



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

9625th meeting
 Tuesday, 14 May 2024, 3 p.m.
 New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Fernandes	(Mozambique)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria	Mr. Gaouaoui
	China	Mr. Geng Shuang
	Ecuador	Mr. De La Gasca
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Guyana	Ms. Persaud
	Japan	Mr. Yamazaki
	Malta	Mrs. Frazier
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Hwang
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sierra Leone	Mr. George
	Slovenia	Mrs. Blokar Drobič
	Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
	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 3.05 p.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 Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Poland 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. Lisa Doughten, Director of the Financing and Partnerships Division, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and Ms. Caitlin Howarth, Director for the Conflict Observatory team, Yale Humanitarian Research Laboratory.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite His Excellency Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis, 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. Doughten.

Ms. Doughten: When we previously briefed the Council, on 11 April (see S/PV.9600), we informed it that Ukraine was enduring some of the worst attacks since the start of the war. Since then, attacks on Ukraine have only escalated further. Relentless hostilities continue in communities along the north-eastern border with the Russian Federation and on the front line. Several waves of attacks in the Kharkiv region over the past few days have caused the death and injury of numerous civilians, including children. Just today, the city of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, was struck again, injuring at least 15 civilians. They have also led to the massive destruction of civilian infrastructure, a trend I will address in more detail in a moment.

Those attacks have triggered yet more displacement from border and front-line communities. As of today, authorities report that more than 7,000 civilians were evacuated from border areas of the Kharkiv region and that has had devastating consequences for civilians who remain in those areas, with many cut off from access to food, medical care, electricity and gas.

People in the Donetsk and Sumy regions, in the east and the north of the country, were also affected by attacks in recent days, with homes and civilian infrastructure damaged. In total, the Office for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recorded more than 700 civilian casualties across Ukraine in April. Some 129 civilians were killed, while 574 were injured, a significant increase in the number of civilians injured for the second month in a row. Of all civilian casualties, 90 per cent occurred in Ukrainian-controlled territory.

Strikes have also been reported inside the Russian Federation, including on Sunday in the Belgorod region, reportedly also resulting in several civilian casualties and damage to residential homes and other civilian infrastructure.

Across Ukraine, we have also seen an intensified pattern of attacks on civilian infrastructure, with far-reaching humanitarian consequences. Since 22 March, the United Nations and its partners have seen five waves of attacks directed against Ukraine's energy infrastructure. OHCHR recorded 50 such incidents in April alone. The Kharkiv and Dnipro regions are particularly affected, with Ukraine's Energy Ministry reporting up to 250,000 residents experiencing rolling power outages in Kharkiv and ongoing restrictions in Dnipro since March. Those attacks have destroyed or damaged power generation plants and electricity substations. The impact of those power cuts on the most vulnerable is stark. They have temporarily left millions of households across the country with no power, no water and no gas needed for cooking, heating, hygiene and other vital services. Children who rely on online schooling are not able to learn. Older persons with mobility impairments, persons with disabilities who use wheelchairs or other assistive devices and mothers with small children are unable to leave multi-story apartment buildings to access food and medical support.

We are extremely worried by what appears to be a new pattern of attacks on railway infrastructure in the east and south of Ukraine. In April alone, OHCHR recorded 10 attacks on railway infrastructure in government-controlled territory. The attacks killed 16 civilians and injured 59 more. Damage to the railway system also prevents the movement of people, goods, such as construction materials, and other essential supplies. Also of concern are the attacks on factories and production plants, limiting the availability of locally procured humanitarian goods. In addition,

continuing attacks on Ukraine's port infrastructure threaten their ability to export grain and other agricultural commodities at a time when the number of people facing acute food insecurity around the world continues to rise year after year. And we are alarmed by reports of attacks damaging energy infrastructure and oil refineries in the Russian Federation. Such attacks risk inflaming the war further and worsening its humanitarian impacts.

I am compelled, once again, to recall that under international humanitarian law, the parties must take constant care to spare all civilians as well as civilian objects, including homes, schools, hospitals and other essential infrastructure.

The intensification in hostilities is making the delivery of humanitarian assistance all the more dangerous. Nevertheless, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners are doing everything we can to reach people in need of support, despite the enormous risks. Across the country, as of the end of March, 3.6 million people have received some form of humanitarian assistance.

So far this year, a dozen inter-agency convoys have delivered vital supplies to 20,000 people in front-line areas. Local humanitarian partners have been instrumental in conducting last-mile delivery and distribution. Assistance has also included the delivery of health-care services to nearly 860,000 people, maintenance support for water and wastewater systems for more than 1.7 million people and emergency water supplies for more than 1.2 million people. Two million people have received food, seed and livestock support, while around 580,000 people have been helped with essential household supplies and materials for emergency home repairs.

Humanitarian protection activities have been expanded, including gender-based violence support for people newly displaced by hostilities. We commend the Government of Ukraine for the additional support it has announced for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, in the form of financial reparations and medical and psychological assistance. We are also incredibly grateful to donors, who have provided 22 per cent of the \$3.1 billion needed for the Ukraine humanitarian needs and response plan. We call on donors to provide immediate and flexible financial support, which is urgent in order to respond to the ever-growing needs.

Another challenge remains — reaching civilians in areas of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya that are currently under the occupation of the Russian Federation. We are deeply concerned about the estimated 1.5 million people in need of life-saving assistance in those areas.

As we said during last month's briefing, and have repeatedly said in the Council, in accordance with international humanitarian law, all parties must allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need. They must ensure that humanitarian personnel have the freedom of movement required for their work. I renew my call to the parties to comply with their obligations in that regard.

This war has caused the death and injury of tens of thousands of people in Ukraine. It has displaced millions, many of whom continue to seek refuge in neighbouring countries and across the world. It has caused immense suffering and left more than 14 million people, or 40 per cent of the population, in need of humanitarian assistance. We once again call on the Council to seek an end to it.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Howarth.

Ms. Howarth: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the Council on the bombardment of Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

The Council's focus on this matter comes as waves of attacks sweep across Ukraine, targeting power generation and transmission facilities nationwide. A week ago, missile strikes caused serious damage to three thermal plants and two hydroelectric power plants. A few days ago, another large-scale infrastructure attack was reported. By some counts, nearly every single power plant has been targeted.

On 29 February, the Yale Humanitarian Research Laboratory released a report documenting verified damage to Ukraine's power-generation and transmission infrastructure that took place between 1 October 2022 and 30 April 2023 — a period of just 31 weeks. Through a combination of open-source data and satellite imagery analysis, the Research Laboratory identified 223 damage events across 23 of Ukraine's 24 oblasts, and we verified 66 of those events to our rigorous high-confidence standards across 17 oblasts. That is a rate of over seven damage events identified per week, with peak impact timed for the height of winter.

Just last Wednesday, almost a dozen Ukrainian power facilities were reportedly struck in a single day, compared to the average of seven per week. Since March, the successful targeting of power-generation facilities has further slashed Ukraine's capacity. Each hit compounds the problem.

Russia's officials have clearly stated their objectives for targeting Ukraine's energy infrastructure: first, to advance Russia's military objectives; secondly, as retaliation for Ukraine's purported actions; and thirdly, as the intentional infliction of harm upon civilians in order to compel Ukraine to submit to negotiations favourable to Russia's interests. While the first justification may be lawful within the bounds of the laws of war, retaliation and intentional infliction of harm likely violate international humanitarian law.

Yale Humanitarian Research Laboratory did not assess the degree of dual use afforded by the energy infrastructure documented in our report. However, the law of armed conflict prohibits attacks on both civilian objects and military targets if the attack causes excessive civilian casualties, damage to civilian objects or a combination relative to any concrete or direct military advantage anticipated. As State Duma member Andrey Gurulyov defined Russia's campaign, it is aimed against Ukraine's whole energy systems. A comprehensive campaign, by its own definition, defies proportionality.

Russia's officials use language that indicates a disregard for the extent of civilian suffering, in apparent contravention of the obligation, under article 57 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Convention, for parties to take constant care to spare the civilian population, civilians and civilian objects. Beyond expressing a disregard for civilian suffering, officials have stated that they are utilizing that suffering to compel Ukraine to negotiate on terms favourable to Russia. As Dmitriy Medvedev wrote in October 2022, in order for Ukraine to stabilize its energy supply it must,

“recognize Russia's legitimate demands in the context of the special military operation and its results ... Then the lights will work again”.

Boris Chernyshov, when he called strikes on Ukraine's power infrastructure “strikes of retribution” for purported and unspecified war crimes, said: “For that they will sit there without gas and without electricity and without everything.” What does it mean

to go without gas and without electricity and without everything? It means that too much pressure is put on other parts of Ukraine's critical infrastructure, causing cascading problems and further damage. It means extended periods without water. It means jobs ground to a halt, productivity is lost and education is fragmented. It means blackouts that last longer than the emergency batteries on life-saving health-care equipment. The impact of these strikes cannot be assessed only through logging damage to facilities. It will take far more to understand the scope and scale of the harm done to Ukraine's civilians, including lives lost.

Just as Russia's officials have comprehensively planned and executed their destruction of Ukraine's critical infrastructure, so too should the international community systematically counteract this devastation.

First, we must target the missiles. Sanctions already in place must be enforced in order to ensure that weapons components and the resupply of other critical elements are stopped at the borders of countries that already recognize those sanctions regimes. We must track these components and target Russia's missiles at their source.

Secondly, we must prepare for this emergency and mobilize resources today in order to support and stabilize Ukraine's economy and ensure that emergency humanitarian aid is in motion now so as to ensure civilian survival this winter.

Thirdly, we must let Russia pay by releasing Russian assets seized under global sanctions in order to fund these emergency preparations over the next six months — work that cannot begin soon enough.

Above all else, we must not underestimate the scale of this threat. Russia's wholesale destruction of Ukraine's energy infrastructure targets the heart of its civilian population. If it is allowed to bleed from a thousand cuts, hope will drain away. But every action that makes the heart stronger makes all of Ukraine more capable of defending itself.

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

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

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Ms. Doughten and Ms. Howarth for their briefings.

For more than 800 days now, Russia has persisted in its war of aggression against Ukraine, in violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Russia is continuing to violate international humanitarian law and is carrying out a deliberate campaign of strikes targeting civilian targets. Russia is executing that strategy at the cost of a heavy human toll and an alarming deterioration in the humanitarian situation.

As we just heard, the Russian army is systematically targeting Ukrainian energy production units, including thermal power stations, hydroelectric plants, substations and transformers. Beginning in the winter of 2022-2023, that campaign has intensified since February 2024, culminating in large-scale salvos in late March and early April. It is estimated that 50 per cent of Ukraine's energy production capacity has been destroyed or damaged. Russia has struck Kharkiv and Odesa with ballistic missiles on an almost daily basis.

Those strikes deep in Ukraine's territory, far from the front lines, are not aimed at direct military objectives, but at civilian infrastructure essential to the population. Those attacks run counter to the principles of distinction and proportionality. They show Russia's total disregard for the obligation to minimize civilian injuries and damage to civilian objects. Those strikes may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.

France will remain committed to addressing the humanitarian consequences of Russia's attacks.

There must be no impunity for those crimes. France will continue to support the work of international justice. The arrest warrants issued on 5 March by the International Criminal Court for Sergei Ivanovich Kobylash, Lieutenant General in the Russian Air Force, and Viktor Nikolayevich Sokolov, Vice-Admiral and Commander of the Black Sea Fleet, concerning the campaign of missile strikes against Ukrainian civilian energy infrastructure, are a decisive step forward. France welcomes the renewal of the mandate of the Human Rights Council's Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, which is documenting the indiscriminate attacks against Ukraine's population and critical infrastructure.

While Russia is carrying out destructive attacks on Ukraine's energy sector, Ukraine and the rest of the world are taking action to mitigate the humanitarian consequences of the war and to provide support to the population by strengthening the resilience of strategic

infrastructure. This crucial issue will be discussed at the peace conference organized by Switzerland next month.

There is only one possible path to a just and lasting peace — that of respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Mr. De La Gasca (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Doughten and Ms. Howarth for their detailed briefings.

Ecuador notes with concern how the conflict in Ukraine is worsening and spreading, exacerbating the suffering of the civilian population and creating additional risks that may affect regional and global stability. The statistics are alarming: more than 10,000 civilians have lost their lives since the beginning of the conflict, including hundreds of children. More than 20,000 people have been wounded, and millions have been displaced.

Since the previous time the Council discussed the humanitarian situation in Ukraine (see S/PV.9600), the escalation in the intensity and frequency of attacks has continued. Essential infrastructure, including hospitals and schools, has been destroyed or severely damaged. This month alone, we have seen attacks that have rendered several energy facilities inoperable, affecting millions of people's access to basic services such as electricity and clean water. In recent days, in the Kharkiv region, the impact of the attacks has been equally devastating, with numerous civilian casualties and a significant increase in internally displaced persons.

We must recall that international humanitarian law is explicit in its prohibition of attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. In that context, Ecuador calls on the parties to strictly adhere to the principles of proportionality, distinction and precaution, in order to avoid an escalation of the cycle of suffering. Safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance must be allowed and facilitated, and the lives and safety of humanitarian workers be respected and protected.

Ecuador maintains a clear and principled position on this and other conflicts. We reject any violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and supports the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The most effective way to end the devastation faced by civilians is a definitive cessation of hostilities. Until the guns are silenced, the suffering of innocent people will continue to increase, regardless of humanitarian

efforts or implemented protection measures. Therefore, Ecuador urges the Russian Federation to put an end to its military operations in Ukraine and to comply with the ruling of the International Court of Justice of 16 March 2022, to make space for dialogue and diplomacy, as legitimate and effective ways to achieve peace.

Ms. Persaud (Guyana): I thank Ms. Lisa Doughten for the comprehensive update and note the contribution of Ms. Caitlin Howarth. I also welcome the participation of the representatives of Ukraine, Germany, Estonia, Poland, Denmark and the European Union in today's meeting.

Despite the many calls by the Council for full compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law, and for the parties to the conflict to comply with the legal requirement to protect civilian objects, they continue to be destroyed almost daily. Guyana is deeply alarmed by the unrelenting attacks on residential buildings, schools, medical facilities, grain ports and energy facilities since the start of the war in February 2022. We are also concerned that the attacks were often unrelated to front-line engagement and appear to have little regard for the requirements of proportionality and military necessity.

International humanitarian law is clear in its prohibition of attacks targeting civilians and objects indispensable to the survival of civilians. Yet we continue to witness large-scale, coordinated attacks on civilian infrastructure, including dozens of energy facilities, resulting in disrupted access to electricity and water supply for millions of people in multiple locations.

The damage, destruction or loss of functionality of energy facilities are having direct and reverberating effects on civilians. They are not only causing incidental civilian harm, through the disruption of access to critical services, but are also resulting in loss of civilian life and injury to those living near target sites. There have also been attacks on the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in Ukraine. Despite the many calls for an end to attacks on or near the site, the International Atomic Energy Agency team of experts stationed at the site continues to report hearing military activities, including artillery and rocket fire, in areas near the plant. That cannot and must not continue. Greater care must be taken to eliminate the persistent dangers posed to the safety of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and to adhering to the five concrete principles and seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety at the site.

Guyana reiterates its call for the parties to respect and adhere to international humanitarian law. We also urge them to commit to a serious political and diplomatic process towards ending the conflict and call for the withdrawal of Russian military forces from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine. We maintain that prolonging the war poses increasingly grave risks for all concerned and for international peace and security. We further call for scaled-up humanitarian support to Ukraine and for humanitarian workers to be granted unhindered access to all areas, including the occupied territories.

In conclusion, Guyana once again encourages the continued engagement of the international community to end the war as soon as possible.

Mr. Yamazaki (Japan): I thank Ms. Lisa Doughten and Ms. Caitlin Howarth for their valuable briefings.

It is regrettable that we heard again today in a briefing from the United Nations about the many civilian casualties caused by the clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations by a permanent member of the Security Council. Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine has resulted in the deaths of, and injuries to, countless innocent people, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis on the ground. Energy-related facilities throughout Ukraine are under continuous attack. On 8 May, President Zelenskyy said that Kyiv, Zaporizhzhya and other regions had been attacked with more than 50 missiles and 20 drones. The Energy Minister of Ukraine said that about 80 per cent of thermal power plants had been damaged. We also note that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reports that intensified attacks in the Kharkiv region are causing civilian casualties, widespread destruction and displacement from front-line and border areas.

Japan is deeply distressed by Russia's continuous disregard for international law, including international humanitarian law. Attacks against civilians and critical civilian infrastructure are clearly prohibited by international humanitarian law. The international community will not tolerate impunity for those responsible, and the perpetrators of violations of international humanitarian law, and all heinous acts, must be identified and held accountable.

In addition, Japan condemns in the strongest possible terms North Korea's export and Russia's procurement of ballistic missiles, as well as Russia's

use of those missiles against Ukraine. The transfer of those weapons, which is a clear violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, supports Russia's war of aggression and increases the suffering of the Ukrainian people. We continue to monitor closely what North Korea gains in return.

Needless to say, a stable energy supply is fundamental to people's lives. To that end, Japan has supported the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine's energy infrastructure. That includes the provision of two large autotransformers, benefiting around 500,000 residents in Kyiv, and the delivery of six mobile power supply vehicles to the Ukrainian Sea Port Authority. In addition, Japan has supplied five advanced gas turbines and transported seven autotransformers to help prevent energy shortages and maintain critical services for over 5 million people during the challenging winter months. Japan remains committed to supporting the Ukrainian people by bolstering electricity and heating supplies in Ukraine.

Once again, we reiterate our clear position and urge Russia to stop its aggression and immediately and unconditionally withdraw from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine. Japan continues to stand with the people of Ukraine and the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Gaouaoui (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Ms. Lisa Doughten for her valuable briefing. I also followed attentively the briefing provided by Ms. Caitlin Howarth.

In many meetings, Algeria has expressed its deep concern about the worsening humanitarian situation resulting from the crisis in Ukraine and about the mindset of confrontation between the parties. That has tragic repercussions for the civilian population and ramifications at the regional and international levels. The loss of civilian life, the suffering of refugees and internally displaced persons and the destruction of civilian infrastructure, including power plants, are a source of great concern for us. Furthermore, tensions have worsened, hostilities have continued on the ground and the polarized situation has been exacerbated, with dangerous repercussions for international peace and security, not to mention the economic and social consequences, including food and energy security. In that regard, Algeria reiterates its call for intensified diplomatic efforts in order to put an end to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and to address the humanitarian suffering without any distinction.

Algeria stresses the need to stop hostilities and give priority to the protection of civilians, while fully abiding by the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international humanitarian law. Algeria calls on the parties to set aside the mindset of confrontation and to create conditions conducive to holding comprehensive and constructive dialogue and negotiations based on the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. We urge the parties to aim their efforts towards finding a just and lasting solution to the crisis in Ukraine, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and their legitimate security concerns.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I thank Director Lisa Doughten and Director Caitlin Howarth for their informative briefings.

This spring, Russia has targeted power plants, electricity substations and gas storage facilities across Ukraine. The United Kingdom calls for an immediate halt to that destructive campaign against Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Millions of people already face disruption to power, heating and water supply. Those attacks are making an appalling humanitarian situation worse. That is especially the case for front-line communities, as the attacks and lack of power hamper humanitarian partners' communications and movements.

The most recent attack, on 8 May, involved over 70 missiles and drones. Since March, at least 14 power stations have been hit. Iranian-made uncrewed aerial vehicles remain Russia's weapons of choice in those attacks against civilians and their infrastructure.

Russia has targeted Ukraine's energy infrastructure since the start of the full-scale invasion in 2022. Before that, in 2015 thousands of consumers experienced power outages when Russia hacked Ukrainian energy grids. Now that pattern of Russian aggression continues, in an attempt to terrorize civilians, obstruct livelihoods and businesses and, ultimately, to break down Ukraine's resolve. But Ukrainians will not allow Russia to do that.

The United Kingdom has committed \$55 million to the Energy Community's Ukraine Energy Support Fund, and over \$214 million in overall support to the energy sector in Ukraine. We encourage donors to support that fund, to consider rapid provisions of new or refurbished energy equipment and to help provide air defence systems to protect Ukraine's civilian infrastructure. Together, we will help Ukraine to repair, restore and defend its energy infrastructure.

One country could end this wanton destruction and suffering immediately. The United Kingdom calls on Russia to cease its attacks and to withdraw from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I thank Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Director Doughten for her sobering briefing. I would also like to thank Ms. Howarth for her well-researched presentation today.

It has been more than a month since our most recent meeting on the devastating humanitarian toll of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, including the country's energy and critical infrastructure (see S/PV.9600). Civilians continue to bear the brunt. Reports continue of Russian forces committing torture and sexual violence and carrying out forced transfers and deportations of civilians, including children. The United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine verified that at least 604 civilians were killed or injured in the Ukraine in March alone — a 20 per cent increase from February. At least 57 of them were children. Millions of people have been left without electricity because of Russia's coordinated attacks on Ukraine's grid infrastructure and its power generation and natural gas infrastructure. Those large-scale attacks striking Ukraine's cities and infrastructure are a clear escalation. They threaten critical services, including electricity, water treatment and heating. Power plants in Kharkiv are operating at 20 per cent capacity owing to near daily attacks, forcing the evacuation of tens of thousands of civilians.

Next week the Security Council will be subjected to yet another meeting during which Russia will claim that Western arms are to blame for prolonging the war it started. Russia need only look in the mirror to understand why more than 50 countries have provided critical support for Ukraine's forces. Last month, the United States announced \$1 billion in new assistance to Ukraine. That assistance includes urgently needed capabilities, such as air defence equipment, to defend Ukraine's citizens from Russia's relentless attacks. Since February 2022, the United States has also provided nearly \$2.9 billion in humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and neighbouring countries. That includes life-saving support for the 3.4 million people who remain internally displaced and nearly 6.5 million refugees. Newly approved supplemental funding will help to maintain the humanitarian response amid unabated attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure.

The recent increase in Russian attacks reinforces the need for urgent humanitarian support to reach the 14.6 million people in need of assistance. We urge donors to support the humanitarian response through the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund or other partners.

It bears repeating that Russia continues to deny international monitors and humanitarian organizations access to the Ukrainian territory that it occupies, as well as to facilities in Russia holding prisoners of war and Ukrainian civilians. It bears repeating that Russia continues to procure ballistic missiles and other munitions from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in violation of Security Council resolutions. Fearing the mounting body of evidence against it, the Kremlin vetoed the mandate renewal for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Panel of Experts (see S/PV.9591). It bears repeating that Russia continues to acquire Iranian uncrewed aerial vehicles, which are being used relentlessly against Ukraine's cities and civilian infrastructure.

After more than three years, the toll of Russia's aggression against Ukraine is well documented and researched. No amount of lies and diversions can cover up the sheer body of evidence. There will be accountability. But in the meantime, the way to end this war and the humanitarian crisis it has caused is clear: Russia must cease its aggression and immediately and fully withdraw from all territory within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In what now seems to be becoming a tradition, our Western colleagues gather us all here once a month for meetings on Ukraine, the sole purpose of which is to demonstrate the steadfast support of the collective West for the Zelenskyy regime, which is on the verge of complete collapse. These meetings have turned into collective self-hypnosis sessions aimed primarily at the domestic Western audience. However, we will not hear a single word of truth about what is happening in Ukraine or the root causes of the Ukrainian crisis from our Western colleagues. Instead, the sponsors of the Kyiv regime, including non-members of the Security Council from European Union countries, line up, as they have done today, to tell alarmist stories about the situation in Ukraine and to try to create an impression of unbearable suffering being visited upon the civilian population as a result of Russia's actions.

That is not an easy thing to do, since the Russian Aerospace Forces strikes on military facilities belonging to the Kyiv regime are high-precision strikes, and life in Ukrainian cities is generally normal, except for the hunt for Ukrainian men being carried out by the Ukrainian dictator in order to conscript them against their will to the front lines as cannon fodder. I will return to that issue later in my statement. Our Western colleagues are not to be envied. Their claims look strange to say the least in view of the abundant video footage of allegedly civilian facilities in Ukraine being destroyed, including grain elevators, postal warehouses and stores, which clearly shows the detonation of ammunition and fuel. It is also rather difficult to explain why strikes on supposedly peaceful hotels and recreation centres tend to be followed by the publication of hundreds of online obituaries of Ukrainian military personnel.

Western capitals must also be selectively blind to the crimes committed by the Ukrainian armed forces, because that does not fit into the false narrative that they are unsuccessfully trying to impose on the public. In that narrative, there is no room for human rights violations and thousands of political prisoners in Ukraine, Russophobia or nationalism, while the glorification and whitewashing of Hitler's accomplices, who were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Jews, Poles, Russians and Ukrainians during the war, are denied using the single argument that the President of Ukraine is a Jew.

If our Western colleagues were eager to convey to the international community at least an iota of truth about what is happening in Ukraine, they would not have stayed silent but would have condemned the most recent cowardly terrorist attack committed by the Kyiv regime two days ago. After all, they know very well that, on 12 May, the peaceful Russian city of Belgorod was once again subjected to a large-scale rocket attack. Three types of missiles were used in the attack: the Tochka-U tactical missile system, the Vilkha multiple-launch rocket system and the Czech-made Vampire system. At 11.40 a.m., the fifth attack that day caused a section of a residential apartment building to collapse. The missile had been fired from the direction of Volchansk, in other words from Ukrainian-controlled territory. The attack killed 15 civilians, and 17 people were injured, including a six-week-old baby. Unfortunately, the shelling of Belgorod continued throughout the day, and the rescue operation even had to be suspended several times. On Sunday evening, three more people died. And that is just one example of how Ukrainian Nazis, faced with the

active advance of Russian troops along the entire front line and suffering an increasing number of defeats on the battlefield, are seeking to vent their anger on the citizens of peaceful Russian cities by targeting them in violation of the norms of international humanitarian law.

Of course, the Zelenskyy regime is primarily responsible for all those crimes. However, Western countries are almost as much to blame, given that the sponsors of the Kyiv junta continue to supply it with long-range weapons, provide it with intelligence and send their instructors and mercenaries to Ukraine in the delusional hope of inflicting a strategic defeat on Russia and weakening our country. We will have an opportunity to discuss in detail those destructive actions taken by NATO countries during a meeting to be convened at our initiative on 20 May. Therefore, we will not dwell on that now.

I will merely say that, having abandoned hope that their protégés will achieve the desired result, the sponsors of Zelenskyy's regime have now begun to explicitly and overtly grant it permission to strike peaceful targets with the weapons that they have been providing. For example, in early May, the British Foreign Secretary, David Cameron made the revelatory statement that the weapons provided by London could be used to carry out strikes on Russian territory, including in areas outside the zone of the special military operation. The Latvian Foreign Ministry also confirmed that Ukraine had received weapons from its partners with permission to strike Russian territory.

At the same time, Western capitals are shamefully avoiding condemnation of the blatantly terrorist methods akin to those of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant that are used by their protégés in organizing attempts to assassinate journalists and activists on Russian territory. In March, that effort went so far as to include a major terrorist attack that was ordered, targeting Crocus City Hall near Moscow. When we add to that their long-standing disregard of repression against dissidents and opponents of the Kyiv regime — such as the death of the American journalist Gonzalo Lira in the custody of the Ukrainian security services — it is not surprising that the citizens of Western countries are asking more and more questions of their authorities and refusing to support them. After all, with their complicity with the crimes of the Zelenskyy regime, they are trampling on the very values that they portray as the fundamental pillars of the democratic world.

Present-day Ukraine no longer seeks to conceal its decaying, anti-democratic neo-Nazi essence. For example, in April, Kyiv informed the Council of Europe about restrictions of the constitutional rights and freedoms of Ukrainians. In other words, the Zelenskyy regime thereby decided to formalize the long-established practice of oppressing its citizens. Information about the staggering levels of human rights violations in Ukraine is so difficult to sweep under the rug that even reports published by the United States Department of State in late April cite numerous instances of torture, persecution of the church, arbitrary arrests and politically motivated murders. By letting off steam in that way, Washington, London and Brussels are in the habit of blaming everything on Russia, forgetting at the same time that the persecution of dissenters and the violation of human rights began in Ukraine long before the special military operation — starting, at least, immediately after the anti-constitutional Maidan coup 10 years ago.

Today the residents of Ukraine are facing a qualitatively new level of violation of their rights. In just a few days, on 18 May, Ukrainian men of enlistment age will effectively become disenfranchised. With the entry into force of a new law on mobilization, they will find themselves outside the law. They will lose control of their property and money and will no longer be able to renew or receive documents. Nonetheless, conscription evasion in Ukraine has reached record levels. That is an exceedingly inconvenient topic for Zelenskyy and his sponsors because, according to their worldview, Ukrainians should willingly go forth to defend their country. In fact, it has become known that 11,000 men of enlistment age fled to Romania alone, with 19 of them dying in the attempt. In order to flee the country, potential conscripts abandon their vehicles at the border, don women's attire and resort to all manner of clever tricks to deceive their border guards. At the same time, only the poor and disenfranchised face the danger of being sent to the front. The wealthy, of course, have opportunities to bribe their way out. When it comes to the children of the powerful, it is a completely different story; they have long since been abroad, spending the money stolen by their parents, including Western aid.

That is what Ukrainians care about, not the lofty words of Western sponsors, who are only interested in making Ukrainians fight. On Ukrainian social networks that Zelenskyy's repressive machine has not yet reached, issues that once were considered seditious

are being raised increasingly vociferously, namely, what are Ukrainians fighting for and for whom? For the arrogant, corrupt Kyiv leader and his clique, who trampled upon their own Constitution and are losing even formal legitimacy on 21 May? Are they fighting for the Western geopolitical interest in weakening Russia? Ordinary Ukrainians are understanding more and more clearly that they have no interests in this war, which the United States and its satellites have been preparing the country for since at least 2014. That is especially the case when they receive news about how life is getting better in the territories liberated from the Kyiv regime, where former Ukrainian citizens are finally able to exercise their right to speak in their native Russian.

To conclude, I wish to address our colleagues from developing countries. They should consider all those trends, whose veracity can be easily ascertained, the next time that they are called upon to support certain formulas or plans promoted by the Ukrainian henchman and his Western sponsors. They are so divorced from reality that any meetings at which discussion of those formulas is proposed, will be, at best, a waste of time. At worst, developing countries will become complicit in prolonging the agony of the Kyiv regime at the cost of tens — if not hundreds — of thousands of lives of ordinary Ukrainians, who are being thrown into that senseless meat grinder against their will and against their country's interests. The only way to stop it is to consign Zelenskyy and his clique and the entire Maidan Government to the dustbin of history, where they deserve to be. That is precisely what we are seeking to achieve right now.

Mrs. Blokar Drobič (Slovenia): I would like to thank Director Doughten for her briefing and Ms. Howarth for her contribution. Let me make a couple of points on behalf of my delegation.

First, as Resident Coordinator Denise Brown stated recently, there are no peaceful mornings in Ukraine. Since the previous time we met on this file, in early April (see S/PV.9600), more than 1,000 drone and missile attacks were recorded across Ukraine. Cities such as Kharkiv and Odesa were hit especially hard. Thousands of people have again been forced to flee as their homes are being destroyed, finding themselves in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. The aerial pounding of critical civilian infrastructure is continuing unabated — 140 educational facilities were reportedly damaged or destroyed in attacks across the country in 2024 alone. In parallel, UNICEF has reported that the

rate at which children are dying increased by nearly 40 per cent in the first quarter of 2024, as compared to the same period last year.

Secondly, with regard to Russia's use of cluster munitions, according to the latest reports, Russia used cluster munitions in its bombardment of Odesa in late April. Using such weapons in a densely populated area is against all rules of international humanitarian law. In one instance, submunitions were reportedly scattered across a 1.5-kilometre radius, which will pose a threat to the civilian population for years to come. As a State party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Slovenia condemns the use of those indiscriminate weapons in the strongest possible terms.

Thirdly, with regard to attacks against critical energy infrastructure, millions of Ukrainians lost power in the past month as a result of the Russian barrage on Ukrainian energy infrastructure. The country's energy sector was hit especially hard last week when three thermal power stations were damaged.

The intensity of the recent attacks against critical energy infrastructure outpaces that of attacks during the winter of 2022-23. Let me recall the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court against two Russian commanders alleged to be responsible for war crimes of directing attacks at civilian objects and inhumane acts, including the campaign of strikes against energy infrastructure carried out in that period.

These attacks seek to impair Ukraine's economy and are obviously not directed against military targets. They are a clear violation of international humanitarian law, and they need to stop now.

Ukrainian civilians have suffered too long. They and the wider region need a tangible prospect for peace. We call on Russia to stop its subversive actions and give peace a chance.

Mr. George (Sierra Leone): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this briefing. I also thank Ms. Lisa Doughten for her briefing. We acknowledge the contribution of Ms. Caitlin Howarth. I welcome the presence and participation of the Representative of Ukraine in this meeting.

Two years of conflict in Ukraine have resulted in civilian deaths, widespread damage and destruction of homes, schools, hospitals and vital civilian infrastructure, including energy infrastructure, leading to a dire humanitarian crisis.

We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Ukraine, which is being particularly exacerbated by attacks on critical energy infrastructure. Reports from Ukraine from as recently as 8 May suggest significant strikes on Ukraine's energy infrastructure. The attacks reportedly caused significant damage to three thermal power plants, four hydroelectric power plants, 17 major high-voltage substations and a gas-storage facility in the Lviv region.

Reports also suggest that the attacks severely hampered Ukraine's energy capacity. More than 800 district heating facilities were destroyed or damaged, and up to 8 gigawatts of power generation was lost. In addition, 412 settlements remain offline, and hourly outages continue for household and industrial consumers in the Kharkiv and Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk regions. Overall, it is estimated that 50 per cent of Ukraine's pre-conflict energy-generating facilities are offline, and an estimated \$1 billion will be needed for their restoration.

We are concerned that attacks on the energy infrastructure have resulted in major disruptions to the supply of essential services, such as electricity, water, and gas, to medical facilities, schools, manufacturing industries and places of work for a significant portion of the population. The impact on the provision of essential services is to slow down production levels and reduce economic activity. We are also alarmed by the impact on health-care facilities, including those with incubators and other life-saving devices, which in some cases had to resort to use of batteries that ran out before the re-establishment of power, putting the lives of many at risk.

Given the current circumstances and the devastating impact of the conflict in Ukraine and parts of the Russian Federation on the civilian population, we call on the parties involved in the conflict to adhere to their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, including energy facilities.

In acknowledging the efforts of the international community to address the humanitarian consequences of the conflict, we stress the urgent need for more coordinated international efforts to address the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. The 2024 humanitarian needs and response plan for Ukraine must be fully supported in order to ensure the well-being and protection of the civilians affected by the conflict.

Let me conclude by urging all parties to prioritize the protection of civilians and critical infrastructure, including energy-generating and gas facilities, in order to prevent further harm and ensure the restoration of essential services for the well-being and stability of civilians.

We reiterate our call for meaningful steps to be taken towards the immediate cessation of hostilities and for the parties to the conflict to engage constructively in good faith towards finding a political and diplomatic solution that recognizes the legitimate concerns of all. We also reiterate our call for full respect of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): I would like to thank Director Doughten and Ms. Howarth for their briefings.

As we just heard, the death and destruction toll are growing by the day. At least 10,800 civilians have been killed, including 600 children, and more than 20,000 civilians have been injured. In addition, the Ukraine humanitarian needs response plan estimates that 14.6 million people across Ukraine are in need of assistance. Malta remains seriously concerned about the lack of humanitarian access, and we urge Russia to allow and facilitate safe, timely and unimpeded access, in line with its obligations under international humanitarian law. Russia's indiscriminate attacks further exacerbate the dire humanitarian situation in Ukraine, with more than 14 million people in need of assistance.

We must also not forget that the humanitarian consequences of Russia's war go beyond Ukraine. Russia's has weaponized food and undermined global food security by terminating the Black Sea Grain Initiative, as well as by shelling Ukraine's grain storage and export facilities. Malta will continue to support the European Union's solidarity lanes, as well as all efforts aimed at addressing the humanitarian consequences of Russia's aggression.

Not a single week passes without air strikes destroying the lives of thousands of Ukrainians. We once again condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the ongoing Russian aerial assaults on cities and critical infrastructure across Ukraine. Just last week, Russia carried out one of the biggest aerial assaults against Ukrainian power-generation and -transmission facilities in several regions. This deadly trend encompasses daily drone, missile, rocket and artillery attacks in Kharkiv, Odesa, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk regions.

Those attacks are yet another example of Russia's disregard for human life, since they have disrupted vital services, such as electricity, heating, water, gas and other essential services for hundreds of thousands of civilians. As of today, more than 800 heat-supply facilities have been destroyed or damaged, and the attacks have caused more than \$1 billion worth of damage to the energy sector. Malta expresses its concern about the humanitarian consequences that this might cause, given reports that the latest energy disruptions will last for several months, due to the extent of the widespread damage.

Continuous attacks on schools and medical facilities are also having far-reaching consequences, making access to essential health care and education even more challenging and impacting the basic rights to health and education. According to the World Health Organization, in the first trimester of 2024 alone, there have been more than 70 attacks on health-care providers, supplies, facilities, warehouses and transport in Ukraine. That is unacceptable.

The impact of the war is also linked to mental health risks and trauma among millions of Ukrainians. Children have endured the loss of family members, their homes and schools. Those scars may last a lifetime. Furthermore, the risks of gender-based violence have heightened while the most vulnerable, often women, boys, girls and older people, face the greatest challenges.

For more than two years now, we have witnessed unprecedented suffering and loss for Ukraine and its people. Russia's war of aggression is an affront to the principles on which the United Nations was built and constitutes a violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. Russia's attacks continue to blatantly violate international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

The Russian Federation must be held to account for the damage caused by this senseless war and for all the other serious crimes committed. We express our full support to the mandate of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, as well as to the important work undertaken by the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

In conclusion, Malta reiterates that the only way to achieve a just and lasting peace would be for Russia to unconditionally and completely withdraw all its forces

and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Ms. Doughten, Director at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and Ms. Caitlin Howarth, Director for the Conflict Observatory team of the Yale Humanitarian Research Laboratory, for their briefings. We are pleased that the voices of science are being heard by the Council.

In Ukraine, the facts confirm the continuation of massive attacks on the civilian population and infrastructure. Switzerland condemns all those attacks, which have killed and injured civilians in populated areas. Last week alone, several children were injured, and educational facilities and a hospital were damaged.

As Ukraine fights for its future, all those who can build it — starting with children — must be protected. Civilians and civilian infrastructure must never be targets. We once again call on all parties to strictly respect international humanitarian law and to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

We have observed an increase in attacks on critical energy infrastructure. In total, nine regions across Ukraine, including those far from the front lines, have experienced disruptions to their electricity supply in the past week. In addition, the situation around the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant remains worrisome. The five principles established by the International Atomic Energy Agency for the prevention of an accident at that nuclear power plant must be respected under all circumstances.

All aspects of life are affected by the continuing attacks. Millions of homes have been left without electricity, heating or water supplies owing to power cuts. The worrisome developments in the Kharkiv oblast demonstrate the humanitarian impact of the intensified hostilities.

Imagine for a moment what it means to lead one's daily life in Ukraine today. Workers who commute to work by train are putting their lives at risk because of attacks on railway facilities, as happened notably in Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Donetsk and Cherkasy. Students who rely on e-learning are denied access to education owing to power cuts. And humanitarian personnel risk their safety in delivering essential assistance under difficult conditions.

Under international humanitarian law, humanitarian actors must never be attacked, and their mission must be respected and protected.

Switzerland reiterates that Russia must put an end to its military aggression against Ukraine. We remain determined to do everything in our power to contribute to a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. It is in that spirit that Switzerland will organize the first high-level summit for peace in Ukraine on 15 and 16 June.

We are aware that the road to a genuine peace process will be a long one. However, Switzerland is convinced that the establishment of a platform for high-level discussions represents an important step forward. We hope to be able to count on participation from all regions of the world to create a common understanding of what a possible peace process requires and to define together a road map on how to involve both sides in a future peace process.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): I thank Ms. Doughten and Ms. Howarth for their timely and insightful briefings.

It is deeply regrettable that Russia has escalated its unjustifiable attacks against Ukraine in recent months and further expanded the front into Ukraine's north-eastern borders near Kharkiv over the past week, despite the international community's condemnations. As Russia's full-scale invasion has persisted for more than two years, we are witnessing an erosion of our common principles intended to save people from the scourge of war. The brutalities of the war in Ukraine are not only demonstrated by the more than 10,000 civilian casualties, but also by the impacts of the war, reverberating in global food security, regional nuclear safety and the massive destruction of infrastructure.

In recent months, in addition to attacking hospitals and schools, Russia has also been targeting the energy infrastructure across Ukraine, including thermal and hydroelectric power plants and gas storage, as Ms. Doughten eloquently described today. According to a recent media report, 80 per cent of thermoelectric power plants in Ukraine were damaged, and Ukraine's power generation has decreased by 30 per cent as a result of Russia's attacks. That tactic is apparently aimed at crippling Ukraine's basic functions and demoralizing the Ukrainian people's ability to fight against the aggressor. Such actions are unacceptable, as targeting civilian infrastructure is in violation of international

humanitarian law, as articulated in the first Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions, particularly when they are indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. Today critical energy infrastructure holds far more significance in people's daily lives than it did decades ago when international humanitarian laws were created and developed. Therefore, they deserve particular protection by warring parties.

In addition to hindering access to electricity for millions of Ukrainians in the short term, the destruction of energy infrastructure has long-enduring impacts on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine. Indeed, the recent report of the International Committee of the Red Cross highlights domino effects in which the destruction of energy infrastructure leads to the disruption of other basic services, such as the delivery of water and sanitation. And the lack of safe water, sanitation and electricity can all impair the requisite operation of hospitals and the viability of food production and distribution, leading to the spread of disease, death and displacement, disproportionately affecting women and children. Needless to say, a drastic increase in humanitarian needs caused by the collapse of critical energy infrastructure will make effective and coordinated humanitarian operations on the ground even more challenging. The lack of access to essential services will make both recovery and reconstruction there even harder in the long term.

As repeatedly emphasized in previous meetings, my delegation once again stresses that all the devastating events and human suffering transpiring in Ukraine are a result of Russia's illegal invasion. That must end now to save lives and restore humanity.

The Republic of Korea will continue to stand with the people of Ukraine and provide vital assistance in the areas of security, humanitarian aid and reconstruction until they achieve a just and lasting peace, as well as sustainable prosperity, in their land.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank the two briefers for their presentations.

As the Ukraine crisis grinds on, there has recently been an escalation of ground clashes and intermittent horrific attacks, resulting in huge casualties and having a serious humanitarian impact. China is deeply concerned about that. In view of the prolonged fighting in Ukraine and the increasingly dire humanitarian situation there, China has repeatedly called on the

parties to the conflict to remain rational and exercise restraint, strictly abide by international humanitarian law and refrain from attacking civilians or civilian infrastructure. The longer the Ukraine crisis lasts, the more risks and challenges it will bring, and the more damage it will do to Europe and the world at large. The international community shares a common aspirate for an expeditious ceasefire, the restoration of peace, a defusing of the crisis and the construction of a balanced, effective and sustainable European security framework.

China is neither the creator of the Ukraine crisis nor a party to it. All along, we have campaigned for peace, worked to promote talks and played a constructive role in pushing for a political settlement to the crisis. At the outset of the fighting, President Xi Jinping spoke with the leaders of Russia and Ukraine on the telephone, calling on the two sides to stop fighting as soon as possible, resolve their differences through diplomacy and negotiations and settle the dispute peacefully. Later, on the basis of in-depth discussions with all parties and fully heeding their views, China proposed the four priorities to politically resolve the Ukraine crisis — the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries must be respected, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations must be observed, the legitimate security concerns of all countries must be taken seriously, and all efforts conducive to resolving the crisis peacefully must be supported.

During his recent visit to France, Serbia and Hungary, President Xi Jinping had in-depth exchanges of views with European leaders on the Ukraine crisis. He pointed out that China and Europe should work together to prevent spillover and escalation of the fighting, establish conditions for peace talks and safeguard international energy and food security and the stability of global industrial supply chains. During President Xi's visit to France, China and France also agreed to seize the opportunity of the Paris Olympics to advocate for a worldwide ceasefire during the Games.

Over the past two-plus years, the Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs has engaged with representatives of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and relevant European countries on the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis, conducted in-depth discussions with all parties and conveyed messages promoting the cessation of hostilities. The Special Representative has just completed his third round of shuttle diplomacy in Türkiye, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, among others.

In all those diplomatic efforts and meetings and talks, China's message and proposal have been consistent and can be summarized as advocating peace, promoting talks and finding a political settlement.

History has repeatedly proven that, at the end of the day, conflicts can only be resolved through negotiations, and military means cannot bring lasting peace. The Ukraine crisis is no exception. China calls on the parties to the conflict to promptly resume dialogue and engagement to jointly lower the tension and calls on the international community to establish conditions for an early cessation of hostilities. China will maintain its objective and impartial position, continue communications with all parties concerned and make unremitting efforts towards a political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

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

I thank Ms. Lisa Doughten and Ms. Caitlin Howarth for their insights. I also welcome the representatives of Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Poland and Ukraine, as well as the Head of the Delegation of the European Union.

The war in Ukraine has resulted in a severe refugee crisis, numerous casualties, widespread damage to infrastructure, forced displacement of civilians and long-lasting impacts. International efforts are crucial to alleviate suffering and address the humanitarian catastrophe. The conflict poses a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. We remain profoundly concerned about the situation. Regrettably, the prospects for a mutually accepted solution remain elusive, since the conflicting parties firmly believe in a military and zero-sum logic, at the expense of a cooperative approach. The repeated and consistent calls of the international community, including the Security Council, for the immediate cessation of hostilities, can no longer be ignored.

According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, by the end of 2024, nearly 300 million people around the world will need humanitarian assistance and protection, which will require almost \$46.4 billion. Conflicts are the primary driver of the fragile global humanitarian landscape. The humanitarian tragedy in Ukraine adds immense pressure to that dire global context. As we reflect on that grim reality, we must consider promoting peace, dialogue and understanding through diplomacy, aid

or grass-roots efforts. Every step towards conflict resolution matters. In that regard, we would like to reiterate, once again, our four-point position.

First, civilians bear the brunt of the conflict. Their protection is paramount under international humanitarian law. All parties must ensure their safety and uphold the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Secondly, the principles of distinction, precaution and proportionality must be scrupulously adhered to and upheld by all parties.

Thirdly, all parties must facilitate full, safe, rapid and unhindered access for humanitarian personnel and relief to civilians in need.

Lastly, ending the conflict is the sole way to address its humanitarian consequences.

Against that backdrop, Mozambique advocates for a political and negotiated solution as the only path to lasting and sustainable peace between the two countries. We reiterate our call for the immediate cessation of hostilities and the return to direct negotiations, without preconditions.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): I would have recognized here the envoy of the dictator Putin if he had not extracted himself from the Soviet permanent seat in a cowardly manner, leaving behind the residual junior team. He has certainly failed to hypnotize not only the European members of the Council but also its responsible African, Asian and Latin American members. My sympathy goes, however, to the United Nations interpreters.

I thank Ms. Doughten and Ms. Howarth for their briefings.

On 10 May, the Russian army launched a new offensive, targeting the northern Kharkiv region from Russian territory. The immediate aim is Vovchansk, which, along with nearby settlements, faces relentless artillery shelling, airstrikes and the use of guided aerial bombs. The Ukrainian forces are thus far holding the line, preventing Russian troops from advancing to Kharkiv, the second-largest Ukrainian city and one of the main targets of the fierce Russian missile attacks and air strikes over the past months. Heavy defensive battles are under way in the border area in the north of the Kharkiv region.

The situation remains extremely dangerous for local civilians. As reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Ukraine, Russian attacks in the Kharkiv region over the past few days have led to civilian deaths and injuries, including children. Those casualties contribute to the overall number of 1,993 children killed or injured since Russia started its invasion. This number, as UNICEF stated yesterday, is the one that the United Nations has been able to confirm, but the actual number is yet to be verified.

The Ukrainian authorities swiftly initiated evacuations of civilians from the areas targeted by Russian attacks to safer locations. Nearly 6,000 residents have been evacuated since the assaults began, and the operation is ongoing. Russian forces persist in razing Ukrainian towns to the ground without regard for the local population's suffering, with Vovchansk becoming the latest victim, akin to Bakhmut or Maryinka.

And that is all is being carried out by the country that installed itself in the Soviet seat as a permanent member of the Security Council — a seat that carries special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. In fact, the Kremlin does not even care about the safety of its own population. The destruction of a multistorey residential building in Belgorod on Sunday is another example of Putin's disregard for Russia's own citizens.

It goes without saying that Russia will not allow independent international experts on site. Instead, we have heard immediate propaganda allegations against Ukraine. It speaks volumes, however, that the local authorities and the Russian Ministry of Defence have issued different versions. As Putin's envoy decided to keep to the version of the Russian Ministry of Defence, I would like to remind him of his own cynical statement:

“ ... Ukrainian anti-air missiles, misfiring or straying off course, hit residential buildings and civilian objects. Harm is also being caused by debris falling in residential areas solely because Ukrainian air-defence systems are located there.”
(S/PV.9523, p.10)

He can now quote that statement to his new Minister of Defence, referring to the version by the Ministry of Defence of Russia.

However, experts have drawn attention to the similarity of the destruction to the consequences of

a guided aerial bomb explosion. Recently, reports of unauthorized drops of such aerial bombs from Russian aircraft over the territory of the Belgorod region have become routine. Several incidents have already occurred in May. For example, on 4 May, a Russian aircraft dropped a 500-kilogram bomb on Belgorod, damaging 30 private houses. On 12 May, a similar bomb fell on the territory of the village of Razumnoye-54, in the Belgorod region. According to reports by Russian online sources, there have been 33 such incidents with unauthorized drops in Russian border areas and occupied Ukrainian areas since March. Given those numbers, it was only a matter of time before such destruction happened in Belgorod.

Further deliberate aggravation by Russia serves as further proof of how far we still are from our goal of “never again” — the main motto of the anniversary of the victory over Nazism, which the world marked last week. Atrocities of war are again the reality for Ukrainians. On 8 May they woke up to air sirens and explosions. That day, 55 missiles and 21 drones attacked energy facilities and other critical infrastructure in seven Ukrainian regions, from west to east. The next day, Ukraine again sustained new Russian attacks against its energy-generation facilities. Since the end of February, Russia has carried out 388 strikes on 131 energy infrastructure facilities — hydro- and thermal power plants, dams and transmission systems. Those strikes destroyed almost all of Ukraine's thermal power generation. On 27 April alone, four thermal power plants were damaged. On 8 May two more hydroelectric power plants were attacked by Russia and are no longer in operation. And all that was done by a country that called itself a friend of the Charter of the United Nations.

The world defeated Nazis 79 years ago, but their modern reincarnation continues to kill, destroy and threaten. Like Hitler, Putin used to salami-slice neighbouring countries. Having tested the world's reaction, he came to a similar conclusion to the one Hitler arrived at prior to September 1939, and he moved ahead full-scale in February 2022. It speaks volumes that the so-called list of unfriendly countries elaborated by Moscow coincides to a great extent with the list of anti-Hitler coalition countries. Those who defeated Nazism are enemies for modern Russia, and now Moscow threatens those States with nuclear sabre-rattling and makes them the subjects of obnoxious verbal attacks.

In contrast to 1939, Europe today is acutely cognizant of the threat posed by Russia. Ukraine is now the only country in the world being attacked by ballistic and cruise missiles almost daily. In April alone, Russian forces launched more than 300 missiles, almost 300 Shaheds and more than 3,200 guided aerial bombs. On 1 May, missile strikes hit Odesa and Zolochiv, in the Kharkiv region, claiming two lives and injuring 19, while causing damage to civilian infrastructure. Further attacks on 3 May and Orthodox Easter, 5 May, in Kharkiv left more casualties, with a total of 380 shelling incidents recorded in the first week of May alone. Today the Russian forces targeted a multistorey residential building in the heart of Kharkiv, resulting in injuries to at least 16 individuals, including three children. And do not forget that all that is being done by a country that declared itself the main fighter against Nazism at the United Nations.

The situation for the local population in the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories remains alarming. The Russian occupation army is full of convicted murderers, as the practice of recruiting Russian prisoners in exchange for pardons persists. Some cases are shocking even for Russians who are loyal to Putin's regime. For instance, the Russian media recently found two infamous murderers in the Russian army — the cannibal Dmitry Malyshev, who murdered several people and ate the heart of one of them, and the maniac Alexander Maslennikov, who killed and dismembered two women. It seems that those particular skills are currently in high demand in the Russian army. Therefore, instead of serving long prison sentences, both were recruited from their prison cells to the Russian army and sent to Ukraine to kill Ukrainians. As follows from Putin's speech on 9 May, such people are "real heroes" in Russia. Upon returning to Russia, those "heroes" resume their previous violent activities. According to Russian media, at least 24 convicted murderers who were pardoned and returned to Russia after participating in the war committed murders again. The actual number of crimes committed by the ex-convicts is likely to be much higher.

It is difficult to even imagine how residents in the occupied areas of Ukraine are suffering, as rapists and murderers serving in the Russian army enjoy full impunity for crimes against them. Reports from the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights starkly outline the

extensive and systematic use of torture by the Russian aggressors. That includes the use of sexual violence as a weapon against Ukrainian civilians and prisoners of war, reaching a level of brutality and impunity that shocks even seasoned experts. And all of the above is being carried out by a country whose Orthodox church leader openly advocates for war and even blesses weapons to kill Ukrainians.

All those crimes cannot be committed in perpetuity. They must be stopped. In the face of such a widespread and severe war of aggression, a global effort is necessary. Therefore, on 15 and 16 June, the first summit on peace in Ukraine will take place in Switzerland. We have invited all peace-loving nations, and each nation really can bring peace closer. The summit will build on the discussion of Ukraine's peace formula and various other visions of the peace process. The summit will be the first step of a high-level political start towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine based on the Charter of the United Nations and key principles of international law.

As we approach the summit, Russia, however, is intensifying its effort to spread lies about a so-called peace deal that Ukraine and Russia were allegedly close to in the spring of 2022. Indeed, the delegations met, but the positions were so far apart and Russia's demands so bizarre, that the prospect of a real solution was not even remotely in sight. It is clear why Russia is turning the public's attention to the Istanbul talks of March 2022. It is trying to shift the focus from what happened in February 2022. It is clear why Russia is blaming the Ukrainian President for undermining a deal that was never going to be reached in reality. Russia is trying to make the way to real peace impossible. The name of the person who actually ruined the prospect of peace is Putin. He has been ruining peace in Ukraine for more than a decade — first, by occupying Crimea and parts of the Donbas in 2014, then by obstructing the Minsk and Normandy peace processes, then by launching a full-scale war of aggression, and then by refusing to end it. That is why the war drags on.

Only together can we stop Russia and put an end to its aggressive plans for the rest of Europe. In order for that to happen, keep supporting Ukraine and do not buy into Russian lies. Therefore, it is really important — and not only for Ukraine — that the majority of nations attend the summit. The more active the world is now in restoring a comprehensive, just and lasting peace for Ukraine, the more likely it is that others in the world

will not become the victims of similar aggression. It is not brute force that should determine the world order, but the Charter of the United Nations, and united, we can force Russia to comply with it. The summit in Switzerland will focus in particular on energy and nuclear security, safety of navigation, and humanitarian issues, notably the exchange of all for all and the return of children who were forcibly deported to Russia. A stable, predictable, peaceful world is a world in which no one can spread violence, chaos, destabilization and pain as Russia is doing now. There are no State borders or natural barriers that can stop the spread of radiation. There is no nation that would simply put up with the captivity or deportation of its people by a hostile State. There is no nation that would accept someone turning its cities into ruins. The peace formula must work for everyone, and it is a common interest of a strategic nature for us all to show unity of purpose at the summit in Switzerland.

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

Ms. Leendertse (Germany): I would like to thank Director Lisa Doughten from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Ms. Caitlin Howarth for their valuable insights.

Russia is continuing its relentless bombing campaign against Ukraine's critical infrastructure. By doing so, it is systematically destroying the livelihoods of the civilian population, in blatant violation of international humanitarian law. In line with its imperial ambitions, Russia is trying to subjugate Ukraine, a sovereign and peaceful country. That is clearly incompatible with Russia's responsibilities as a permanent member of the Council. Russia is attacking the very foundation of the United Nations and of global peace and security. As a nuclear-weapon State, it is invading its neighbour, which has renounced nuclear weapons, and by employing arms imported from Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it is defying Security Council resolutions. To shield its illegal activities, it is dismantling the international arms control architecture and undermining Council instruments, such as the Panel of Experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006).

We, the international community, have to stand up for international law, for the Charter of the United Nations and for humankind. We must protect Ukraine as well as this very Organization from Russia's aggression. Germany is supporting Ukraine with

political, humanitarian and military means. Air defence systems supplied by Germany are actively helping to protect Ukrainian cities. We have also contributed to humanitarian relief efforts and to reconstruction measures, including in energy infrastructure. More than 1 million Ukrainians have found refuge in Germany, most of them women and children.

Germany continues to engage in the search for a peaceful resolution in line with the Charter of the United Nations. The upcoming peace summit in Switzerland offers a unique platform in that regard. However, a just and lasting way out is possible only if Russia renounces its objectives of conquest and annexation. Let me therefore conclude by again calling on Russia to immediately and unconditionally cease all its military operations, respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine and withdraw all its troops from Ukraine.

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

Mr. Tammsaar (Estonia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the three Baltic States, namely, Latvia, Lithuania and my own country, Estonia. We also align ourselves with the statement to be made on behalf of the European Union.

First of all, let me thank the briefers for their most valuable input.

The humanitarian situation in Ukraine continues to worsen. Every month, Russia uses more than 130 types of missiles, including missiles provided by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, more than 320 Shahed drones and approximately 900 guided aerial bombs against Ukraine. As of late, we can also add chemical weapons to that list. These weapons are systematically used to kill and maim Ukrainian civilians, destroy homes, schools, hospitals and places of cultural heritage, attack food storage facilities, and wipe out Ukrainian energy infrastructure on a daily basis. Russia's bombs have destroyed more than 80 per cent of Ukrainian thermal power plants and 50 per cent of hydroelectric power plants, while it claims — including here in this Chamber — that it only targets military objects. Based on that, I can only conclude that either Russian soldiers have a disastrously poor aim rate or that a permanent member of the Security Council is a pathological liar.

Since 2022, there have been more than 1,700 attacks affecting health-care facilities and personnel, as verified by the World Health Organization, and over

1,000 educational facilities damaged or destroyed, as recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and there is a pattern of double-tap attacks targeting civilians and the rescue workers helping them. Those are the trademarks of Russia's aggression.

We condemn Russia's constant and systematic violations of the Charter of the United Nations, international law, including international humanitarian law, and Security Council resolutions. We also recall the decision by the ICC to indict two Russian military commanders for alleged war crimes, which include attacking civilian targets and energy infrastructure in Ukraine.

While the people of Ukraine continue to show remarkable resilience, we underline the need for sustaining humanitarian aid, including urgent support for the restoration of the energy infrastructure. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have together contributed over \$100 million of humanitarian aid to the people of Ukraine, and we will continue to support Ukraine until its victory.

At the same time, we call upon all peace-loving Member States to participate at the June peace summit in Switzerland in order to contribute to comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter and respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Let me take this opportunity to remind the Council that 18 May will mark the eightieth anniversary of the Crimean Tatar mass deportations, carried out by the totalitarian Soviet regime. The systemic forced deportations were a widely used colonial tactic, led by Stalin, to suppress dissent and enforce Russification — also widely used, by the way in the Baltic countries.

In conclusion, the aging dictator who usurped power in Russia by re-electing himself complained last week that Russia is going through a difficult period. I have a humble recommendation to ease Russia's heavy burden. The solution is simple and has been repeated uncountable times by many around this very table and around the globe, indeed — he should withdraw his military forces immediately, completely and unconditionally from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Lambrinidis.

Mr. Lambrinidis: 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, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia, as well as Andorra, Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

Lisa Doughten and Caitlin Howarth have shone a stark light on the grave humanitarian consequences of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Every discussion on Ukraine must start by restating one unequivocal fact: Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression constitutes a manifest violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and the resolutions of the General Assembly. As my German colleague said very eloquently, this is aggression — not just against Ukraine, but against this Organization, right here, as well.

That is why, first, Russia must uphold international law and cease its attacks on Ukraine's civilian infrastructure now. Secondly, Russia and its leadership must be held fully accountable for their war of aggression. A permanent member that tramples on the United Nations Charter has heightened responsibilities, not lower ones. Thirdly, all nations — North and South, East and West — must come together in support of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in Ukraine.

These past weeks, Russia has continued its missile and drone attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, destroying a significant portion of Ukraine's energy-generation capacity. Many thousands of Ukrainians now lack access to electricity. Its missile attacks also continue on Odesa and other Black Sea ports, threatening the freedom of navigation and hindering grain and other deliveries to the global market. In other words, Russia continues to weaponize food and deliberately undermines global food security. Such systematic air strikes against Ukraine's civilians and civilian infrastructure, in and of themselves, violate international humanitarian law and must stop immediately and unconditionally. Indeed, there are credible reports of Russia using double-tap strikes, where the second attack hits rescue workers.

Russia's indiscriminate attacks further exacerbate the dire humanitarian situation in Ukraine, with more than 14 million people in need of assistance. We have heard so much about this here today. In response, the European Union and its member States have stepped

up the provision of humanitarian and civil protection assistance, including, of course, power generators and power transformers.

First, Russia has an obligation to allow humanitarian aid to reach all those in need by enabling full, safe and unhindered humanitarian access through the front lines and to stop withholding aid from people in need in the areas it has temporarily occupied.

We recall the legally binding order of the International Court of Justice of March 2022 for Russia to immediately suspend its military operations in Ukraine. Third parties must immediately cease providing material support for Russia's war of aggression or coddling Russia in any way.

Secondly, Russia and its leadership must be held fully accountable for waging a war of aggression and for other most serious crimes under international law, as well as for the massive damage they have caused. The EU is firmly committed to ensuring full accountability for all crimes committed, including victims' rights to justice and reparation, as well as guarantees of non-repetition. We are working with all relevant multilateral and regional actors to achieve that. There can be no impunity for those crimes.

Thirdly, we reiterate our support for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine. To that end, the aggressor must immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, and it must respect its sovereignty and territorial integrity, in line with the resolutions of the General Assembly. We welcome Switzerland's initiative to host a summit on peace in Ukraine next month and call on all States to participate. The international community must reaffirm the centrality of international law, including the United Nations Charter and its principles.

In conclusion, I reaffirm the EU's unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. The EU will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes.

As for Russia, it must stop its systematic and brutal bombing of Ukrainian civilians and civilian infrastructure right now. It must stop its illegal war and the illegal and inhumane means that it is using to pursue it. Enough is enough.

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

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): We thank Mozambique for organizing this timely meeting and the briefers for their insightful interventions.

Russia's war continues to tragically affect hundreds of thousands of civilians across Ukraine on a daily basis. Aware of the steep price the Russian military is paying in human lives for gains on the front lines, Moscow is bent on taking vengeance on the civilian population of Ukraine as a sort of punishment. In this way Russia is trying to degrade the Ukrainian economy and society, making large parts of Ukraine uninhabitable, including through extensive mining operations.

Speaking about the humanitarian aspect of the this war of aggression, we must not only concentrate on the front lines, but also keep in mind the Ukrainian territory under temporary Russian control, including the illegally annexed Crimea, where innocent civilians continue to be subjected to unimaginable abuse and denied even the most basic rights and freedoms. The purpose of those barbaric actions is clear: to destroy the lives of the Ukrainian people and intimidate Ukraine and those who support it. In that context, we are particularly appalled by the ongoing deportations and transfers of Ukrainian children and their forced Russification.

As we heard, the current wave of attacks by Russia against civilians is particularly brutal. Indiscriminate strikes, such as the very recent ones on the schools in Nikopol and Kharkiv, resulted in serious damages and power shutdowns, aggravating the already existing humanitarian crisis by limiting the local population's access to health care, education, clean water and food. Those attacks also create significant negative environmental risks, including the risk of a nuclear incident, which has repeatedly raised concerns for the International Atomic Energy Agency experts. Poland is extensively cooperating with Ukraine in the field of energy security.

At the same time, by focusing on its aggressive military campaign against Ukraine, Russia is continuing to curtail the basic rights and freedoms of its own population. The costs of the war keep trickling down to ordinary Russian citizens, whose needs are being neglected by the Government's unrelenting pursuit of its illusory war objectives. The bill of the war will be repaid for a long time by future Russian generations.

The international community must stand with Ukraine and do everything it can to make Russia stop its aggression. We welcome Switzerland's initiative to host a summit on peace for Ukraine in June. We are convinced

that it should be a demonstration of the broadest possible commitment to the principles of sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Poland supports President Zelenskyy's peace formula as a plan for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in Ukraine and for ensuring enduring security on the European continent. Ukraine fell victim to Russian aggression, and it is only Ukraine that should be listened to as to the ways to achieve any future peace agreements.

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

Ms. Lassen (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries — Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and, my own country Denmark.

We thank the presidency of Mozambique for the opportunity to address the Council and the briefers for sharing their valuable updates.

In recent months, Ukraine has endured some of the worst attacks since the start of Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression two years ago. Every single day, the devastating consequences are felt by civilians around the country. More than 10,800 civilians have lost their lives — the actual number is likely higher — and many more have been injured, including a growing number of children.

Russia's systematic and detrimental attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure are heinous and illegal, as they target civilian objects and objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. Since 22 March, there have been five massive attacks damaging over 80 per cent of Ukraine's non-nuclear power plants. That has included dangerous attacks on hydroelectric infrastructure with added risk of environmental disasters in the case of dam breaches.

The attacks have disrupted the access to electricity and water for millions of Ukrainians, particularly

in Kharkiv, where Russia is carrying out a dreadful campaign of daily attacks. As a consequence, Ukraine has been forced to impose restrictions on power consumption in several regions across the country. Unless Russia immediately halts its attacks and the energy infrastructure is quickly restored, there will be grave consequences for the civilian population during the coming summer and even worse in the winter ahead. We reiterate that attacks against civilians and civilian objects are strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law and must stop immediately.

We urgently call for full, safe and unhindered humanitarian access to all areas in Ukraine, including those temporarily occupied by Russia. Humanitarian relief must be allowed to reach all civilians in need. We are also appalled by the continued reports of attacks on humanitarian workers and aid storage facilities. Just a few weeks ago, an air strike caused considerable damage to the offices of the Danish Refugee Council in Kharkiv, forcing a temporary suspension of operations. We stress once again that humanitarian actors and their life-saving operations must be protected at all times.

In conclusion, the Nordics continue to stand with Ukraine and its people, who have shown exceptional bravery and resilience in defending their freedom and our shared values. We continue to support efforts to ensure full accountability for international crimes committed in and against Ukraine. We echo the repeated calls for Russia to immediately cease all hostilities and withdraw its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

We also extend our full support to the first summit on peace in Ukraine, to be held in Switzerland next month, and hope that many countries will join. The Russian aggression and its detrimental global consequences demand united efforts, firmly based on international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and in line with Ukraine's peace formula.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.