



Security Council briefing on Threats to International Peace and Security: Ukraine, 12 February 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Darren Camilleri
Political Coordinator of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, Madam President. I also thank ASG Jenča for his informative briefing. We have also taken note of the views expressed by Mr Sweeny in his statement.

We are meeting today ahead of the two-year mark of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. With each day that passes, this senseless war continues to inflict devastating consequences on Ukraine and extreme hardships on her people.

By calling for this meeting, Russia continues to pursue its tactic of attempting to distract the international community with a narrative that does not reflect reality. In response to this cynical propaganda, it is crucial for us to recall the facts.

On 17 February 2022, the Russian Federation, in its role as President of the Security Council, confirmed that the package of measures for implementation of the Minsk Agreements were the only international legal basis for settling the conflict in Ukraine.



Soon after the start of its full-scale invasion, Russia went a step further and organised so-called referendums in four regions within the internationally recognised borders of Ukraine which it has partly occupied. These were meant to justify its illegal annexation of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia regions. However, these sham referendums were declared unlawful by the UN General Assembly. They were deemed in violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, and inconsistent with the principles of the UN Charter.

It is pertinent to recall that the Minsk Agreements offered a chance for dialogue. They were the only mutually agreed format to pave the way in good faith towards defining mutually acceptable solutions. Unfortunately, Russia's aggression against a sovereign UN Member State has undermined the prospect for resolving differences through diplomacy.

Madam President

The destruction and suffering that Russia's war is causing, particularly for the communities near active conflict zones in the east and south of Ukraine are staggering.



According to OHCHR, more than 14 million people need humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. More than six million people have had to flee the country and remain refugees, mostly across Europe.

The repercussions of this war have also impacted thousands of Ukrainian children who have been orphaned, displaced, deported, and deprived of the life they used to know.

Furthermore, we are deeply concerned about the impact on the right to health and education of children due to widespread attacks on schools and hospitals.

Grim consequences are also a reality for women and girls, who have been a target of sexual violence by Russian forces. We cannot fail in our responsibility to prosecute these crimes. Perpetrators must be held accountable.

Malta will continue to underline the imperative need to prevent further human suffering and loss of life. This was one of the key messages delivered by my Foreign Minister Dr. Ian Borg in his capacity as OSCE Chairperson-in-Office during his recent visit to Kyiv.



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In closing, Madam President, we reiterate that Russia has the power and the responsibility to end this war today. It can do so by withdrawing its military forces from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, stopping its aggression, and abiding by the UN Charter and international law.

I thank you.