



THE PERMANENT MISSION
OF MALTA TO THE UN NEW YORK



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UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL

United Nations General Assembly on ‘The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.’

26 February 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Adam Kuymizakis

Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

President

Malta aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to make some additional remarks in its national capacity.

Ten years ago in February 2014, Russia began its aggression against Ukraine with the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. Eight years on, we witnessed the culmination of this aggression, as Russia launched a full-scale military invasion against its sovereign neighbour and relentlessly attacked Ukrainian cities across the country.

As we have stated before, both here in the General Assembly and in the Security Council, Malta unequivocally condemns Russia’s violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.



We condemn its attempt to forcefully change the internationally recognised borders of Ukraine, and all attempts to forcibly integrate Ukrainian territory into the Russian Federation. This includes the imposition of Russian citizenship, illegal referendums, illegal population census, forcible change of the demographic structure of the population of Crimea, and the suppression of national identity.

Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and orchestration of referendums in violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity represents an affront to the fundamental principles of international law. It is a violation of the UN Charter, the very foundation of our shared system of multilateralism.

President

The human rights situation in the temporarily occupied territories is of grave concern. The inhabitants of these regions, particularly the Crimean Tatars, have been subjected to human rights limitations and lack of basic freedoms.



International monitoring mechanisms, including the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, have affirmed that Russia has violated international humanitarian law and international human rights law in Ukraine.

Some of these violations include indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, systematic summary executions, torture and ill-treatment, inhumane detention conditions, rape, sexual and gender-based violence, and the forced transfer and deportation of children. We urge Russia to provide full information on Ukrainian children forcibly transferred or deported to the Russian Federation, from the territories of Ukraine, including Crimea.

The latest report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has documented violations of the rights to life, liberty, and security by Russian security forces in Crimea, as well as in parts of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, and Luhansk. This is unacceptable and it is our collective duty to hold perpetrators accountable.



Russia must be held accountable for its war of aggression against Ukraine. We support ongoing accountability processes and the important work of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

We also echo the Secretary General's call to the Russian Federation to abide by the complete prohibition of torture and to ensure the independent, impartial, and effective investigation of such allegations in the peninsula. It is essential to ensure that the fundamental rights of freedom of expression and religion are safeguarded and exercised by all individuals and groups without any grounds or unjustified interference.

Malta will continue to stand alongside Ukraine until a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace is achieved and will urge the international community to engage constructively towards this end. We reiterate our demand to the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally cease its aggression and withdraw all its troops and proxies from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. I thank you.