and aspiration of countries across the globe, in particular those in the developing world, which suffer from the side effects of the conflict.

Brazil reaffirms its respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States and its commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes. The diplomatic path is the only one that offers real prospects for a just and lasting peace, in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and taking into account the legitimate security concerns of all.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): I recognize the representative of the criminal Russian regime in the permanent seat of the Soviet Union.

The terrorist nature of that regime was again manifested on 5 October with another mass murder of Ukrainian civilians, this time in the village of Hroza. I would like to start by thanking all those who expressed their sympathy for the victims of that horrendous Russian attack — one of the deadliest since the beginning of the Russian invasion.

At least 52 local residents, including a 6-year-old child, were killed by a Russian Iskander missile that hit a local café and a store located in the same building. Six others were wounded, and four more, including two children, were reported missing. The café was full of people assembling for a funeral reception. They were all civilians and local residents who had gone to pay their respects to Andriy Kozyr, a fallen Ukrainian soldier who was killed in action last year and initially buried in another region, as Hroza was under occupation at the time. Recently, his son Denys decided to rebury him in his home village. Last Thursday, the Russians killed Denys as well, along with the entire family, including his wife, his grandmother and grandfather and his mother-in-law.

Hroza is a small village, located about 30 kilometres west of Kupyansk — a city that was liberated last autumn and that Russia is desperately trying to retake at any cost. The particularly tragic aspect of that horrendous attack is that Russia killed loved ones from nearly every family in Hroza with a single strike. According to the words of a local woman:

“With one missile they buried the whole village. In every house, there will be one coffin — in some even three or five. There are just a few people left alive in the village.”

We in Ukraine remember clearly similar stories of entire settlements being erased from the map. Those settlements were destroyed, and their residents were killed. That happened 80 years ago, during the Nazi invasion of Ukraine. Now the Russian Federation carefully cosplays its role model, the Third Reich, by killing people, by attempting to annex territories and by fuelling imperial sentiments and feelings of Russians’ own superiority. It is also trying to whitewash its aggression by pretending to defend itself from imaginary attacks.

That is exactly how Putin explains his war of aggression — as a form of defence, without caring at all how crazy it sounds to audiences beyond Russia. “They started the war, and we used force and continue to use it to stop it”, he told his puppets from the so-called Russian Parliament in February this year. “Today a real war has been unleashed against our homeland”, he persuaded the audience of a military parade later in May. All of those narratives demonstrate how the Russist regime follows in the footsteps of its Nazi predecessors, who were sure that:

“it’s always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for their lack of patriotism, and for exposing the country to danger. It works the same way in any country.”

That was said by Nazi war criminal Hermann Göring to psychologist Gustave Gilbert during the Nuremberg trials.

We commend the strong message from the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Ukraine, Ms. Denise Brown, who condemned the horrifying Russian strike as another barbaric consequence of Russia’s invasion and reminded us that intentionally directing an attack against civilians or civilian objects is a war crime. As the Secretary-General stated in response to the Russian strike, “Attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure are prohibited under international law” (*SG/SM/21974*). As we have seen throughout the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, Russia has shown little regard for the norms of international law. Moreover, the civilian population and civilian objects have remained deliberate targets for

Russian forces. On the same day that the mass murder in Hroza happened, Russian shelling killed two civilians in Kherson. The next day, 6 October, Russia struck a residential building in Kharkiv, killing a 10-year-old boy and his grandmother. Such attacks occur every day, and the only way to stop them is to deprive Russia of the capability to attack. That is the main task that the Armed Forces of Ukraine are fulfilling, in particular by using weapons supplied by our allies to reduce Russia's military potential and thereby limit its capacity to wage aggressive wars.

Russia, in turn, is attempting to undermine our human potential, targeting the right of Ukraine and Ukrainians to exist. And this country that keeps killing Ukrainians on a daily basis is now running as a candidate in the elections to the Human Rights Council to be held tomorrow, 10 October. Eighteen months ago, as noted in General Assembly resolution ES-11/3, Russia's membership rights in that body were suspended due to

“gross and systematic violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law committed by the Russian Federation during its aggression against Ukraine” (*General Assembly resolution ES-11/3, second preambular paragraph*).

Russia instead responded to that decision by intensifying its aggression and increasing the number of its deliberate attacks on civilians. As Russia keeps killing civilians every day, any vote in favour of its candidacy will be a bullet in the body of the United Nations, which Russia has already mutilated. We believe in the capacity of the United Nations community's wisdom and moral integrity to prevent that from happening.

Terror has opened too many fronts against humankind. And two days after the horror in Hroza, we saw horrific footage from Israel, with thousands of missiles in the sky above Israel. People killed right in the streets. Cars riddled with holes with civilians inside. Hostages abused. We in Ukraine are particularly sensitive to what has happened in Israel because the Russian terror campaign has also brought all of that into the streets of Ukrainian cities and villages. When such terrorist attacks occur, everyone who values life must stand in solidarity. Our position is absolutely clear. Anywhere in the world, anyone who brings terror and death must be held accountable.

The terrorist attack on Israel was thoroughly prepared, and the whole world understands which sponsors of terror could have encouraged and organized it. And they hope to benefit from it in the propaganda domain. According to some intelligence reports, Russia has already transferred some weapons to Hamas. The aim is plain and simple — to substantiate the fake information that the Kremlin has so desperately circulated about military assistance to Ukraine. As part of the Kremlin's disinformation campaign, those fakes can be used as a basis for so-called investigations in the Western information space. In order to make the fakes more convincing, there is a possibility that Russia will use Ruslan Syrovyi, a defector from Ukraine's border guard service who appears to have been a long-time Russian agent. It will not come as a surprise if Putin's envoy uses that narrative about weapons sent to Ukraine reappearing in the Middle East in this Chamber on Friday.

Israel has every right to protect itself from terror. So does any other State. And it is very important for the whole world to respond to terror in a united and principled fashion. As the President of Ukraine said following the mass murder in Hroza,

“We realize that words and documents can hardly stop such evil. But air defence can, as well as artillery, missiles and armoured equipment. And Ukrainian soldiers who repel Russian assaults and manage to advance themselves. And sanctions imposed by the international community on Russia for its acts of terror. And international justice”.

Ukraine and its civilians need viable protection from Russian atrocities, and we hope the world will focus on strengthening the capacities that President Zelenskyy mentioned rather than consuming Russian propaganda and watching new Mosfilm shows such as the one scheduled for this Chamber on 13 October. Putin has stated clearly and unequivocally that he would like to kill Ukraine. And it was not even a Freudian slip of the tongue. On the contrary, he fully realized what he was saying when he claimed on 6 October in the so-called Valdai forum that “If the Western defence supplies are terminated tomorrow, Ukraine will have a week left to live”. Ukraine will have a week left to live. He said that on the same day that his troops killed 52 people in the village of Hroza.

The restoration of justice and Russia's accountability will be key elements for the comprehensive, just and lasting peace and security that the entire world would

benefit from. That is one of the 10 points of our peace formula, the plan that Ukraine has proposed as a universal model to restore the rules-based order and respect for the norms of international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It should become an effective instrument not only for putting an end to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine but for settling and preventing any of the multiple war-related crises that affect people and nations across the globe. I would like to reiterate the message that my President delivered in this Chamber in September (see S/PV.9421), which is that every country can demonstrate its leadership within the framework of one or more or all the points of the peace formula. We invite everyone to join in its implementation.

The President: I now give the floor to Mrs. Samson.

Mrs. Samson: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the potential candidate country Georgia, and the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Monaco and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

I thank the Brazilian presidency for the opportunity to address the Security Council today. I also thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for the information they provided.

Last month, the President of the European Council described Ukraine as a crime scene. In the past few days, we have witnessed more horrific crimes. Russia's appalling violence against Ukraine's civilian population shows no signs of abating. Last Thursday, an attack targeted a café and a grocery store in the settlement of Hroza in Kupyansk, in Kharkiv oblast, killing 52 people, including a child, and injuring many others. A day later, an air strike on an apartment building in Kharkiv killed a 10-year-old boy and his grandmother and injured dozens of others. Those are heinous attacks against innocent civilians, in addition to Russia's continued daily indiscriminate attacks near the front lines. Since its unilateral withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, Russia has also escalated its attacks on civilian objects, including facilities for the export of Ukrainian grain.

International monitoring mechanisms, including the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry, have concluded that Russia has committed a wide range of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law in Ukraine. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has verified 9,614 civilian deaths during Russia's aggression. The actual number is without doubt much higher. We once again urge Russia to uphold human rights law and international humanitarian law. Intentional attacks against civilians are war crimes. All commanders, perpetrators and accomplices of those atrocities will be held to account. The EU remains firmly committed to ensuring that Russia be held fully accountable for its aggression against Ukraine.

The EU commends the Ukrainian people's strength, courage and resistance. We stand in firm solidarity and will continue supporting Ukraine and its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia must immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. Ukraine is exercising its inherent right to defend itself and to regain full control of its territory.

The international community has repeatedly expressed its desire for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in line with the Charter of the United Nations, the resolutions of the General Assembly and international law. The EU will continue its work to ensure the widest possible international support for the key principles and objectives of Ukraine's peace formula. Any initiative for sustainable peace in Ukraine must be based on full respect for its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The President: Recalling presidential note S/2017/507, on the working methods of the Security Council, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the representative of Czechia.

Mr. Kulhánek (Czechia): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and for giving me the opportunity to address the Security Council on behalf of Czechia. I also thank the two briefers for their briefings.

It is our duty to raise our voices once again against the unspeakable atrocities that Russia is committing on a daily basis against the people of Ukraine. Last Thursday, the Russian army launched a brutal attack on the Ukrainian village of Hroza, tragically ending the lives of some 60 innocent civilians, who had gathered to bid farewell to a soldier — a defender of his nation. Heartbreakingly, among the victims was a 6-year-old child. That single callous act claimed the lives of one in six residents of Hroza. The next day, Russia shelled residential buildings in Kharkiv, killing and injuring even more civilians. Yet on that very same day, the President of the Russian Federation tried to convince us that Russia did not start this brutal war against Ukraine and that it was trying to end it. How can we believe that when Russia has been waging a decade-long war against Ukraine and annexing and occupying part of its sovereign territory, while proclaiming that it has no interest in further conquests?

Such claims ring hollow. Russia continues its occupation, its military operations against Ukraine and its attacks on civilian objects and key civilian infrastructure, including targeting ports and grain facilities that are extremely vital for supplying food to the world. Moreover, Russia continues its cynical and indiscriminate killing of civilians.

We once again call on Russia to immediately stop its aggression against Ukraine and to withdraw its troops from the territory of Ukraine. We reiterate our full support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters.

There can be no impunity for war crimes, including the attacks against civilians committed last week. All those responsible will be held accountable.

Czechia will continue to assist Ukraine and its citizens in their just defence against Russia's aggression and in their struggle for the liberation of all the occupied territories. We call on all those who value freedom, mutual respect, sovereignty, cooperation, peaceful coexistence and respect for human life as essential building blocks of international relations to join us.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Romania.

Mr. Feruță (Romania): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to address the Security Council today.

Attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure are prohibited under international humanitarian law and must stop immediately — that has become one of the most frequently used phrases in our statements in meetings of the Security Council and the General Assembly. Nevertheless, such heinous attacks continue to occur. The indiscriminate attacks against civilians in the Kupyansk district of the Kharkiv region on 5 October and, on the following day, on another residential building in the city of Kharkiv bear the mark of the aggressor that Ukraine has been dealing with for the past 19 months.

Based on the statistics provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the illegal war started by Russia has killed nearly 10,000 civilians. Civilians need to feel safe again, and the indiscriminate attacks need to stop. Life has become incredibly tough for them, especially as winter approaches very rapidly and critical civilian infrastructure has sustained damage from previous shelling.

Furthermore, on the night of 5 to 6 October, there were drone attacks on grain silos and trucks close to the Danube River, at the Ukraine-Romania border. That constitutes another deliberate breach of international law and international humanitarian law, and also a clear attempt to stop the shipments of grain around the world. The ports on the Danube River provide alternative ways to export grain from Ukraine. Romania stands against the attempts to artificially increase the global price of grains by impeding the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, and therefore will do its part support countries in need.

Romania's message to its partners across the United Nations membership is that we will do everything in our power, together with our European partners, to bring safety and calm to the world food market. Romania has facilitated over 27 million tons of Ukrainian grain, and we will seek to increase those export facilities.

In conclusion, Russia is the aggressor. Its actions are based on the illegal use of force and represent serious violations of the most important norms and principles of international law enshrined, first and foremost, in the Charter of the United Nations. Romania firmly believes that justice must be done with regard to all the core crimes committed in the context of this war, including the crime of aggression.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving Poland the opportunity to make a contribution to today's meeting. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya for bringing us up to date on the current state of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Let me start by expressing Poland's grave concerns about the erosion of the global security system. The current wave of violence in the Middle East, which started with the ongoing terrorist attack against Israel, only deepens and adds to the scale of insecurity caused by the war in Ukraine, which is the topic of today's meeting. Poland's position in that context remains firm and clear: we stand by international law, including the universal right to self-defence of those attacked, with respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States. We condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and call for respecting international humanitarian law.

In the light of today's discussion, Poland joins the international community's firm condemnation of yet another massacre of innocent civilians conducted by the aggressor's forces in the village of Hroza just a few days ago. Close to a sixth of Hroza's population was wiped out in a single missile strike and, as we read in many reports, no family in the village was spared the horror of losing someone close to their hearts. Also among those killed in the attack was a worker for the Polish Humanitarian Action organization, who had been caring for the elderly there — another horrific example of the loss of life among humanitarian workers mentioned by the Assistant Secretary-General.

It has been said many times in this Chamber that such disgraceful conduct does not befit a permanent member of the Security Council. Russia follows in the notorious footsteps of Muscovite imperialism by being a major disruptor of international peace and security while wielding power to block any meaningful response to its transgressions. That leads me to a broader observation: Russian actions undermine trust in the United Nations system — trust that we now so badly need. When the global security system is degraded, all Member States, in particular those entrusted with special responsibilities, must act in such a way that the credibility of multilateralism is secured, not undermined. That is Poland's call to everyone.

Contrary to those expectations, Russia, while retaining its rights and privileges as a Member State, carries its destructive behaviour over into all the workings of the United Nations system. In other words, the Russian approach of aggression is not limited to the battlefield. We witness it on a daily basis here at the United Nations. Instead of playing a constructive role in United Nations processes, Russia's main goal is to undermine the very existence of the rules-based international order, which Russia cynically perceives as the major obstacle to conducting its aggressive policy with impunity.

It is very distressing that Russia has yet to show even a shred of goodwill or intent to end its aggression against Ukraine and that it remains deaf to our appeals to it to withdraw its military forces from the territories of the neighbouring country that it has occupied. Therefore, if we want to enhance the credibility of multilateralism, we should ensure that Russia will be held accountable for its violations of the very fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Only by getting our act together and standing firmly by the rules we have all agreed to live by will we be able to prevent the current world system from disintegrating.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes (Latvia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of three Baltic States — Estonia, Lithuania and my own country, Latvia. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which is enabled by Belarus, is a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and a threat to the rules-based international order. We strongly condemn Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, and we call upon Russia to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine with its internationally recognized borders. Let me reiterate that the sole responsibility for this war lies with Russia. Russia started this war, and Russia alone can — and must — end it immediately.

We are witnessing a clear pattern of deliberate steps taken by Russia with the aim of causing maximum suffering to Ukraine's civilian population and targeting civilian infrastructure. The evidence of such attacks is mounting. Innocent civilians, including children,

are killed, or their rights are gravely violated by the Russian armed forces. To this day, the United Nations has been able to confirm the killing of close to 10,000 civilians in this war of aggression. That is only a part of the real death toll, as Russia continues to restrict access to the territories it illegally controls in Ukraine. More than 11 million people have been forced to leave their homes or flee their country. The deadly bombings on 5 October of the settlement of Hroza in Kupyansk, Kharkiv region, killed more than 50 people, including a child, in yet another atrocious attack against innocent civilians.

Russia's appalling terror against Ukraine's civilian population continues. Attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure are serious violations of international humanitarian law, and thus constitute war crimes. As long as that remains the case, there is no place for Russia in the Human Rights Council. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine has confirmed the systematic use of torture, executions, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, rape and forced deportation executed by Russia. The intentional targeting of civilians must stop. Those crimes must stop immediately.

Russian leadership, military personnel, perpetrators and accomplices must be held accountable for each and every international crime committed in and against Ukraine. Accountability will be ensured. Justice will be brought to the victims. There will be no impunity for war crimes.

Let me also underscore that Russia's threats to revoke the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty are highly irresponsible and seriously undermine global security. We call upon Russia to stop its nuclear blackmail.

We are at a critical moment for the global order. Russia's war of aggression continues to challenge the world in many ways. Changing internationally recognized borders by force must not be accepted by the international community. The international community must firmly stand together against Russia's attack on the principles and norms of international law. We will continue to provide all the necessary support to Ukraine. Respect for the Charter of the United Nations is in the vital interest of all States.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.