



Security Council briefing on the Maintenance of Peace and Security of Ukraine, 17 March 2023

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

Thank you, President, and I also thank today's briefers.

Over a year has passed since Russia launched its unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. This gross violation of the UN Charter and international law has led to yet another manmade humanitarian catastrophe. Today, the war threatens not only Ukraine and the region, but millions of people across the world.

President

As we have heard, over 17 million people, nearly 40 per cent of the population of Ukraine, require humanitarian assistance and protection as a result of this war. More than 8 million Ukrainian refugees have been recorded across Europe. 5.4 million people have been internally displaced.

We have all witnessed the humanitarian consequences of the systematic use of missiles and drones to attack civilian objects and infrastructure indispensable to the survival of the civilian population across Ukraine. Not least in Tuesday's missile strike on an apartment building in Kramatorsk.

Such attacks have left millions without power, heating, and water for days in the middle of winter. Compounding the hardship for the most vulnerable



caught up in this fighting, especially those in areas close to the frontlines and outside the control of Ukrainian authorities.

Furthermore, we have also seen the horrific effects from the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas, with town squares and residential apartment blocks reduced to rubble.

Malta once again calls on the Russian Federation to cease such attacks which constitute a violation of international law.

President

The devastating impacts of Russia's war on children, women, and men will be felt for generations. We condemn the pattern of international humanitarian and human rights law violations related to the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. Malta also deplores the unlawful transfer and forced deportation out of Ukraine of more than 6,000 children.. Such actions constitute war crimes.

In this regard, Malta supports the International Criminal Court's efforts to ensure that all those involved in violations of international humanitarian and human rights law are held accountable.

In addition, we welcome the important work being carried out by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, and support the idea of establishing a Register of damages as a record of evidence and



information on claims for damages, losses or injury caused by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Such initiatives will support the much-needed reconstruction of civilian infrastructure destroyed in Ukraine over the past decade as a result of the conflict.

President

Malta is concerned that many of those in desperate need of humanitarian assistance are unable, or prevented, from accessing the services they need. We commend the work of the UN, its partner agencies, and all humanitarian organisations working in such dangerous situations, and appeal for the full facilitation of humanitarian access and operations throughout the country. Especially in the areas along frontlines.

In view of the upcoming deadline, Malta highlights the importance of extending the Black Sea Grain Initiative. The initiative has allowed the export of tonnes of grains and other foodstuffs. Prolonging the agreement is crucial for the stability of international prices and for the continuous flow of grains, helping people worldwide struggling to put food on their tables and support farmers whose incomes have plummeted because of the war.

Additionally, we reiterate our call for unimpeded and repeated access to be granted to the ICRC for all Ukrainian Prisoners of War. Malta recalls that under the Third Geneva Convention, all prisoners of war are entitled to receive regular visits from ICRC delegates.



President

As the war in Ukraine begins to ramp up once again , we reiterate our call on the Russian Federation to immediately cease its hostilities and to withdraw all Russian forces from Ukraine's internationally recognised borders.

More than enough lives have been lost, families torn apart, and civilians traumatised by a year of carnage.

Let us see de-escalation and dialogue in the days and weeks ahead, rather than this continued cycle of death and destruction.

I thank you.