



Security Council briefing on Maintenance of Peace and Security: Ukraine, 14 May 2024

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

I would like to thank Director Doughten and Ms Howarth for their briefings.

As we have heard, the death and destruction toll are getting heavier by the day. At least 10,800 civilians have been killed, including 600 children, and more than 20,000 civilians have been injured. Also, according to the Ukraine Humanitarian Needs Response Plan, millions are estimated to be in need of assistance across the region. Malta remains seriously concerned by the lack of humanitarian access and we urge Russia to allow and facilitate a 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 over 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 weaponised food and undermined global food security, by terminating the Black Sea Grain initiative, as well as shelling Ukraine's grain storage and export facilities. Malta will continue to support the EU's 'Solidarity Lanes' as well as all efforts aimed to address the humanitarian consequences of Russia's aggression.

President,

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.



These 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 may 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, solely in the first trimester of 2024, there have been more than 70 attacks on health-care providers, supplies, facilities, warehouses, and transport in Ukraine. This 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. These scars may last a lifetime. Furthermore, risks of gender-based violence have heightened while the most vulnerable, often women, boys, girls, and older people, face the greatest challenges.

President,

For more than two years now, we have witnessed an unprecedented suffering and loss for Ukraine and her people. Russia's war of aggression is an affront to the principles to which the UN was built and constitutes a violation of international law, including the UN Charter. 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 closing, President, 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 recognised borders. Thank you.