



Security Council briefing on the Maintenance of Peace and Security of Ukraine, 6 February 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

[I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Malta]

Thank you, Martin, for your briefing today. As always, Malta remains grateful for the work of your team and humanitarian partners on the ground.

This month marks one year since the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. This aggression has created an acute humanitarian crisis and profound misery to millions. Every day we see images which demonstrate the toll of Russia's aggression which affects communities that had lived in peace but now are having their lives virtually destroyed as a result of the ongoing senseless bombing and violence.

Today, 17.7 million Ukrainians need emergency humanitarian assistance. 6 million have been internally displaced. 8 million have sought safety in European countries. These figures, just a little over a year ago, would have been unimaginable to nearly all of us around this table.



Constant attacks by the Russian Federation against Ukrainian energy and civilian infrastructure continue to disrupt power supplies, leaving millions of Ukrainians without electricity, water, and heating as winter temperatures plunge below zero. These attacks, and the widescale blackouts they cause, are a blatant violation of International Humanitarian Law.

So too is Russia's use of indiscriminate munitions in populated areas, such as explosive weapons with wide ordinance effects. The use of which has resulted in the leveling of residential buildings, medical facilities, death, and catastrophic injury for thousands of civilians trapped in the fighting.

Whether it's the elderly brutalized by soldiers in their homes, civilians shot at while fleeing warzones, or the many reports of sexual violence perpetrated against Ukrainian women and girls, civilians are being actively targeted in this war.

Children have not been spared either and a generation boys and girls have been traumatised by war. UNICEF estimate that since 24 February 2022, 1,148 children have been killed or injured, education for 5.7 million children has been disrupted, and 1.5 million children face mental health issues. This is over and above the thousands of Ukrainian children have been abducted, deported, and forcibly adopted to the Russian Federation, breaking family ties and placing children in vulnerable situations while denying them the right to family life.



Malta reiterates that halting this war of aggression against Ukraine, is the only way to cease this cycle of violence and horror. Notwithstanding,, all those who have committed atrocities including sexual violence in conflict, must be held accountable for their actions in accordance with international law.

It is essential that all those in need across the country have access to humanitarian assistance. We regret the insecurity and obstacles that continue to restrict humanitarian access along the frontlines and in areas which are not under Ukrainian control. Such denial of humanitarian assistance is unacceptable.

Malta also deplores that fact that the ICRC still does not have unimpeded, and repeated, access to all Ukrainian prisoners of war Under the Third Geneva Convention, prisoners of war are entitled to receive regular visits from delegates of the ICRC. Notwithstanding reports of recent, modest progress in this respect, we call for the rights of all prisoners of war to be swiftly realised by the parties to the conflict.

In conclusion, we express our full support to the UN, its' affiliated organizations, and all humanitarian workers who are working in extraordinarily challenging operational environments and demanding



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circumstances on the ground. And extend our condolences to the families of those humanitarian workers killed in Ukraine over the past 12 months.

We reiterate our determined call upon the Russian Federation to stop this senseless war, to withdraw its military forces from the entire territory of Ukraine, and to turn to dialogue and diplomacy.

It is never too late to turn back and do what is right.

I thank you.