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Discours de Son Excellence M. Volodymyr ZELENSKY, Président de l'Ukraine

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): The sitting is open.

Dear colleagues, please take your seats.

May I welcome our ambassadors to this sitting. May I welcome you, colleagues. May I welcome all who are watching us online. And may I welcome those who are with us at the public gallery. May I especially welcome Ambassador TARASYUK and Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA in the front row.

The reason for this is that we will now welcome to our hemicycle His Excellency the President of Ukraine, Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKY, who will address us via video link.

I propose that we have 45 minutes for this debate to have the address of the president and to have our questions.

Dear Mister President, can you hear me?

Can you hear me, Mister President?

OK, thank you very much.

Dear Mister President, may I thank you that you are able to join us today. We all know how busy your schedule is day after day and we all admire your courage and determination in these days and months when your country is on the brutal and illegal attack by the Russian military.

Since 24 February, tens of thousands of Ukrainians have been killed and wounded, millions of your citizens had to leave their homes - many of them even your country - and have now found shelter in our other member states. The pain caused by this brutal war is immeasurable. The courage shown by your people to resist the illegal Russian war of aggression is almost unimaginable.

Please, Mister President, accept our condolences for all those who lost family and friends in this war that should never have been started and should end as soon as possible.

And, please, Mister President, accept our best wishes to you and all your citizens who so bravely strive to restore Ukraine's national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In this report:

1. Speeches in English, French, German and Italian are reported in full in English.
2. Speeches in other languages are summarised from the interpretation and indicated by an asterisk (*).
3. Speeches in German and Italian are available in full on the Assembly's website.
4. The text of the amendments is available at the document centre and on the Assembly's website. Only oral amendments or oral sub-amendments are reproduced in the report of debates.
5. Corrections should be handed in at Room 1081 not later than 24 hours after the report has been published.

This organisation, Europe's oldest and broadest treaty-based cooperation for peace in Europe, stands united with you and your people.

Mister President, by crossing your borders, Russia also crossed our red lines, the red lines of this organisation, which was founded to protect and promote peace in the whole of Europe on the basis of the respect for the rule of law, human rights and democracy.

That, Mister President is why the Council of Europe suspended and then expelled Russia from its membership, a unique, sad, but unavoidable and necessary reaction to Russians blatant violation of international law.

Mister President, we all consider Russia's unilateral aggression as an attack against the multilateral cooperation that is meant to protect all our citizens in Europe. That is why we try to do whatever is in our mandate to support your country and your citizens in these most challenging and dangerous times.

Today, Mister President, after your intervention, we will again discuss the consequences of Russia's war of aggression and our means to help your country and your citizens to the best of our ability.

Mister President, we would be grateful if you could tell us where you see additional possibilities to help Ukraine and to halt Russia's aggression and to end this war.

Amongst the support we can give is our expertise in how to hold everybody who is involved in this war accountable, every private, every commander, as well as the president, the government and the parliament of the aggressor state.

It is our obligation, Mister President, we believe, to help you, so that nobody will escape responsibility.

We are helping to create a system of international justice and cooperation with many others including the International Criminal Court and the United Nations.

Mister President, this week's ongoing terrible bombing of your city centres by Russia, which I, together with the Chair of the Committee of Ministers and our Secretary General, immediately condemned as another blatant violation of international law, again shows that we should remain united to end this shameful aggression by Russia against your country and to help you and the citizens of Ukraine to prevail.

Mister President, we here in this hemicycle are more than ready to listen to your wisdom and your advice to our members and our member states.

Mister President, without further delay I give you the floor and thank you very much for being here with us.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYI (President of Ukraine)*: Thank you so much for your support, and for such kind, profound words. I understand very well they are so important, the messages, the actions, that I hear from you.

Dear Mr President,

Dear Secretary General,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Europeans,

I'm very grateful to you for this possibility to talk to you today.

These days, Ukraine wakes up every morning with two questions. What else has become the target of the Russian terror in the previous night? And where else were our forces able to prevail over the terrorists?

When I say these days, I don't mean just two days, or a week. Not even a month. The Russian terrorist war against Ukraine has been going on for 232 days. That's after eight years of war in Donbas.

I think you are well informed about what Ukrainians have to live through these days, because in the European media there is no shortage of information about specific manifestations of the Russian terror and about the course of this war.

The Ukrainian delegation in the Parliamentary Assembly is working quite effectively stressing what is important for Ukraine and for all of Europe.

I won't take your time to tell you about the new targets of the Russian terrorists and the events at the frontline. I want to focus on something else. On how and when we will be able to put an end to these days. When the war will end. When peace will come. When our territorial integrity, peace and quiet, will come back to the Ukrainian land.

I remember when I became president of Ukraine in 2019, our country had quite difficult relations with the Council of Europe, because then, the Russian delegation had come to the Parliamentary Assembly. In fact, there was an attempt to forget everything that Russia had done against Ukraine and European values, starting in 2014. To forget it by covering it with the ideas that allegedly one had to keep up dialogue with Russia on all possible levels.

In other words, dialogue camouflaged the desire to just ignore the reality. And even worse. That word, to "camouflage" the desire of some actors, to get a part of the corrupt money flow from Russia to Europe that had already caused many troubles in European politics.

This year there is nothing like that any longer, and I'm really grateful to you for that, really grateful.

When Russia started its full-fledged invasion, you quickly adopted very principal decisions and expelled the aggressor state from the Council of Europe. You adopted a number of resolutions that condemned Russian terror and the crimes of that country against international law.

The principal approach is what we can see at all the other levels of the European institutions.

But what does it all mean in essence?

It shows that, finally, a real dialogue has started. A fair dialogue. The dialogue we need so much. It is just not the word "dialogue" that camouflages something, but the real search for solutions. It's a dialogue between Europeans. A dialogue about how we should save people's lives, how we should protect our joint values, and how Europe should withstand while they are attacking everything which is fundamental for peace. When this attack is carried out, not by a marginal political group, which we had seen in Europe before, but when the attack is carried out by geographically the largest country of the world, the country that for decades had prepared itself for war and turned it into its ideology: the destruction of human rights.

Now we see some historically important results of this dialogue in Europe between the Europeans. We see the actions that have made Europe unprecedentedly stronger. Never yet in history was united Europe as strong as it is today. So, focus on everything that is needed to not allow the Russian terrorists destroy our lives. This is the power of dialogue.

Together we are isolating Russia. Together we are punishing it for the terror and making it feel the price of the war it has unleashed.

Thanks to our dialogue we have very important programmes of support for Ukraine. Defence programmes, financial support, programmes to support Ukrainians, the ones who had to flee their homeland to save themselves from hostilities.

Thanks to this dialogue, a lot has been done to protect Europe from the Russian energy weapons.

What had been called for for decades had become a priority for the national governments, for the European institutions. We have to continue this kind of dialogue. The dialogue between us. The dialogue with our partners all over the world.

I will ask you, on all the levels, in politics, in media, as you talk to your voters, to promote the idea of delivering to Ukraine a proper number of modern air defence and anti-missile systems. This year we are ready. We have to defend, to protect our skies from Russian terror.

If this is done, it will be a fundamental step to bring the war to an end in the nearest future.

We have to continue this dialogue to cut down further Russia's possibilities to finance this war. In particular, it is crucial to take away the profits from oil and gas exports of the aggressor state.

Russia should see zeroed accounts to think about the benefits of peace. This is what the sense of the sanction packages of the EU should be.

We have to continue this dialogue to finally find a way to force Russia to comply with the requirements of the IAEA, and of all humanity. In other words, to demilitarise the Zaporizhia nuclear power plant.

Russia should not only take all its military equipment from there but take all of its soldiers from there.

We have to continue this dialogue, to make Russia responsible as the aggressor state, and every Russian murderer and butcher for all the crimes of this war, for every manifestation of their terror. When these legal mechanisms are created, when they start working, this will become one of the most powerful guarantees for long-term peace.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear Europeans,

This year we have seen that Russia is rejecting any real dialogue with us.

Russia only wants to speak with the language of terror. This is a fact.

This fact should be recognised at every level: politically, legally, and at the frontline, in Ukraine, by supporting our defence capabilities.

I want to thank you, because this Assembly can become the first international organisation that will recognise Russia as a terrorist state.

We have seen the power of a real dialogue between us. The dialogue of how terror can be stopped. As a result, Europe is much stronger now, as anyone could have thought. Potentially, our possibility to protect freedom, rule of law, human rights and social justice is even stronger than we can think about today.

Europe can play a historic role in creating a special tribunal for Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Let's do it. It will be the best way to protect the principles of international law.

Europe can become a leader in all the efforts to pay-back the losses created by the war. We have to create proper compensation mechanisms. We have some ideas about how to create it. A draft like that, a project has already been prepared by Ukraine, and I will ask you to support it in Europe and in other levels of the UN General Assembly. Especially, because it is in Europe where the lion's share of Russian assets are concentrated, of the state as such, of the corrupt businesses that are related to the aggressors, that the Russian assets should go, in compensation for all the losses caused by the war.

Now, if we really think about each of you, we know very well what are the elements of this peace formula. You all hear what this dialogue in Ukraine and in Europe is about, in other words, to stop this war, to bring peace back. Ukraine has proposed its road towards peace. It's a European road. It's a road of dialogue and of principal decisions. Dialogue as a way of implementing decisions to protect Ukraine, humanity, to keep increasing the price for the aggressor, for the war.

The road of making all those who are responsible for the war to respond for it. This is the road towards victory. It's much shorter than it may seem, but only under the condition that the dialogue for it is fair between all of us who really cherish freedom. And the word "dialogue" does not cover the wish to ignore the war.

I want to thank you for your attention, thank you for your great support.

Long live Europe and glory to Ukraine.

Thank you very much.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Mr President,

I think that the applause you just received shows how much we appreciate your courage, your determination, but also your wise words and the wisdom that you shared with us on how to come as soon as possible to an end of this war and to restore justice, national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of your country.

Mr President,

You have told us that you have to leave at about 10:45 a.m. because your schedule is heavy. You have accepted to answer the questions of our delegates, and you will answer them one by one.

We first have five questions on behalf of the political groups and then members of national delegations.

For the first question I call Mr Frank SCHWABE. He is from Germany. He speaks on behalf of the group of the Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group.

Mr Frank SCHWABE, you have 30 seconds.

Mr Frank SCHWABE (Germany, SOC, Spokesperson for the group): Mr President, Dear Mr President Volodymyr ZELENSKYY,

Thank you so much for this very impressive speech in a time where we are sometimes speechless and thank you for your very impressive leadership.

Our Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group tries to support the brave people of Ukraine in this terrible Russian war, like we tried to do it together as a unified organisation here as much as possible.

I would like to ask you about the prisoners of war and also the Ukrainians who were deported to Russia.

What do you expect from the international community? What do you expect from us in this regard?

Slava Ukraini.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mr Frank SCHWABE.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: *Slava Ukraini [Glory to the heroes in Ukrainian].*

Thank you for your question.

The question of prisoners of war is very relevant, like any other humanitarian issue, especially as we see what the Russian forces, how they treat our prisoners of war.

We saw that in Olenivka where 50 prisoners of war were just blown up. It's not happening according to the rules of the war, in terms of the attitude to the men here. The main issue is whether the Red Cross would have access to the prisoners of war.

Here, I would like to turn to you and to turn to the representatives of the managers of the International Red Cross. Yes, this international organisation has been working like that all those years. They have to have access to the prisoners. This has been going on since the occupation of our Crimea and Donbas, they did not have access to our prisoners. The Red Cross cannot get there. It's been going on for 7 years now. And now, when there are thousands of our prisoners of war after this full-scale invasion, who are in the occupied parts of Donbas, where they are tortured.

And we know that; they are tortured, and they are doing all kinds of terrible things to them. And once again they don't have access to them.

We Ukrainians cannot fight to make the International Red Cross to find this possibility, it's the Red Cross who should fight for it. It's their job, because they're paid for it, because all of the world is watching them. They have to exert pressure upon Russia to get there. This is what I believe is important.

Frankly, probably they are trying to do that. But every day, we do not hear from the media that the Red Cross has gone there, that they were at the borders, on the Ukrainian side, that they would not be allowed inside. I don't see them at the borders, at those temporary borders; I don't see their speeches in the media, the pressure on Russia, I don't see them speaking at the UN General Assembly. I don't see this media and information coverage and this pressure.

This is what my assessment is.

Yes, we are exchanging people.

We are very grateful to the United Nations, to the Secretary General, Mr António Guterres.

I want also to thank our colleagues from Turkey who have helped us liberate some of our defenders from the Azovstal plant.

I want to thank our partners from Saudi Arabia who have helped us set free some of the prisoners of war, some citizens of the US, Britain, Sweden, Croatia - I think we should all do that.

But once again let me emphasise: I believe that the Red Cross should be more powerful in that.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

The next question comes from Mr Aleksander POCIEJ. He is from Poland. He speaks on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party.

Mister Aleksander POCIEJ, 30 seconds.

Mr Aleksander POCIEJ (Poland, EPP/CD, Spokesperson for the group): Dear President Volodymyr ZELENSKYY,

In the name of European People's Party family, where there is the biggest Ukrainian representation, and personally as a Polish Senator, I welcome you among us.

I wish you and your people all the best. I promise to carry on your message to our national parliaments.

Here's the question. We have no weapons. We have no money. We have international recognition and experience in the field of human rights.

How can we help you more than we have already helped?

What do you expect from us?

Thank you very much.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Aleksander POCIEJ.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: Thank you for this question.

First of all you need to isolate diplomatically the Russian Federation as much as possible so that the Russian people would know that they're paying a high price for this aggression, so that the society would start exerting pressure upon its leaders: political and military leaders.

That's why maximum sanctions, what you can do today. We've said it today. Very important political statements. Recognition of Russia as the aggressor state, as the state that sponsors terrorism.

Because, as the president said at the very beginning – and I wrote it down – in order to create a system of international justice, this is what we should do. And I think that everything that can enhance this system of international justice, we all have to work for it.

Just like we're working with the international criminal court today, headed by prosecutor Khan. They come to us and all the countries are supporting that, the Baltic countries, the Polish, French, Slovakian colleagues are coming over here and they are working as prosecutors and criminal experts, and I think that's the most important thing.

The important thing is that the society of the Russian federation would understand that since now they are the society of the terrorist state and the borders of European countries would not be open for themselves and now they cannot support the war and go to vacation to Europe, they cannot say that we are fighting against our values, we have values that are wrong, they are talking about themselves... well, OK, they have values of their own, why are they enjoying the values of other countries?

This is I think what we can do. The most important thing is this huge political and information support of Ukraine today. Today you can't do all that. Why? Because the world will feel this war fatigue. The world can get tired of it, but we can't get tired. Because then the world will lose. Not only Ukraine will lose. The world will lose. It'll lose its freedom, democratic future, and so in order not to feel this fatigue, you have to support Ukraine.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

The next question comes from Mr Ian LIDDELL-GRAINGER. He is from the United Kingdom. He speaks on behalf of the European Conservatives Group.

Mr Ian LIDDELL-GRAINGER, you have 30 seconds.

Mr Ian LIDDELL-GRAINGER (United Kingdom, EC/DA, Spokesperson for the group): Mister President, Can I thank you for allowing your MPs to come here.

They are a credit to Ukraine, and they are a credit to your parliament.

I will tell you, this is the only group that stood against the Russians, my group.

Unlike the president and the leader of the Socialist Group, we stood solid.

But I ask you this: start denouncing the countries that won't help you. Countries like Germany and others who are refusing you to give you the tools that you need to win this war. Stand up with us, and we'll work and win together.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Ian LIDDELL-GRAINGER.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: Well, I do not understand what the question to me is.

I am grateful to you for your powerful position, I am really very grateful to you for that. The powerful countries that could help us more, this history of those countries started back in 2014 but today I have to say that Germany, for example, has started helping Ukraine much more and I very much hope that the manufacturers of air defence systems and we, of course, should think of course about relations with such countries, there are five countries in the world that produce such modern air defence systems and Germany is one of them. That is why I am grateful that the first air defence systems and anti-missile systems have arrived from Germany. They arrived yesterday. Yet they will not cover all of our skies and not protect us against the 130 strikes that we received two days ago and that continue now. This will not defend us completely but that is already a start. They are opening up the possibility that in the future Germany will be able to give more support and other countries that produce air defence and anti-missile systems will and can help us protect the skies over peaceful Ukrainians.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

The next question comes from Mr Iulian BULAI. He is from Romania. He speaks on behalf of Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe.

You have 30 seconds, Mister Iulian BULAI.

Mr Iulian BULAI (Romania, ALDE, Spokesperson for the group): President Volodymyr ZELENSKYY,

Thank you for accepting the invitation to be present in this Parliamentary Assembly.

We praise the courage of the Ukrainian people.

We salute the work done by the Ukrainian colleagues in this house.

Our Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe joins the cause to ensure a comprehensive system of accountability for serious violations of international law by Russian Federation.

What role can the Council of Europe play in the establishment of a special tribunal for the crimes of aggression against Ukraine?

Slava Ukraini. [in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine.]

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Ian.

Mister President?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: We definitely need to support our resolution at the UN and to establish this special tribunal. This is one resolution.

Again, we're getting back to this system of international justice. It would be just to bring all those culpable to responsibility.

Another thing where we could work together is to support yet another resolution in terms of establishing a mechanism of compensation for the losses. These are the two things that will be discussed in the coming days and weeks. These are of principle importance to us. Why?

Because while it is difficult to say in general what can be done, let me give you some very specific examples.

I came to one of the small towns in the Kharkiv region that had been recently deoccupied. When you see people who have lost their sons, the son who had, you know, [been on] the frontline. You would ask his parents with white hair, with grief in their eyes, you would ask them:

What do you need?

They don't need anything. They don't need any food, they don't need any water, they don't need any money. They want to rebuild their house that had been robbed and destroyed.

They're only asking for justice.

Find those who are guilty of this war: they have to be held responsible.

So creating the special tribunal and bringing all of them justice is what is so important for us today, even for simple Ukrainians.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

The last question on behalf of the political groups comes from Mr George KATROUGALOS. He's from Greece, and he speaks on behalf of the Group of the Unified European Left.

George, you have 30 seconds.

Mr George KATROUGALOS (Greece, UEL, Spokesperson for the group): Mister President,

On behalf of the European Left I welcome you, and I wish you luck and strength in all your efforts for defending your country.

I'd like to ask you: what do you think it is the role of diplomacy, if any, for ending the Russian aggression and putting an end to the war?

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, George.

Mister President?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: Thank you very much.

Diplomacy is a most powerful tool when weapons are not talking.

Diplomacy today, diplomacy with Russia, we cannot have it today. We cannot have the kind of diplomacy we used to have before because there is no respect to the leaders who are killing or not respecting international law. It cannot happen so that someone would isolate the leading European countries and the world will support the territorial integrity of Ukraine, but some countries continue talking as if nothing is happening.

That is why I believe that today the diplomatic isolation of Russia is an important kind of pressure.

We are not terrorists. You are not shooting at the usual nationals of the Russian Federation, but we have to show them their place, we have to isolate them.

They all have to understand that this war costs, that this war is happening in Ukraine because of the leaders that they have elected.

I think that this is... diplomacy is specific, it cannot be selective: this is a subject we are discussing; this is what we're not discussing. If it is good, we will discuss it with Russia; if it's not very nice, we will not discuss it with Russia. No, it cannot happen like that.

Russia should feel, should bear responsibility for what it is doing, for what it has already done, for having blocked the sea, for having brought famine to many countries of the world, for having taken over the nuclear power plant, for bringing cold weather, not only to us, not only to us. We have exported electric power to the countries of the European Union. Not only to the European Union, but to Moldova, we were exporting to Romania, we were going to start exporting it to Poland, but Russia took away Zaporizhzhia power plant and turned it off to bring grief, to bring trouble, any trouble and grief that can be caused by shortage.

Diplomacy should be about stopping Russia, bringing back our territorial integrity, so that they move back to their own territory.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mr President.

We now will continue to questions from members.

The first question from Mr Alain MILON from France.

You have 30 seconds, Mister Alain MILON.

Mr Alain MILON (France, EPP/CD): Thank you, Mister President.

Ukraine has been subjected to intense bombardments that have left many civilians dead. These are deliberately targeted, and I remember in particular the bombing of the maternity hospital in Mariupol and the towns I was able to visit with the President of the French Senate.

If military support is essential, I would like to ask you about the health and humanitarian situation: are your health system and your hospitals able to cope with the devastation caused by this war? Can you enlighten us on the medical and humanitarian support you would need?

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Alain.

Mister President?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: Thank you very much.

I want to thank you, the French Republic, since the beginning of the war, because children with oncological diseases, France has helped us to treat them. We have quite a good healthcare infrastructure. When we had to fight Covid-19, we had quite good results, but with the beginning of this full-fledged war, well, of course, we are always short of something because there are many wounded people and that is why we very much welcome any kind of assistance. And here, we can speak about details because we need everything. There are special hospitals that are deployed in the occupied areas. There are special mobile hospitals that would be brought to the frontline. We also need support for rehabilitation programmes. So, there is room to help us. And if you want to do it, we will be grateful for it.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

The next question comes from Ms Fiona O'LOUGHLIN. She is from Ireland.

Madam Fiona O'LOUGHLIN, you have 30 seconds.

Ms Fiona O'LOUGHLIN (Ireland, ALDE): President Volodymyr ZELENSKYY,

Solidarity with you and the people of Ukraine from the people of Ireland.

First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the female battalion who have represent Ukraine here in the Parliamentary Assembly and indeed all around Europe. They have been incredible ambassadors.

You talk, President Volodymyr ZELENSKYY, about a unified Europe supporting Ukraine, and you are right.

But in many ways Europe is at a crossroads. Here at the Parliamentary Assembly we believe that there is a need for a Fourth Summit to reconfirm and recommit to the guardianship of human rights, the rule of law, and democracy.

Of course, such a summit would absolutely commit to supporting Ukraine and holding Russia responsible and accountable for the war of aggression and their crimes against human rights.

What other themes do you feel that we should prioritise in a Fourth Summit to prevent such a situation happening again?

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Madam Fiona O'LOUGHLIN.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: I think that there are answers in your question and that one can speak about in details and talk about them for hours. Human rights, the right to freedom, the right to life. These are the rights we are fighting for and what we are giving our lives for.

I think these are the subjects you have discussed at the summit, at any summit. I think the most important thing is to make decisions. The decisions that depend on you, but the motivation to unite Europe depends on your decisions as well. As well as motivation for us in Ukraine to defend ourselves, and not only our land, but to defend all those values, rights, and freedoms of people all over Europe, of the societies all over the world.

This is very important for us. This is why the decisions, such as the recognition of Russia as a terrorist state, these are not just words. That's a public recognition. That's not just a policy. That gives us a lot of motivation. You know what is happening here and you know what we're fighting for. The same kind of results is what we should hear at any summit. Or else it will just be dialogue, the word "dialogue". Any dialogue should end up with results. That's what I think.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

The next question comes from Mr John HOWELL. He's from the United Kingdom.

Mister John HOWELL, you have 30 seconds.

Mr John HOWELL (United Kingdom, EC/DA): Thank you.

Let me start by also praising the Ukrainian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly.

They are a real credit to you.

You have long asked for air defence systems to be able to cover Ukraine.

I'm pleased to see that NATO is now moving forward with that.

Are you pleased with the progress that is being made, or do you still want more help in this area?

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister John HOWELL.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: Thank you very much.

Now, as regards our defence, we have our own air defence systems, but we do not have enough of them.

We are fighting a big country. Territorially, a big, large country that has a lot of equipment and lots of missiles. You would see what we are fighting.

Not so bad, 130 strikes of cruise missiles during two days. The use of dozens of drones, kamikaze drones, Shahed Iranian drones and other drones. Tonight alone nine drones were hit by us. Yesterday more than 30 were destroyed. That's a constant fight.

Of course, it takes our strength away and our equipment away. And there, we would like to have a better possibility to cover up our skies. Our own capabilities are not enough for us.

Germany has given us this possibility now, as I said, the Iris-T. The first system has already been delivered. The United States have confirmed their support with new air defence systems.

We would very much like the support to be much higher.

We expect from France and from Italy powerful steps where they could also help us.

There is nothing I can add about that. We have about 10% of what we need, frankly speaking.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

The next question comes from Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS. He's from Lithuania.

Mister Emanuelis ZINGERIS, you have 30 seconds.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD): Sir,

There are no words to express our solidarity, especially from the Baltic states. We were never recognised as a part of Soviet Union by the international community, and the occupation from Soviet times was not enacted on us.

But you have done all the homework related to human rights. You lead the fight for the human rights of our European society.

My question will be: after yesterday's United Nations vote about bridging a second Charter, point of paragraph of the United Nations Charter, how should we react?

What is our next step in the United Nations against Russia, against this terrorist regime, against the clique in the Kremlin, which is now acting against Europe, national states against liberal democracies?

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Emanuelis ZINGERIS.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: I believe yesterday we talked to our diplomats, it was a historic day yesterday.

One hundred forty-three countries supported Ukraine, and they did not recognise those bloody annexations and pseudo referenda – artificial referenda. I think that was a victory, not only for Ukraine yesterday, but a victory for the world, and it was a powerful result. It is powerful. It has increased, compared to the previous time, the number of countries that now recognise Ukraine and do not recognise the lies with which Russia keeps attacking the information space all over the world. I think that was a very powerful step and a big loss for the Russian Federation.

With such steps, not only on the frontline, in combat that the victory is built but in diplomacy about which we have already spoken, international platforms, at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, at the United Nations. With these steps and, of course, in combat, as well, that is why we need support in all of those areas.

Just look, yesterday only five countries supported Russia – only five. Almost nobody is left with them. That shows that the world is united. And we should not lose that. This is our mission.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

The next question comes from Ms Thórhildur Sunna ÆVARSDÓTTIR. Sunna is from Iceland.

You have 30 seconds, Sunna.

Ms Thórhildur Sunna ÆVARSDÓTTIR (Iceland, SOC): Thank you.

Dear Mister President ZELENSKYY,

I had the honour of visiting your beautiful country this summer on a fact-finding mission with a PACE delegation, and I would firstly like to express my strong solidarity for people of Ukraine.

Ensuring accountability and ending impunity for Russian war crimes is a huge but very vital challenge that Ukraine has boldly taken on.

I believe it is vital to go above and beyond to ensure the trials for war crimes committed in Ukraine be beyond reproach so that no one can question their fairness or claim any bias by the courts.

To this end, are you and your government considering some form of hybrid trial mechanism, for example to include international experts in war crimes tribunal in Ukraine?

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Madam Thórhildur Sunna ÆVARSDÓTTIR.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: First of all,

I'd like to thank you for having visited Ukraine this summer.

Because when we're talking about political support, this is very important: to come and see with your own eyes, to visit not only the capital city but those areas which have been deoccupied. To see the consequences of what Russia has done.

We are an open democracy that is going towards the European Union. Along this road I want to thank you for any support, any help with the candidate status for Ukraine. This has become a very important motivation for all of us in the armed forces. We know what we're fighting for; we are open.

That's why we are ready to work in any hybrid format. If you have some ideas and proposals, we are a state that would only support such initiatives. But it is important this would all not only be declarations, so it would work that an international tribunal would be set up.

Here the question is not who would play the most important role there and from what countries.

The important thing is to have ambitious people there, people who want to have results, professionals, and I am sure this is what this is going to look like.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President

If you allow me, I would have two more questions before we have to finish due to your time restraints.

The first question comes from Mr Damien COTTIER. He is from Switzerland.

You have the floor.

Mr Damien COTTIER (Switzerland, ALDE): Thank you, Mister President.

I had the honor of leading the 10-member delegation of this Assembly which, as has just been mentioned, went to Kyiv, Irpin, and Bucha at the end of June on behalf of the Assembly. I must say that we were all very shocked by what we saw, which demonstrates that war crimes have been committed and are still being committed in your country.

The Assembly has been committed to this international tribunal against the crime of aggression from the very beginning, and the Committee of Ministers has joined us. Can you tell us, Mister President, what concrete diplomatic efforts are currently being made to gather a broad coalition in favour of such a project?

Furthermore, do you have sufficient means to carry out investigations on the spot? Do you have sufficient international support for investigations into the very many war crimes and crimes against humanity that are being analysed? I believe the latest figure is 39 000.

Thank you, Mister President.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Damien COTTIER.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: Thank you.

I want to thank you too for having visited Ukraine, Irpin and Bucha.

Unfortunately, I have to say that in the de-occupied areas, in the Kharkiv region, things are as terrible as what you could see in Irpin and Bucha, with hundreds of graves of the people who had been tortured and killed.

That's why the issue of this international tribunal - and today it has been brought up many times - is absolutely fair and very relevant.

First of all, we expect that a field office will be opened up in Kyiv of the International Criminal Court. Prosecutor Khan is talking to our prosecutor general, and we hope that this process will be accelerated and the office will be opened up.

As I said, criminal experts are now working, and all kinds of experts from different countries. Here, our doors are also open. Because in addition to experts, forensic experts, France has recently helped us technically a lot, so that we could do everything in terms of forensics. Investigations, rightful locations, with proper equipment, modern equipment. Everything is quite simple. We need both. Experts, and we will never have too many of them.

We are open to this process because we know those people have tortured our people. We are open for the international community. That's why we need both: experts and equipment.

Frankly, there are too many people that have been killed. Too much work has to be done to get the corpses out and many other things, so we are grateful for any technical support as well.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister President.

Now the last question due to time restraints come from Ms Ingjerd SCHOU. She is from Norway.

You have 30 seconds, Madam Ingjerd SCHOU.

Ms Ingjerd SCHOU (Norway, EPP/CD): President ZELENSKYY,

Thank you for taking time to address our Assembly. It's highly appreciated.

As your forces are retaking former occupied territories, the brutality of the Russian forces is being uncovered step by step.

Among other things, we have had terrible news about several mass graves with a shockingly high number of dead soldiers and civilians.

How are you, in the middle of this war, also able to deal with such challenges?

Do you have the resources and capacity to handle these sites on mass graves with the dignity and respect such a complex and demanding task demands? Both with regards to the dead and with regards to their families?

To what extent do you receive assistance from the international community?

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Madam Ingjerd SCHOU.

Mister President.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: Thank you for this question.

You know, when we speak about support to our people, that people need to find jobs, children have to go to schools and kindergarten, people have to go back to the houses that have been destroyed. All these things are in the usual infrastructure for the everyday life of usual people, and when there is no war you do not pay

much attention to it, but now all of it has been destroyed for many people. That is why Ukraine needs support on location. The local authorities are helping us, the central authorities are helping and all of our money, frankly, goes to the frontline, to our military. That is why we need a lot of money to bring back people's lives, and the educational infrastructure, which we do not have. So, any kind of assistance, any kind of donations or special programmes, to recover, to rebuild the life of Ukrainians, would be very much welcome.

Today, we call it a fast recovery plan, which includes recovery of the electric power grid and communication lines after missile strikes, and water delivery. All of these are important priorities; simple things, but that cost very much.

Our budget deficit is \$5 billion every month, so you understand that we are spending the money, first and foremost, for the armed forces and, first and foremost, for the pensioners, for social assistance, to medical doctors and teachers. This is where our money goes today. So, all the other things that you have just mentioned and what I am speaking about, well, there is not enough. I do not want to complain. I do not want to beg you for anything. We will take this road. But if it is possible to help us in any way, to help us in those humanitarian areas, we would really be very grateful for that.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much, Mister President.

Dear Colleagues,

As said, due to time constraints of the president and his heavy schedule, I now have to interrupt the list of speakers.

I propose that those who did not have the chance to ask questions to President Volodymyr ZELENSKYY take care that that questions are delivered to Ambassador Borys Tarasyuk and Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA, who could find out how to get an answer from or via you.

I spoke this morning with the Ukrainian delegation. I'm most willing to come as soon as possible again to your country to address these questions and other possibilities of our Parliamentary Assembly to come to your help.

May I thank you very, very, much from the bottom of our heart.

We wish you all the strength, all the wisdom, all the courage to continue your important efforts to restore national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and that justice will be done, sooner or later, to all the citizens of your country.

Once again, Mister President, thank you very much.

We wish you well.

Take care.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine)*: Thank you very much.

Thank you for your support.

Thank you and good bye.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much.

Again, colleagues, sorry that we could not afford more time to this debate.

I want to compliment you for your disciplined approach. I want to complement the Ukrainian delegation and Ukrainian Ambassador for making this possible. I want to thank the President for being able to answer so many questions in such a short time.

Again, the questions that remain, please take care that they reach the Ambassador or the head of the Ukrainian delegation. We'll find a way to get them answered.

Questions non prononcées - Réponses écrites de M. Volodymyr ZELENSKY, Président de l'Ukraine

Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN (Finland, SOC): *[Question provided in writing]*

Finland, like Ukraine, is a neighbouring country of Russia, and Finns, based on their historical memory, feel deep solidarity with the Ukrainian people. Mr President, do you see that there remains any possibility to realise the late Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's dream of a common European home?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

The dream of a common European home is quite realistic. Ukraine is actively contributing to achieving this goal, including by receiving the status of a candidate for membership in the European Union and defending the whole Europe from Russian aggressive imperialism.

The only clarification is that the common European home cannot include Russia. For centuries, this state in one form or another tried to develop exclusively by expanding its geographical borders and conquering its neighbours. The modern totalitarian regime headed by Vladimir Putin is no exception. For years, this regime has been presenting the Russian population with the idea of "restoring its greatness" in exchange for the freedoms of this population.

I see no intersection between the interests of modern Russia and Western European values, where human rights, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and respect for democracy prevail.

Mr Gonzalo ROBLES (Spain, EPP/CD): *[Question provided in writing]*

Mr President,

The international community has stood by and will continue to stand by Ukraine faced to the unjustified, cruel and illegal invasion of its territory. It has condemned it and shown its solidarity towards its people and its government faced to the abuse of human rights. We are now at a crucial moment, and it is necessary to persevere. But, at the same time, we are witnessing images in which those who return to the recovered areas are not receiving a particularly good treatment. On the other hand, we wonder how coexistence is in conflict areas among different sensitivities. It is important to draw a clear distinctive line between those who do not respect human rights and those who do, despite the complex nature of this issue.

Which measures is your government taking to guarantee rights and coexistence among the different sensitivities in recovered areas?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

The first thing that is being done in the territories liberated from the Russian aggressor is the restoration of law enforcement agencies and human rights organisations. The Ukrainian Government is taking urgent measures to ensure social rights of the residents of the liberated territories and create conditions for the restoration of their full economic life.

We actively co-operate with international human rights mechanisms.

The liberated territories are open for the activities of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, international non-governmental organisations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and many other institutions.

It should be taken into account that the infrastructure, in particular the medical one, in the territories that were even for short period under Russian occupation, is almost completely destroyed. Russian looters stole all more or less valuable equipment. Naturally, it takes time and resources to restore all these destructions and losses. The assistance of the civilized world to our country in this matter is no less important than assistance with weapons.

Mr Manuel VESCOVI (Italy, EC/DA): *[Question provided in writing]*

What are the conditions for starting negotiations with Putin?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

Negotiations with Russia will become possible when the territorial integrity of Ukraine is restored within the internationally recognised borders. Russian troops must withdraw from our land, from the territory of our state: then Ukraine will determine in what format and with whom it is ready to talk.

Ms Danuta JAZŁOWIECKA (Poland, EPP/CD): *[Question provided in writing]*

Mr President, expressing admiration and gratitude to the entire Ukrainian society for fighting for world democracy and freedom, I want to emphasise that Russia's crimes in Ukraine must not go unpunished. Russian war criminals must be prosecuted and tried. This is our responsibility.

The adopted text calls on the EU to support the creation of a special international tribunal to punish the crime of aggression committed against Ukraine, for which the International Criminal Court (ICC) has no jurisdiction, and to hold Russian political leaders and military commanders and their allies to account.

PACE calls for the establishment of an ad hoc international criminal tribunal to bring to justice those responsible for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

Mr President mentioned this initiative, but let us know which tribunal do you think would be more effective and responsive to the situation in your country?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

We believe that the tribunal is the only effective mechanism to bring Russia to justice for the crimes committed in Ukraine. It can be a Nuremberg model of an international treaty between states. It is absolutely capable. Or it can be a UN General Assembly resolution authorizing the UN Secretary General to conclude an agreement with Ukraine. Then the agreement between Ukraine and the UN will be the legal basis, and the statute will be attached to it. Another option is an agreement between Ukraine and a European international organisation, such as the Council of Europe.

In fact, there are many options. Legitimacy can be ensured if there is a key element - the political will of our international partners.

Mr Levan IOSELIANI (Georgia, SOC): *[Question provided in writing]*

During the official visit of the Georgian delegation to Bucha, we saw many war crime cases with our own eyes. Could you tell us more about what the situation is in other regions? Do we have more war crimes, and on what scale? Could we assess this as genocide?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

When we look at the results of Russia's occupation of Bucha, the destruction of Mariupol, the bombing of residential buildings in Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Odesa, the railway station in Kramatorsk, the prohibition of safe evacuation through humanitarian corridors to calmer, safer places in Ukraine - we have no doubt that the only goal of the Russians in this war is the destruction of the Ukrainian people, that is, the genocide of the Ukrainian people, the realisation of the intention that failed to be realised in the 20th century, when Ukraine was starved to death. As Ukrainian defenders liberate the territory of Ukraine, we seem to find more and more horrific consequences of the Russian occupation.

Ms Sibel ARSLAN (Switzerland, SOC): *[Question provided in writing]*

I wish you much strength in these difficult times.

Because of destroyed hospitals and a lack of medical care, Ukraine asked the states to support sick and injured people a few months ago. In the meantime, civilians from Ukraine are being treated in Switzerland. What is the situation like now? Especially in view of the winter?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

Yes, you are absolutely right. The Russian aggressor is mercilessly destroying the healthcare infrastructure. Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, about 900 healthcare facilities have been damaged, 123 have been completely destroyed. We are grateful to all our partners and, in particular Switzerland, for the opportunity to treat and rehabilitate the civilian population. There is also a great need for treatment of Ukrainian soldiers and we also expect more decisive steps of the Swiss Government in this direction.

The situation with the provision of medical care remains extremely difficult. As winter approaches, we expect it to become more complicated, given the terrorist tactics chosen by the Russian side to destroy civilian, in particular energy infrastructure.

Ms Anne-Mari VIROLAINEN (Finland, EPP/CD): *[Question provided in writing]*

The role of education in post-war reconstruction.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

I have no doubt that the role of education both during martial law and post-war period is extremely important. We have largely adapted educational programs to modern conditions and needs. The priority, of course, is the security aspects for pupils, students and teachers. The Ukrainian Government is doing everything possible to ensure the planned educational process, distance learning tools are actively used.

You know that a large number of pupils and students, as well as educators, have moved outside our country and, thanks to the assistance of the governments of partner states, are receiving education abroad. We see here new opportunities for the exchange of experience, integration of curricula, intercultural exchange and we are sincerely grateful to all our partners for supporting Ukrainian children and students.

After the victory over Russia, we will analyse the needs of our country in the field of education and make appropriate adjustments to the curricula. I am confident that one of the positive consequences of this tragic period for our country will be the elimination of language barriers between the people of Ukraine and the civilized world.

Ms Liliana TANGUY (France, ALDE): *[Question provided in writing]*

Mr. President,

Thank you for this time of exchange and please be assured of my and my political group's support for the Ukrainian people. We admire your national parliament and the PACE Ukrainian delegation who continue to sit and work actively despite the incessant attacks on your country.

You recently received a delegation from the French National Assembly led by its President, Ms. Yaël Braun-Pivet. A cooperation agreement was signed between our two assemblies.

In addition to humanitarian aid and the sending of military equipment by France, what do you expect, Mr. President, from our interparliamentary cooperation to bring peace and defend freedom and democracy in Ukraine?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

I am grateful to French parliamentarians for the attention they pay to the issue of assistance to Ukraine in countering Russian aggression. In March, during the most difficult period of the war unleashed by Russia, I addressed the French Parliament. At that time I announced the main needs of Ukraine: assistance with weapons, economic blockade of Russia, comprehensive assistance in restoring the territorial integrity of Ukraine, security guarantees for our country. All of them remain relevant.

After the disclosure of the facts of mass war crimes, I must add that we also expect France's support in the establishment of a special international tribunal to punish the perpetrators of these crimes and the establishment of compensation mechanisms for victims of war crimes.

Mr Birgir THÓRARINSSON (Iceland, EPP/CD): *[Question provided in writing]*

Does the President consider it likely that the war in Ukraine will spread to neighbouring countries and if so, how likely?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYI (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

Yes, I think it is quite possible and even inevitable, if we do not stop the aggressor by joint efforts. It is about the confrontation between freedom and totalitarianism, into which Russia is slipping. Totalitarianism cannot exist surrounded by free states. An example of an alternative way of development, which in modern conditions cannot be hidden from the Russian people, will constantly encourage the Russian leadership to expand the geography of its influence and, at the same time, severely restrict the rights and freedoms of Russians.

The only obvious way to avoid such a scenario is to consolidate our efforts as soon as possible to force the kremlin regime to live by the rules of the free world.

Lord Richard KEEN (United Kingdom, EC/DA): *[Question provided in writing]*

If now or in the future your armed forces have access to tactical nuclear weapons, would you consider deploying them in response to use of such weapons on Ukraine soil by the Russian Federation?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYI (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

Despite the full-scale war with Russia, Ukraine responsibly ensures full compliance with its international obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

We reject Russia's blatantly false accusations that Ukraine is allegedly developing and preparing to use a "dirty bomb" on its own territory. The recent mission of IAEA experts to Ukrainian facilities, which Ukraine proactively requested, conducted the necessary verification and confirmed the absence of any undeclared or prohibited activities by the Ukrainian side. The IAEA report on the results of this inspection was also presented at the UN Security Council meeting in New York.

At the same time, the world should take a more proactive position to prevent Russia from implementing any criminal scenarios with the use of nuclear weapons. Threats of the aggressor to use any non-conventional weapons are irresponsible and absolutely unacceptable.

Ms Minna REIJONEN (Finland, EC/DA): *[Question provided in writing]*

Human rights, forced evacuations of Ukrainian civilians from the Russian-controlled territories.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYI (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

Human rights and Russian-controlled territories are incompatible definitions. Russian invaders are pursuing a policy of forced deportation of Ukrainian citizens in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. It started with the attempted illegal annexation of Crimea, where Russia aimed to change the ethnic structure of the population. This policy extends to the new territories occupied by Russia. The Ukrainian side together with partners is working to record the relevant facts.

I am confident that all this will be included in the indictment materials in national courts, the International Criminal Court and the Special International Tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

Ms Laima Liucija ANDRIKIENĖ (Lithuania, EPP/CD): *[Question provided in writing]*

Russia's war against Ukraine: establishment of a Special International Tribunal for the crimes of aggression.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYI (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

In September this year, the draft international treaty on the establishment of the special tribunal was presented to diplomats from partner countries in Kyiv.

We offer this treaty to everyone in the world who values the international legal order. I will give you one more quote. "The charges in the Indictment that the defendants planned and waged aggressive wars are charges of the utmost gravity. War is essentially an evil thing. Its consequences are not confined to the belligerent states alone, but affect the whole world."

When we conclude the treaty and create a special tribunal on Russian aggression, the very fact of preparing indictments and issuing arrest warrants for those who planned and ordered to start this aggression will be the most powerful signal to all other potential aggressors in the world that war is inevitably punished, and the guilty are brought to justice, that the law always works and the law always reigns, and humanity is guaranteed to be protected.

Ms Khatia DEKANOIDZE (Georgia, EPP/CD): *[Question provided in writing]*

Do you think that secondary sanctions must be activated more for the countries where Pro-Russian oligarchs can have influence and very intense ties with Russian- sanctioned Oligarchs? Georgia is a vivid example of that.

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

Thus, the wide application of sectoral, primary and secondary sanctions against persons directly or indirectly involved in the armed aggression on the territory of Ukraine is an effective tool of economic influence. They should ensure the blocking and confiscation of assets of persons who support the aggression in Ukraine in all its manifestations - through financing, propaganda, production of goods and services that contribute to the further waging of war and genocide of the Ukrainian people.

Therefore, it is extremely important to ensure the maximum coverage and application of sanctions to all those persons who directly or indirectly contribute to the armed aggression on the territory of Ukraine, as well as to make it impossible to circumvent them.

Ukraine would be extremely grateful for assistance in the application of sanctions against those involved in the armed aggression, including those restrictions that would allow to block assets and direct them to the reconstruction of Ukraine.

Mr Indrek SAAR (Estonia, SOC): *[Question provided in writing]*

Mr President, colleagues,

PACE, home of Democracy, has many times made the mistake of thinking that, with Russia's current regime, it is possible to get results by holding a dialogue. I very much hope that we are wiser now. We all want peace, but the ideas of how to achieve it are different. Some in this house think that the best solution is an immediate ceasefire between Ukraine and Russia. Please explain to us your vision: to what extent is such a solution possible?

Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKYY (President of Ukraine): *[Answer provided in writing]*

I am confident that the lesson of June 2019 has been well learned in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and in European society as a whole. The ceasefire is indeed a very good decision. However, it is possible only under the conditions of complete withdrawal of Russian troops from the territory of Ukraine and restoration of Ukraine's integrity within the internationally recognized borders of 1991. Obviously, the Russian aggressor is not ready to take such steps yet.

We cannot allow further stay of Russian troops on the territory of our country, troops that commit mass crimes against civilians in the occupied territories and kill our citizens by thousands. Therefore, the Armed Forces of Ukraine continue to do everything to liberate our territories from the aggressor's troops.

Russia must be punished for the unleashed aggressive war against Ukraine, war and other crimes and bear appropriate political, international legal, economic and other responsibility for its criminal actions.

Débat selon la procédure d'urgence : Nouvelle escalade dans l'agression de la Fédération de Russie contre l'Ukraine

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Dear colleagues,

Next item of business this morning is a debate under urgent procedure on Further escalation in the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine. You'll find it in Document 15631, presented by Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS, on behalf of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy.

In order to finish by 1 p.m. I will interrupt the list of speakers at about 12:35 p.m. to allow time for reply and vote.

Can we have Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS here in the front row to present his report.

Let us continue with our next debate, as said. This is the debate under urgent procedure on Further escalation of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, presented by Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS, on behalf of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy.

In order to finish by 1 p.m. I will interrupt the list of speakers at about 12:35 p.m. to allow time for reply and vote.

I have to tell you I will be very strict on time limits in order to allow as many people as possible to participate.

I now first call Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS, the rapporteur.

You have 7 minutes now, and 5 minutes to reply at the end of the debate.

You have the floor.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Rapporteur): Thank you, Mister speaker.

Thank you for providing in such a good manner the previous discussion with the President of Ukraine.

So, dear colleagues, we have an issue here related to the democratic country attacked by a nationalist regime, by a regime linked to terrorism, and attacked to take their land. That was said yesterday evening by 143 countries in the United Nations. The Charter from the United Nations, the second paragraph of the Charter is crossed and breached by Russia Federation and we just had the President of Ukraine who is doing, together with the honourable members of parliament, a rather fantastic homework in creating democracy – mature democracy. What is our house about? Democracy.

During the bombing, Mr Tiny KOX, during the bombing there are doing their homework. They are voting in favour of the Istanbul Convention. They are creating law after law based on our key standards – standards of the Council of Europe. They have become a candidate country of the European Union. So, a member of our Council of Europe, *Gremium*, a candidate to be of the European Union, a fully-fledged member of the United Nations, is attacked by the regime that is now trying to take their territories, actually declaring four regions, including Crimea from 2014, that is their territory. Cities are bombed. Just now, Mr Damien COTTIER spoke, my colleague and Chairman Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of our Parliamentary Assembly, and he spoke about our visit – our parliamentary visit of our Assembly – to see Bucha, to see the other places of mass murder and its incredible crimes.

So, Mr President, my mother spent four years in a Nazi camp, and she told me that I never have an idea that we will be coming to the atrocities underway to the level of the Second World War, created by those terrible fascist regimes like Hitler and Mussolini. And now we have the nationalist regime based on *Ruskiy mir* attacking our values in Ukraine, our heritage in Ukraine, our European cultural heritage in Ukraine.

I visited schools where children were asking me "Where is my mother?", "Where is my father?". I visited hospitals that have no electricity during the operation time, and I saw hundreds of people without legs and hands after bombings.

How can we find the words to describe everything that was yesterday discussed in United Nations and today discussed in our *Gremium*? I would like to encourage all of you today to be serious. Our amendments, mostly, in the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy – and the colleagues can confirm – were adopted. All amendments, most – 99% of all amendments – were adopted unanimously by all parties, and today I am

asking you to be serious and support our resolution. Of course, it is not air defence. We are asking for air defence. It is not concrete air defence. It is not tanks. It is not weapons, nor is it humanitarian supply, but we are asking every member of parliament in their districts, in their parties in the 46 countries to make a link to Ukraine, to use sister cities between our 46 member states, to make sister cities that are evolved with Odessa, with Kyiv, to use the democracy-to-democracy approach and organise our societies on the bottom level of democracy, including the internal power of our societies, including associations, medical associations, even military associations, using the brotherhood, and supply them with everything that is possible. Governments are doing that on the governmental level; parliamentarians should ask our nations to do that on a personal level.

In Lithuania, we just collected one Bayraktar in a few days, making an announcement on television. You can do everyone to collect money in your societies for hospitals and warm clothes – the winter is coming. And we will not give, Mr Tiny KOX, the possibility for European countries to change the topic. If energy will be the topic, we will not change the topic of Ukraine to energy. If food will be the topic, we will not overcome it with the food topic of Ukraine.

Well, that is the major point of the Second World War for Russia, who is a terrorist state and the regime is terrorist, attacking our values, and Ukrainians are dying for the standards of human rights, of the Council of Europe.

Thank you for that.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Emanuelis, for your presentation.

At the end you'll have 5 minutes to answer to our remarks.

First in the debate I call Ms Yevheniia KRAVCHUK from Ukraine. Yevheniia speaks for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe.

You have the floor, Yevheniia.

Ms Yevheniia KRAVCHUK (Ukraine, ALDE, Spokesperson for the group): Thank you, Mister President, Dear Rapporteur, Mister ZINGERIS,

I am delighted to open this debate, especially after such a powerful intervention of Ukrainian President Volodymyr ZELENSKY, for the first time speaking in this Assembly. The ALDE Group of course will be supporting this resolution and the wording is strong and, I think, also to political committee that made these wording even stronger. So, I urge you to support also the amendments that were carried by the political committee today at the meeting.

And, of course, the issues addressed in these resolutions are very important. It's about the illegal so-called referenda, we call it null and void. It's about the illegal annexation that Russia tries again to achieve with four Ukrainian regions. Of course, no civilised country will support it. And it's about again calling to speed up the establishment of an international tribunal to bring the perpetrators and to have this crime of aggression in the tribunal, as it was during the Nuremberg process.

But let me address you not just as a member of this Assembly, not just as a member of parliament, but also as a mother of eight-year-old daughter, who is again this week not in school, but in the basement writing me messages when I stay here and talk to you. Writing me messages that, you know, Ukraine is again under attack, regions, missiles, drones.

Our eight-year-old children know the names of different drones that come to Ukraine and different types of missiles, in their own age.

And you know, there are a lot of popular questions asked in Ukraine. For example, how was your night? Is everyone alive and safe?

And, you know, another 12-year-old child in Mykolaiv last night was taken out of the ruined house, again taken to hospital.

A girl in Nikopol' had two legs amputated because of the shelling, just a few days ago.

And now the orphan. A five-year-old boy became a total orphan. because his mom was burned alive in the car in the centre of Kiev this Monday.

She was a children's doctor, and she was going to school and she was going to work and she didn't survive.

But, you know, another popular question is "How many more villages did we liberate today?". And no legal referenda can stop our army of liberating these villages in any region or Ukraine, and they will be doing so.

But, of course, Ukraine should get the needed support, help, including modern air defence systems to protect our people.

This support will not, of course, bring back the people who are already dead, but it will help to protect more people and Ukraine and to protect democracy in all Europe.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Madam Yevheniia KRAVCHUK.

The next contribution comes from Mr George KATROUGALOS. He is from Greece and speaks on behalf of Group of the Unified European Left.

You have the floor, Mister George KATROUGALOS.

Mr George KATROUGALOS (Greece, UEL, Spokesperson for the group): Thanks Mr Chair,

From the first moment all of us, in unanimity, have been committed to the defence of both Ukraine and its sovereign rights, and/or in defence of the international legality. We should continue to act like that. In this vein we fully support the report.

However, now we're facing important questions regarding diplomacy.

I have full respect for President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

But if I understood correctly what he said, what he answered to my question, I cannot agree with him that when the arms speak there is no room for diplomacy.

The truth is that the European diplomacy has failed and failed miserably.

Not only were we not able to deter Russia from invading, we have been unable in the past to create a new architecture of security that would guarantee the sovereign rights of all countries, without detriment to their feelings of threat or security.

Still, we have the obligation now – a double obligation, in my understanding – to end the war, of course in fully respecting the sovereign rights of Ukraine.

And second, to avoid the return to a polarised world in which the cold war of the past would be a much better model, exactly because we lack the channels of communication now that exist at this time.

Therefore I believe that calling Russia a terrorist state – which is intended, in the end as I have understood it – to exclude any type of diplomatic channels between the European state and Russia, is not in my opinion a good option.

If we had done that in the past, an agreement such as the one concluded between Russia and Ukraine with the mediation of Turkey regarding the transportation of the Ukrainian seats would not be possible. I strongly believe in peace. I believe that the message of Pope Francis, that calls on all European states, to have access to diplomacy should be served also by our Parliamentary Assembly.

I am quite sure that this would also ultimately guarantee the interests in the sovereign rights of Ukraine.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister George KATROUGALOS.

Now I call on the debate Mr Indrek SAAR, from Estonia. He speaks on behalf of the Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group.

Mr Indrek SAAR (Estonia, SOC, Spokesperson for the group): Mr President,

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group, I would like to start by thanking Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS for raising this urgent topic and preparing the report.

Our common values leave no one in doubt that there is nothing more urgent at the moment than stopping the brutalities of Russia's terrorist regime.

We are duty bound to do our utmost to stop Putin's war machine.

Sadly, Russia has again proved, and keeps proving day by day and hour by hour, that dialogue we use in the civilised world is not a tool they value.

This forces us to defend the rule-based world order with other means, and do everything in our power to make Putin lose this war. This is the only way left to achieve peace.

Only then is there hope that Russia would finally understand that violence is not the solution. We must not refuse any plea for help from Ukraine, whose sole aim is to defend its people and territory.

These are our people. That is our territory.

All the resources that are ours to give must be given to Ukraine. In this case, weapons can only be stopped by other weapons.

The biggest surprise for Putin, besides the bravery of the Ukrainian people, is the European solidarity. We must keep it up if we want our rule-based world order to prevail, and we must not get caught in traps. One of these has already been set up. Immediate ceasefire at any price. That is a road to hell which is paved with good intentions.

The ceasefire would offer welcome relief to Putin because he got announced new conquered territories to his supporters on the current frontline. It will also give his military industry time to produce new weapons of death, and allow to regroup the tattered lines of his army for new attacks. All this while enjoying the fruits of his energy war in European homes and waiting for the political results, and certainly interfering in the elections of other countries in his own inimitable way.

This is why I invite all of us not to give in to the temptation to begin peace negotiations if the terms are not acceptable.

Peace can only come on the terms of the Ukrainian people.

Only if the peace treaty fully respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in the internationally recognised borders, addresses the issues of reparations, deportees to Russia, the rebuilding of Ukraine, prisoners of war, and prosecution for the crime of aggression and war crimes.

The day before yesterday I had the opportunity to meet the spouse and the sister of Azovstal fighters. They have been living for months in a state of not knowing and being desperately worried because they have had no news of the husband and the brother who were taken as prisoners by the Russians. The extent of their worries was indescribable. I found it difficult to console them because we have all seen how inhumanely Russia has acted.

But I hope together with them, and with the thousands of Ukrainians in the same situation, that the fall of the Russian regime will help their loved ones return home one day.

I asked these brave women, at the end of our meeting, what would be their message to those who think that Ukraine should resign itself to yielding a part of its territory for the sake of the ceasefire. Their answer was crystal clear: that is not going to happen.

This is a clear guideline for us as well. Ukraine must win this war, Russia must lose. No other solution is possible. Let us engrave this wall with the report in front of us.

Long live the world.

Slava Ukraini.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Indrek SAAR.

Please, colleagues, stick to the time that is given, otherwise some other colleagues will not have the chance to address us.

Next in the debate I call Ms Ingjerd SCHOU from Norway. She speaks on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party.

Madam Ingjerd SCHOU.

Ms Ingjerd SCHOU (Norway, EPP/CD, Spokesperson for the group): Thank you President,

Colleagues, dear Ukrainian colleagues,

Yet again we have seen an escalation in the war. Yet again civilians are being targeted. Yet again the suffering of the Ukrainian people is immense.

This morning's call for support by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is profound. As fellow Europeans we cannot stand idly by.

The ongoing war is a challenge to global governance and rules-based multinational cooperation. A system which has served us so well in Europe; only through multilateral work and unanimity can we counter the ongoing threat to our values and way of life.

On behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, I therefore urge you all to vote in favour of the draft resolution. We must be unanimous in our clear message to President Vladimir Putin and his regime. Their targeting of civilian infrastructure and civilians is nothing but terror.

We must remain firm in our support of Ukraine, and united in our protection of human rights, the rule of law, and democratic stability on our continent.

We must send a clear message of our resolve to prosecute Russia's crime of aggression against Ukraine. We will continue our efforts to establish an ad hoc special international tribunal. The tribunal must be set up so that trials can be held as soon as it is possible to bring in the aggressors. Impunity for the Russian leadership cannot be tolerated.

The same goes for those responsible for war crimes. They will be prosecuted.

Ukraine will need our support for a long time to come. The Group of the European People's Party is in favour of setting up an international compensation mechanism, as proposed in the resolution.

But we must also step up our immediate support for the Ukrainian people. From Norway we are increasing our military support. Nato has asked all member States to do the same. Humanitarian aid must also be extended.

Colleagues,

As some have emphasised this week – now is the time for the Council of Europe to come together and rise to the occasion. Now is the time to stand firm on our core values. Now is the time to fight for the very principles on which our organisation was founded to protect: a democratic Europe built on a rules-based multinational cooperation.

Thank you, Mr President.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Madam Ingjerd SCHOU.

Now I call to the debate Mr Oleksii GONCHARENKO from Ukraine. Mr Oleksii GONCHARENKO speaks on behalf of the European Conservatives Group.

You have the floor, Mister Oleksii GONCHARENKO.

Mr Oleksii GONCHARENKO (Ukraine, EC/DA, Spokesperson for the group): Thank you very much,

First of all, I would like to thank the rapporteur, my friend Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS for his great work.

This is a very powerful report, together with the amendments which were today supported by the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy.

We're speaking about a tribunal for justice.

We're speaking finally about air defence, weaponry to Ukraine, to save our civilians.

We're designating the Russian regime as a terrorist regime, which is absolutely true.

We are saying, for the first time on such a level, that Russia, without any legal grounds, is taking a place in the Security Council of United Nations and is abusing this.

So, this is really a very important and very powerful report. I ask all of us to support it.

But I want us to take a step forward, and to see the wider picture.

Because several days ago Mr Josep Borrell addressed European ambassadors.

He said several very important things: that the prosperity of Europe was based on cheap Russian energy and the Chinese market.

That is true, and this dependence became critical. We cannot live anymore in these conditions.

We should be strong enough ourselves; that the best energy is our own energy; that clean energy is the energy from the countries with clean governments. Nothing else works. The markets which we need are the markets with the rule of law.

Mr Josep Borrell also said that we delegated our security to the United States. Yes, the United States is a great ally of Europe and is a great partner, but why should Europe just rely on the United States? It's not even just and fair.

We should be strong enough ourselves. Why should this - we are saying great powers, superpowers, it is the United States, it is China - Russia tried to be a superpower but the only "super" they have is the super ego of their emperor, because we saw how their soldiers were stealing blenders and toilets from Ukraine, because they have never seen this in their towns and villages.

So this is really that the true moment when Europe should become a superpower. We should become a superpower. The Council of Europe - together we have more than a 600 million-strong population, the strongest economies. What are we lacking? We have a unique culture of consensus, cooperation, dialogue.

Let's use all of it. Let's flourish together. Let's really make a great Europe, with a great force.

The Ukrainian army can be a very strong part of it: the Polish army, German army, French air force, British navy - we will watch the other countries.

Yesterday the Albanian prime minister said we are a small nation. I want to disagree with him: Albanians, Ukrainians, all the nations here, we all are great nations.

And all together we can build a great European civilisation which will take place on the whole planet, and which will give a model and example to everybody.

Let's do it together.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Oleksii GONCHARENKO.

Now I call on the debate Ms Lise CHRISTOFFERSEN, from Norway.

You have the floor.

Ms Lise CHRISTOFFERSEN (Norway, SOC): Dear President, Dear colleagues,

As we speak, the immediate result of Russia's legal and brutal war against Ukraine is unfolding before us. The extensive sufferings of the Ukrainian people in a country laid in ruins will forever stand as most terrible consequence of the Russian aggression against their neighbouring country.

In addition, Putin's war has turned almost everything upside down. For several years he has done the utmost to destabilise of the European countries, interfering with electoral processes, accurate attacks on public institutions, enterprises and infrastructure, financing hooligan gangs to disturb public peace and order, to mention some.

Europe is now facing energy crisis with extreme prices and supply uncertainty. Norway certainly became Europe's most important supplier of gas. Sabotage in the Baltic Sea and unidentified drone activity in the North Sea demonstrate our vulnerability. The security situation in Europe has changed dramatically. We need to strengthen our national defence and preparedness and, at the same time, supply Ukraine with necessary weapons and equipment.

Simultaneously, prices and interests are raising, threatening the welfare of ordinary households. Nor can we afford to ignore the enormous famine disaster brewing in country by country outside Europe caused by the pandemic, climate change, and Putin's war.

Putin's war places great demands on all of us. We must stay together. We cannot let Putin succeed in his attempts to destabilise Europe. Without the necessary solidarity now with Ukraine, with Russian dissidents, with each other, with the rest of the world, we risk never being able to holding Putin accountable for his crimes against humanity.

The values of the Council of Europe are needed more than ever. And when this tragic war is over – hopefully sooner than later – Putin and his accomplices, as well as other war criminals, will be held accountable. When that time comes, we must make sure that war settlement is made on the solid foundation on our common values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Madam Lise CHRISTOFFERSEN.

Now I call Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA, from Ukraine.

You have the floor.

Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA (Ukraine, EPP/CD): Thank you very much, dear President.

Colleagues,

I've been in different European institution for more than 13 years, and today in the morning I have realised that there is a very clear metaphor describing us today. We're like a phoenix which rises from the ashes.

We are becoming more and more powerful with every resolution. United Nations, other international organisations are looking at our decisions.

Since the 15th of March, when we showed the red card for the Russian Federation for the murderous crime of aggression, which is also stipulated in our suggestions for actions as established in international tribunal, we are putting a clear signal on which path to follow. A path where impunity has no place to exist.

We have been debating closing the sky. And this Monday, colleagues, after numerous terrorist attacks on more than 20 cities and towns of Ukraine we have realised that this is a needed action, confirmed in the President ZELENSKY's speech this morning.

The amendment which exists as a moderated one in the text of this resolution, with Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS' support, is something incredible to imagine back in the days.

Yes we called on the member states to support us in a military sense. Because, colleagues, the European Charter of Human Rights has to deliver at least the right to life. The right to life is deprived from millions of Ukrainians today. Without military support, which is a defensive measure, we cannot provide it.

Colleagues, hundreds of prisoners of war are now awaiting for the exchange. This very resolution proposes missions from our very Assembly, like those missions you have conducted to Kharkiv, to Iziom, to Bucha, to Irpin, to Kyiv, to Lviv. You have been to Ukraine so many times since March. You have been with us in the constituencies, delivering medical aid, humanitarian aid, evacuating people. Most of them are women and children.

The Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons which I belong to also responded very adequately with already four resolutions which are talking not only about Ukrainians and temporary relocated persons whom you are hosting. There are almost seven million of those. But also those countries who have been hosting refugees since the very famous crisis.

Colleagues, I am very sure that we pave the way for many to act today. I am very sorry that yesterday, in the media, the United Nations resolution was a blast. Well today's resolution of the PACE will be a more blast, and a more concrete suggestion of what we can do.

Slava Ukraini.

Thank you, dear President.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mariia.

Now in the debate I call Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA from Ukraine.

Dmytro, you have the floor.

Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA (Ukraine, EC/DA): Thank you very much.

Dear Mr Chairman,

Thank you, dear Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS for your brilliant work I think you have done with this report. I am sorry to say that at 11 o'clock Strasbourg time, my mother just told me that in a small village 20 kilometres from Kyiv, where they live, an Iranian Shahed drone sent by Russia has hit a residential building again.

Now, why is this happening despite today's address, yesterday's resolution by the United Nations and all other steps that the international community is taking to counter Russia? Because Russia feels that it has impunity. Because, in a way, something made them believe that they have a licence to kill. And probably that thing is their presence in the UN Security Council. And this is one of the most, I would say, important topics that this report addresses, as well, is this very issue.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I argue that we are witnessing one of the biggest swindles in international diplomacy, because Russia has no legal right to be not just a member of the UNSC but merely a member of the United Nations. Did you know that this is, as of today, the only country that has not ratified the UN Charter? Did you know that there has been no voting in the general assembly at all to admit Russia and that there is no provision in the United Nations Charter to accept a country without a vote if it has not been the founding country of the United Nations in the beginning since the San Francisco Conference?

So, nevertheless, Russia abuses its voting power, it has used its veto – its veto – more than 143 times as of April 2022. One hundred and forty-three times. This is more than all other members of the United Nations Security Council in total. So, this is something absolutely incredible, and I ask you to support this report precisely for the reason that we should take this matter forward. We should inspect and investigate the mere legal grounds of Russia's presence in the United Nations, and its membership.

But not only that, this report touches upon also the responsibility of political parties in Russia. I would like to remind you that every illegal action taken by the Russian Federation starting from the annexation of Crimea and ending with the introduction of Russian troops on the territory of Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, has been supported by the Russian State Duma, by the parliament of Russia unanimously. Does that not mean that all of the MPs who voted in favour of those actions that encroach on the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of other countries are also guilty? Does that not mean that they share this responsibility and should be recognised as organisations that facilitate terrorism? They should, in my opinion, definitely be recognised as such.

I would call strongly to support this report. Thank you again, dear Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS, and *Slava Ukraini* [glory to Ukraine].

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Dmytro NATALUKHA.

Now I call in the debate Ms Maria JUFEREVA-SKURATOVSKI from Estonia.

Madam Maria JUFEREVA-SKURATOVSKI, you have the floor.

Ms Maria JUFEREVA-SKURATOVSKI (Estonia, ALDE): Honoured President, members of the Parliamentary Assembly,

First of all, I would like to express my deepest support to the Ukrainian people, those who have lost loved ones, who are injured, and who are bravely fighting for the freedom of Ukraine.

On February 24th the Russian Federation launched a wide-ranging attack on Ukraine. In March the Parliamentary Assembly indeed responded promptly to Russia's barbaric actions by expelling the aggressor from the organisation.

However we are still witnessing atrocities and destruction in Ukraine. We are witnessing people suffering human rights violations and war crimes. We wish it was a nightmare, but it is not. This is our new reality we all live in.

With the return of war to European soil, all of us in Europe must contribute more actively towards bringing peace and justice. We need to address a huge list of new tasks, not only on the financial, humanitarian, or military level, but also on the level of ideology and democratic values.

Colleagues,

We must remember that our purpose is to preserve the world order in accordance with our values, precisely: the rule of law, freedoms and respect for human rights. And at this critical time we must contribute to doing everything in our power to support Ukraine in order to bring justice and freedom to the Ukrainian territory and people. Our support must remain unwavering.

The Estonian Parliament submitted a draft statement for legislative proceedings condemning the annexation of the territory of Ukraine and declaring the Russian regime a terrorist regime. The draft declares that the Riigikogu supports the investigations initiated by the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court, to identify the crimes committed on the territory of Ukraine, and considers it necessary to persecute those guilty of crimes of aggression in an international special tribunal. The Riigikogu calls on the international community to adopt similar declarations.

At the same time, I feel that it is important to make a distinction between Russia's terrorist regime and the Russian citizens who are condemning Mr Vladimir Putin's regime and actively oppose this. We should not discriminate against people only because of their citizenship.

I also see a need to express support to the political prisoners who have been jailed for their opposing views and activities. Mr Vladimir Kara-Murza, who was awarded the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize, can serve as a great example of someone fighting for a free Russia. We need to keep people like him in our field of vision and not to push them away.

I thank my Lithuanian colleague Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS for his accurate report.

To conclude, I would like to stress once again that only by acting united will we be able to defend peace, security, human rights, and democracy in the world. I have no doubt that the Russian Federation's open aggression against Ukraine will fail, and democracy will prevail.

Slava Ukraini.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Maria.

Next in the debate, I call Mr Mehmet Mehdi EKER from Turkey.

Mehmet, you have the floor.

Mr Mehmet Mehdi EKER (Türkiye, NR): Thank you.

Dear President, dear colleagues,

I would like to thank the rapporteur for his valuable report.

Colleagues,

Russian aggression to Ukraine causes not only the killing of innocent people but also the global food insecurity. And this, of course, will affect the dependent countries and the poor people of the world.

This is another side effect of the aggression of the Russians.

I will elaborate this issue a bit, with your permission.

We know Ukraine is among the world's top exporters of key grain, as well as fertilisers.

Russian aggression on Ukraine in February and its blockade of the country's Black Sea ports in the South brought exports to a halt.

Since this blockade, countries that are heavily or completely dependent on Ukraine and Russia for agricultural goods have been negatively affected.

Furthermore, the World Food Programme report mentioned that over 800 million people worldwide are going hungry, including over 50 million who are on the brink of famine because of the war in that area, because of the aggression.

Hopefully we eased these problems with a grain corridor initiative, in which Türkiye and the UN played a vital role as mediators. The agreement, which established a corridor for grain export from Russia and Ukraine through the Black Sea, has been reached on 22 July in İstanbul.

Member States should support this grain corridor and participate in efforts to extend the deadline of this agreement.

Türkiye, as the only actor who can establish a dialogue with both sides in the war, pioneered the solution to the food crisis. Turkish diplomatic success to open a grain corridor clearly showed us how important it is to keep the dialogue channels open to achieve positive solutions.

However, the grain corridor only covers the agricultural products stored from the previous year's harvest. Additionally, the blockade does not only halt the grain export, but it also halted the fertiliser export as well.

Russia, along with Ukraine, is the world's largest exporter of fertilisers. Thus, since the start of the blockade, farmers all around the globe had to reduce the use of fertiliser, and this will cause a decrease in agricultural production globally.

That is a very important issue.

I thank you very much for your tolerance.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you.

And again, please stick to the 3 minutes, because otherwise you take the time of other colleagues.

Next in the debate is Mr Paulo PISCO, from Portugal.

You have the floor.

Mr Paulo PISCO (Portugal, SOC): Thank you Mr Chairman.

Congratulations to the rapporteur for this much updated report.

Dear colleagues,

We should address directly from this Assembly to Mr Putin, ask him to stop immediately the war in Ukraine and leave all the territories illegally occupied, including Crimea. All the referendums done since 2014 are an obscene violation of international law.

All along these eight months of war Mr Putin didn't achieve any of its objectives and he will not achieve any, unless he prefers mutual destruction. But even though, he will always be defeated.

Mr Putin, you have been, since the beginning of the invasion, manipulating and lying to your people, saying it was a special military operation. But today, according to some sources, you have in your hands maybe close to 80 000 deaths of your own people.

Your military capacities are now weakening faster and the moral of Russian troops are destroyed. They don't want to fight any more to feed your imperialistic and deadly fantasy. And now, you are calling to death hundreds of thousands of reservists, while hundreds of thousand others are running away from your insane war, even knowing the risks of their escape.

NATO, European Union, Council of Europe and other organisations are stronger and united than ever, while your economy is in collapse and your people are suffering and despair. And because of this, you are forced to use more and more repression to silence the voices protesting against your brutal dictatorship.

Mr Putin, swallow your pride and recognise that your expansionist fantasy is destroying also your country. You wanted to make Russia great again, but instead you are destroying all prospects of future of your country and of your people, that in reality you despise. Your regime is falling apart and you are more isolated than ever, internally and externally. Even China is stepping away from you.

Stop the barbarism. Respect international law, human rights and sovereignty of nations. Don't turn the world into a jungle with no law nor moral.

Killing more and more people, destroying Ukraine, and blackmailing the world with food and energy, will not give you the victory. On the contrary, it will destroy you faster.

You have no way out. You will be judged for your war crimes and crimes against humanity, for the inhumane war you brought with no reason.

Justice must be done and the only place you will have in history will be in jail.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Paulo.

Next I call on the debate Mr Jacek PROTASIEWICZ from Poland.

You have the floor.

Mr Jacek PROTASIEWICZ (Poland, EPP/CD): Thank you, Mr President.

Dear colleagues,

Following an excellent speech delivered this morning to our assembly by Ukrainian President Mr Volodymyr ZELENSKY, I believe it should be reiterated that Russian aggression against Ukraine, which started almost eight months ago, is a brutal violation of any international law including this accepted and signed by the Russian Federation.

The only reason it started was imperial ambitions of Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin and the rest of Russian leadership.

The war is simply unjustified and extremely bloody. Already thousands of innocent people lost their lives. Many of them were earlier brutally tortured and simply executed. Almost one third of Ukrainian population lost their homes and were forced to leave the country and look for shelters abroad.

Recent massive shellings of many Ukrainian cities were targeted precisely to residential areas and civil infrastructure, such as schools, kindergarten, and children playgrounds in parks.

All of that is a clear proof that those who are in charge of political and military powers in Russia are ready to use all means to threaten average people of Ukraine and at the same time by suggesting possible use of a nuclear weapons want to terrify a broader international public particularly living here in Europe.

That kind of behaviour should be loudly and openly defined as terrorist behaviour and that is why I will support amendment 7 to the draft resolution in which our assembly may call member states of the Council of Europe to declare the Russian Federation a terrorist regime.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS for the idea to organize this debate and to propose this resolution.

It is very well tailored to what is currently happening in Ukraine and what we are facing there: both bloody war crimes as well as illegal activities such so-called referenda organized only in order to take over parts of a territory of a sovereign state, Ukraine. And I hope sooner or later all those brutal crimes and illegal activities will be put to trial and people responsible for them will be prosecuted and properly sentenced by international tribunals.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Jacek PROTASIEWICZ.

Now we are going to listen to Mr Erkin GADIRLI, from Azerbaijan.

Mr Erkin GADIRLI (Azerbaijan, EC/DA): Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Dear colleagues,

It has already been mentioned here that an ad hoc sub-committee this June visited Ukraine.

I myself, as a member of that sub-committee, together with our colleagues, went to Kyiv, Bucha and Irpin.

Everything that I saw and heard there was very familiar to me, because it reminded me of what had been happening in my country throughout all those 30 years of aggression and occupation.

When the vice-mayor of the city of Irpin asked me if I had any question, I humbly said no, because I really didn't have any question. Everything was very clear to me.

Dear colleagues, aggression always starts under some very good-looking pretexts. It could be anything. Protection of minorities, restoration of the so-called historical justice, the will of the people. There may also be some cynical arguments like necessity, etc.

Without almost exception, aggression starts under these pretexts.

We now see how it works in Russia, in the case of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Occupation, then fake referendums, then references to the will of the people, persecution of minorities. And now we have a shameless annexation of part of the Ukrainian territory, which now Russia claims to be a part of the Russian Federation.

I don't know if you follow the Russian television discussions, what the Russian officials and public figures say. Now they define the actions of the Ukrainian army, which are completely in compliance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, which is self-defence, they call those actions aggression against the Russian Federation.

This is complete nonsense.

Anyway, without taking much further of your time, I would like to thank Mr Rapporteur, our dear friend Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS, for this report. I will vote for it and I'm sure that everyone will do the same.

Thank you very much.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Erkin GADIRLI.

Next in the debate I call Ms Oleksandra USTINOVA from Ukraine.

You have the floor, Madam Oleksandra USTINOVA.

Ms Oleksandra USTINOVA (Ukraine, ALDE): Thank you so much dear colleagues,

I am really grateful to the rapporteurs for the report that has been presented.

I keep hearing here questions about diplomacy, and to what extent "we should support Ukraine". I can tell you that we as Ukrainians have always left a space for diplomacy.

Our first step in the 1990s was the Budapest Memorandum, when we gave up our nuclear weapons.

We took the second step in 2014, when we partially gave up the territories that were occupied by Russia in Crimea and Donbas. They were occupied and the world was silent.

But today when we have all of these cities bombed, shelled, our children die every day on the street, we will not be silent.

I'm asking you not to be silent. We have to call Russians what they are.

We have to call this regime the terrorist regime, because they're killing our children every day.

We're asking in this resolution to support us with the air defence systems.

This is a protection for our children, so they can go to schools, because thousands of families came back after the summer, and now these children are frightened, these children are killed, and they stay in the bomb shelters.

We're asking in this resolution to admit that the Russian regime is a terrorist regime. Not all Russians, but the regime that is currently there in the Kremlin, telling us that the protection of ourselves is a crime and that we are fascists because we are protecting our children.

You know I keep hearing to what extent we should be supporting Ukraine. I can tell you to what extent: to the extent that none of the Ukrainian kids dies just going to school, on the children's playground. This is the extent for us: to the extent that we get our territories back, because everybody has seen what Russia has done to the Ukrainian population there.

The only reason why they did it is because they were Ukrainians, they spoke Ukrainian, and they wanted to live in their own country.

That's why there is no other solution for us, but to protect our children, to fight for our territories, and to get our people back. Otherwise they will continue destroying us.

I'm asking everyone today to support this resolution and every amendment, because every word in this resolution means a lot for the Ukrainians.

It means a lot for every Ukrainian child. Trust me. There is no family in Ukraine who has not lost someone.

A friend of mine and my dear colleague who sits next to me in the parliament lost her husband because he was evacuating people from the occupied territories. That's actually what the Red Cross had to do.

We have every family in Ukraine which has lost someone, and every word in this resolution means a lot for us.

So please support this.

Thank you.

(Applause)

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Madam Oleksandra USTINOVA.

Next in the debate I call Mr Ahmet YILDIZ from Türkiye.

You have the floor, Ahmet.

Mr Ahmet YILDIZ (Türkiye, NR): Thank you, Mister President.

Certainly, the war in Ukraine, the war of aggression in Ukraine, has come to a very critical stage, so we have to discuss it comprehensively. That is why I even wrote the Turkish proposal for the current affairs debate on food security to give the rapporteur to focus on the core issue, and he did it very well.

When we look at the field, Ukraine continues its successful contra-offensive in regaining its territory rightfully. We should uphold it but, on the other hand, Russia is not backing down. This partial mobilisation and a hint of nuclear threat is something we should take seriously. I blame this hint of nuclear threat, as a person of the region and as a diplomat, it should be deterred in words and in actions by our countries and by our leaders.

Of course, as President Zelenskyy replied sometimes by letter of diplomacy it is not possible. During war, during high sentiments, but during all history of humanity, we developed other means – by indirect means, by multilateral means – to address some aspects of the conflicts, such as exchanging prisoners of war or protecting health institutions, protecting food security, and curing wounded people.

Türkiye, as having a specific role in this region, and as having the specific responsibilities, which control the Turkish straits, access to the Black Sea and responsible of the implementation of the Montreal Convention, keeping the balance between the security of Riparian and non-Riparian States, had to take some initiatives to this end. As Mr EKER said, we succeeded in brokering this Grain Initiative. It means somehow unblocking the Ukrainian ports, giving some important revenues for Ukraine and Ukrainian farmers to sustain the agriculture also for the coming years and also to sustain both food security and agriculture for the next years because the grain is not just food it is also seeds to be sowed for the coming period.

Till now, it seems that around seven million pounds have reached the international markets. On the other hand, we succeeded exchange of some prisoners including 200 Ukrainian as we did succeed in Azovstal Türkiye will continue to do this. Türkiye always mentioned by UAV (Unmanned aerial vehicle) but it is not just on that Türkiye developed very structural defence industrial relationship with Ukraine. But also, on area on the table to support Ukraine.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Ahmet YILDIZ.

Now I call in the debate Ms Anne-Mari VIROLAINEN from Finland.

Madam Anne-Mari VIROLAINEN, you have the floor.

Ms Anne-Mari VIROLAINEN (Finland, EPP/CD): Thank you, Mr President.

I would like to thank Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS for a comprehensive report.

I also want to thank Mr Oleksii GONCHARENKO, Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA, and other Ukrainian colleagues for your powerful speeches.

Our support for Ukraine is solid as a rock. We feel and live by your bravery and look up to your determination.

We also want to guarantee that in Ukraine, freedom and democracy prevails. Ukraine must be supported by all means necessary.

That means that Ukraine shall receive all military support in order to push Russia out of their sovereign country.

As Ukrainians have made Russia impotent in the battlefield, the Russian regime has started to destroy infrastructure and kill, torture and rape civilians. This careless breach of international law must be countered by feasible precautions to avoid and minimise the risk to civilians. This is a fundamental principle of the law of armed conflict.

As President ZELENSKYI already mentioned, European anti-airstrike performance in Ukraine must be reinforced and the European defence industry ramp-up must be continued, for providing the vital weaponry for Ukraine's self-defence.

Dear President,

Russia behaves as a terrorist. It tries to destroy Ukraine's energy infrastructure and kill civilians. We should designate a terrorist-behaving state as a terrorist state.

Russia regards basic human rights and international law as weakness. We have shown and will keep on showing it is the other way around. The power and worth of Europe comes from our values.

As already mentioned here, those responsible will be held accountable. Peace negotiations should only be started on conditions of Ukraine. I ask the Council of Europe to support the proposal to establish a tribunal for prosecuting Russian war crimes.

Thank you.

Slava Ukraini.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you.

Next in the debate I call Mr Percy DOWNE from Canada.

You have the floor.

Mr Percy DOWNE (Canada): Thank you Chair,

The Canadian delegation appreciates the opportunity to participate in these meetings, as it allows us to keep up to date on events in Europe and exchange information regarding, among other things, the war in Ukraine.

It is now clear that, when Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24th, it was setting out to destroy the nationhood and the statehood of an independent country in Europe. It did so in complete violation of international law.

Canadians, like people the world over, were shocked and horrified when Russia launched its unprovoked and illegal invasion of Ukraine, particularly in light of President Vladimir Putin's repeated claims that he had no such intentions.

In the intervening months, Europe has experienced sights not seen in generations, and the world faces the greatest threat to the established international order since the Second World War.

Canada has responded strongly to these events, both because of Canadians' belief in a rules-based international order and because, as home to the world's thirds largest Ukrainian population, we feel a special attachment to that country. From the mines and mills of eastern Canada to the prairies and farms of western Canada, people from Ukraine and their descendants have helped to build our country, and we greatly value their contribution.

Since February, the government of Canada has committed or delivered over 600 million dollars in military assistance to Ukraine, ranging from helmets to heavy artillery, and continues to train Ukrainian troops to defend their homeland. Also, the government has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in humanitarian and financial assistance both to the government of Ukraine and to Ukrainians displaced by the Russian invasion. On top of this, individual Canadians and charities have made their own contributions, reflecting and strengthening the long-standing bonds between our countries. And, working with our allies, Canada has imposed targeted sanctions against more that 1,400 individuals.

Much has been done, but much more needs to be done. Even if this war were to end tomorrow – and, sadly, it will not end tomorrow – its effects will be wide ranging and long lasting. Large areas of Ukraine have been devastated by fighting, a continent has been thrown into turmoil, and an entire people will bear the scars of war for generations to come.

Colleagues, we must all recognise that Mr Vladimir Putin is running a criminal and terrorist organisation masquerading as a government.

We will stand with the rest of the world in defending Ukraine.

Thank you, colleagues.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Percy, for being here with us.

Next in the debate I call Ms Jane STEVENSON from the United Kingdom.

Jane, you have the floor.

Ms Jane STEVENSON (United Kingdom, EC/DA): Thank you, Mister President.

And I'd like to thank Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS for this debate at such a dark time in our continent.

The themes we've seen over the past days, retaliatory attacks by Russia on Ukraine, have been disgusting and horrific and inhumane.

While Ukraine takes victory on the battlefields, Russia retaliates in people's homes, in people's streets, on people's children, and on the people of Ukraine.

It is disgraceful, and this resolution is correct that Russia must be held accountable for these horrific war crimes.

We all must bear that responsibility to not let these crimes go unpunished, to monitor them, to record them.

And it is always an honour to stand in this chamber with our Ukrainian colleagues and we've heard some harrowing evidence of the atrocities that have been committed and that I'm sure will continue to be committed until we stop Russia.

Russia cannot win this war. It would be at best a Pyrrhic victory, because if the past months have shown us anything it is the bravery, the determination, and the lionheartedness of the Ukrainian people.

Even if Russia were to occupy Ukraine, that victory would surely be temporary, it would result in decades of unrest, disobedience, and it cannot be allowed to happen.

The war must end quickly and all of us in this place can urge our governments to help Ukraine.

They need weapons, as we've heard repeatedly.

I was really delighted that our defence secretary, Ben Wallace, announced this morning the United Kingdom will be sending more medium-range air-to-air missile defence systems to Ukraine.

I'm delighted that German air defence arrived yesterday.

I hope this will be the first of a lot more air defences that are sent there.

If your country has any weapons, please, urge your governments.

Ukraine needs them now.

We cannot delay.

This war needs to end as quickly as possible, so we save as many civilian lives as possible.

I want to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with my friends in Ukraine.

I want to reiterate the commitment of the United Kingdom, that of our past prime minister and that of our new prime minister.

And I will end with her words: "Ukraine can win. Ukraine must win. And Ukraine will win. *Slava Ukraini*".

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Madam Jane STEVENSON.

Now next in the debate I call Mr Domagoj HAJDUKOVIĆ from Croatia.

You have the floor, sir.

Mr Domagoj HAJDUKOVIĆ (Croatia, SOC): Thank you, Mr Chair, dear colleagues,

First of all, let me thank Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS for this report.

I hope this is the last report that we will debate about Russian aggression in Ukraine while it is still lasting - in other words I hope that the war will be over soon.

I too have visited Ukraine this summer in the framework of the parliamentary platform United for Ukraine.

We are parliamentarians from across the European and world countries, supporting Ukraine and lobbying for Ukraine.

So, I do urge you, colleagues, who wish to join us - either contact me or find us on Twitter. We have national coordinators in almost all European countries.

But colleagues, what I've seen around Kiev, in Makariv, in Andriyiv, in Bucha, in Irpin - and these are only from the first stages of the war - was atrocious.

We are really talking about the most heinous crimes against humanity.

We are talking about genocide.

We are talking about senseless loss of life.

This, dear colleagues, does deserve and must have legal prosecution and consequences for those responsible, from the top, from those who issued orders, to those who executed them.

But also, I think this is an important time to think about the future as well. The rebuilding of Ukraine after the war.

Unfortunately, we cannot compensate for the lives lost, but the buildings and infrastructures must be rebuilt, and the territories currently occupied must be returned to Ukraine, either by military or peaceful means.

I do advocate for peaceful means to avoid loss of life, but unfortunately from today's perspective that seems impossible.

But regardless by which means that they return to Ukraine, let us be clear on one point: Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Crimea are Ukraine. No sham referendums, no theatrical exhibitions will change that. Until these parts are back into Ukraine, the war will not be over.

So, I wish to reiterate my support and the support of the Croatian people, who can really empathise with Ukrainians, because we went through a homeland war, unfortunately very similar to what they're going through now - our support and wish that this war will be over soon.

Furthermore, let me reiterate the need to legally prosecute all the perpetrators of these heinous crimes in Ukraine.

Slava Ukraini [continues with two more slogans in Ukrainian language]

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Next in the debate I call Mr Serhii SOBOLIEV from Ukraine.

You have the floor.

Mr Serhii SOBOLIEV (Ukraine, EPP/CD): "We have already fulfilled all our tasks for today". This was the phrase of bloody dictator Putin, which he announced the same day when the biggest missile attack destroyed hospitals, energy systems, in the twelve biggest cities of Ukraine.

So it was his reaction when he know that any one military object was destroyed. But he fulfilled all his tasks.

Second, if you can imagine what is now on occupied territories, where tortures, each day tortures, by the secret services of Russia against civilians.

The name of these organisations are filtration camps where thousands and thousands of our citizens are in horrible conditions.

Concentration camps, it's for military, where also tortures are a main principle.

A very interesting thing, whoever has the possibility to watch Nazi concentration camps in Poland or in other countries.

Russia opened a new item in this sphere. Its so called mobile crematorium in order to hide all their war crimes. What is this?

We tried to discuss whether it is a terrorist regime or not. It's a fascist regime. We do not understand this still.

The second, not the first person in the Russian Federation, Mr Medvedev, the former president, declared that our main item to exclude Ukrainian nation. What is this? After this it will be other nations.

What are we waiting for?

I think that this excellent resolution is the best way for peace, because we can find here everything that we try in the same way not to put in our previous resolutions.

I think that we need to support this resolution for everything, for future peace, to fulfil the main task that President Macron declared today, to free all territories of Ukraine to the 1991 as it was to international law.

Thank you for your support.

Slava Ukraini.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Serhii.

Now I call in the debate Ms Yuliia OVCHYNNYKOVA from Ukraine as well.

Yuliia, you have the floor.

Ms Yuliia OVCHYNNYKOVA (Ukraine, ALDE): Dear President, Dear Assembly,

At first thank you very much for this historical and incredible important report, dear Mister Emanuelis ZINGERIS.

Dear colleagues, in the eyes of the whole world this brutal and provocative illegal full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukrainian state, against Ukraine nation, has been escalated.

Russia detonated the world order, global security, and severely violated international law, all norms of the democratic civilisation, and the world.

It is really genocide against Ukraine nation, against Ukraine state.

But it's also a numerous ecocide against nature and crime against environment in the whole Europe. And it's serious food security risk for the global world.

Today I want to focus on the environmental consequences of the this invasion, because everyone of us has their own rights, basic rights to a healthy environment, and every of us thinks about our future and of course about the future of our children.

So, human activists fighting in Ukraine and the gross violation of human rights to a healthy environment of Ukrainian and Europeans.

But today Russia has been threatening and blackmailing the world with a nuclear catastrophe. They are cynically demonstrating their violations of all the possible norms. They are proud of crossing all the red lines and of all destruction they did.

The majority of nature resources are damaged and destroyed in our country. We fixed more than 2 000 accidents in environment. We have more than 2.9 million hectares destroyed of this Emerald Network Territory.

Under the occupation, are more than 40% of natural protected areas. And Russian attacks continue to the infrastructure, to the world supply system and to the energy system.

And it's really being polluted and numerous toxic and dangerous substances in the waters. But it's really played on all the water of the global world system.

And of course I want to add about the animals. It's the silent witness of this war.

And for us and for all world thank for this your support it's symbols of our strengths for our life. It's symbols of humanity of our people.

And just some words about one of the symbols, it's Crimea.

On Ukrainian Crimea, some years ago this brought from the Crimea who is only one family member left of the children of his house in the residence district in Dnipro: sitting, crying, lost.

Crimea is the evidence and symbol of the tragedy of our country.

I ask every of our member states to support, support this resolution, and support us for fighting for our independence and our lives.

Thank you very much.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Yuliia.

Next in the debate I call Mr Givi MIKANADZE, from Georgia.

You have the floor.

Mr Givi MIKANADZE (Georgia, SOC): Dear Mr President,

The whole of the civilised world is witnessing Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine.

Since the very first day, Georgia has been condemning Russia's military aggression on Ukraine and has been providing its firm support to Ukraine and to the Ukrainian people, expressing its political support and humanitarian aid.

Georgia is a leader among 191 countries per capita in the provision of humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

We have accommodated 32 000 refugees from Ukraine, who were provided with free accommodation, meals, and all necessary assistance.

From a political point of view, Georgia was a co-sponsor of the UN Security Council resolution as it was among 141 countries that adopted the UN resolution reaffirming Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

Additionally, Georgia was one of 38 signatory countries that applied to the International Criminal Court in The Hague to investigate war crimes committed in Ukraine during Russia's unlawful invasion.

Georgia supported a suspension of the membership and later expulsion of the Russian Federation from the membership of the Council of Europe.

I would also like to add that in no way will Georgia be used as a tool to bypass the sanctions.

This is of primary importance for Georgia, and we will follow this principle to the end.

Russian aggression in Ukraine is substantially altering global security, and the South Caucasus is no exception.

In parallel to Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine, Russia has intensified the process of annexation of the occupied territories of Georgia, and continues its terrible provocations on the ground.

These are very worrisome, and seriously complicate the situation in these occupied regions.

Until this day, we in Georgia are facing the so-called borderisation process conducted illegally by Russian troops almost on a daily basis.

I welcome that this crucial general policy debate on the consequences of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine is at the centre of the autumn plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Although we support the draft resolution; we also see that there are some issues to be amended in the text.

Georgia, member of a civilised world and a true friend of Ukraine, suffered from Russia's unjustified military ingression in 2008.

20% of our territories are still occupied by Russia. Russian troops are illegally present even 40 kilometres away from the capital, Tbilisi.

We understand the consequences of Russia's aggression in Ukraine better than others do.

That is why I want to reiterate that Russia's continued occupation of Georgia and Ukraine undermines European security architecture and the rules-based international order.

Therefore, I call the Parliamentary Assembly to reaffirm its unwavering support for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, as well as express our full support and solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Givi MIKANADZE.

Next in the debate I call Mr Oleksandr MEREZHKO, from Ukraine.

You have the floor.

Mr Oleksandr MEREZHKO (Ukraine, EC/DA): Thank you, Chair.

What can be done and should be done to help Ukraine to survive and defend itself and to stop Russian aggression?

First of all, we need to recognise Russia as a terrorist state, with all the consequences. Such consequences as total isolation, severance of all diplomatic, economic, political, cultural contexts.

We should remember that Russia is not a state in the true sense of this word. Russia is a global genocidal terroristic gang, not more.

Second, the best guarantee of protection of human rights is to provide Ukraine with all necessary heavy weaponry. Because heavy weaponry right now saves lives of civilians in Ukraine.

Third, we need to recognise the genocide of the Ukrainian nation. We see that Russia deliberately is targeting civilian objects and civilians. Russia's ultimate goal is to exterminate Ukrainians as a nation, and they're not hiding this goal. They're talking about this openly.

Regrettably, the Russian population supports the genocide of Ukrainians. We should have no illusions about that.

Fourth, members of the Council of Europe should freeze and confiscate all Russian assets and property and give these assets to the victims of aggression.

Fifth, we need to establish a special tribunal on the crime of aggression and bring to justice all Russian war criminals, starting with Putin. Stop talking to Putin; he is a war criminal, he should be treated as a war criminal, not more.

Finally, we should restore the reputation of our organisation, and put an end, once and for all, to all these policies of so-called dialogue, which is nothing but an euphemism for the appeasement of the aggressor.

All those who had been involved in the return of the Russian delegation, who had been lobbying for Russia, for this dialogue, should step down.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Oleksandr MEREZHKO.

Next to the debate I call Ms Serap YAŞAR, from Türkiye.

You have the floor, Serap.

Ms Serap YAŞAR (Türkiye, NR): Thank you, Madam and Mr President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking the rapporteur for this extremely important report. Since the beginning of the Russian aggression back in early February, all of us have witnessed so many new challenges affecting Europe and, indeed, the whole world: we find ourselves facing an energy crisis, a security crisis, a food crisis and many more crises. The food crisis we are now facing has had a profound impact on the whole world, in particular those countries which are dependent on cereal exports from Ukraine and Russia.

Given that the right to food is the most important, the most fundamental and the most and vital human right, the question of food security is something that must be treated as a priority. With a view to doing this, we have talked about the consequences of the blockade of the Black Sea during the last session of the Parliamentary Assembly. Since then, Türkiye has stepped up its contacts with Ukraine, Russia and the UN to establish a safe and sure corridor -transit route- for cereals.

I am delighted to remind you that the Initiative on the Safe Transport of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports was finalised on 22 July after long and difficult negotiations.

Under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkey has played an essential role in rolling out this initiative and creating a cereal corridor with the UN. Once again, we have seen the enormous importance of maintaining channels open, so as to guarantee dialogue between leaders in this type of crisis.

The agreement finalised in Istanbul was a major diplomatic success which has had an enormous impact on the lives of millions of people suffering from famine. Since the first vessel was able to cross the Black Sea as part of the agreement, between 1 August and 1 October, more than 240 vessels have transported more than 5.4 million tons of agricultural produce along the cereal corridor.

I would like to underline that Türkiye will continue its efforts to guarantee sustainable peace in the region, while at the same time continuing to play its role as mediator between the two parties.

Our sincere hope is that peace will be achieved without any further wait.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): *Thanks to you, Madam Serap YAŞAR. [in French]*

Next to the debate I call Mr Jeremy CORBYN, from the United Kingdom, but I do not see him yet.

We go to the next speaker, who is Mr Birgir THÓRARINSSON from Iceland.

Birgir, you have to floor.

Mr Birgir THÓRARINSSON (Iceland, EPP/CD): President, our thoughts and prayers are with those who are suffering in Ukraine.

Last month, I went to Kharkiv in Ukraine. I brought iPads from Iceland to children from poor households, to enable them to participate in online schooling because of the war. After 14 hours of travelling by train from Lviv to Kharkiv accompanied by Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA, head of the Ukrainian delegation, I saw the war with my own eyes. I saw the devastation by the Russian invasion: hospitals, schools, homes, kindergartens, food markets, businesses, government buildings and churches had all been destroyed. The evilness of Mr Putin has no limits. But nor does European solidarity.

In the midst of this shocking experience, I got a smile from the children in Kharkiv when they received the iPads from Iceland. In the midst of all this, I saw hope. It is hard to imagine how it is to be an innocent child in a brutal war.

Mr President, in Kharkiv I saw the destruction of the Opera House. I saw how Russia is systematically trying to destroy Ukrainian culture. But they will never succeed, because Ukrainians will never give up. Yesterday, we heard the beautiful performance of the Symphony Orchestra of Kharkiv and opera singers. They came to us; they came from the war zone to bring us joy. Despite their suffering, they brought to us Ukrainian culture. This is truly an inspiring nation.

I encourage all members of this Assembly to see the war by their own eyes and bring hope to the children and people of Ukraine. Resolutions passed in this Assembly are important but they are not enough in war times. Being a parliamentarian is an honour and a privilege. We all have a unique opportunity that we must use to help the people of Ukraine. We, as parliamentarians from 46 countries, must show the world that we are not afraid of the Russian aggression. We are not afraid of the dictator in Moscow.

Let us not forget - all through history dictators always fall. Always. May God bless President ZELENSYY and the brave people of Ukraine and keep them safe and free.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Birgir THÓRARINSSON.

Next I call in the debate Mr Geraint DAVIES, from the United Kingdom.

You have the floor.

Mr Geraint DAVIES (United Kingdom, SOC): Mr President, we stand today in solidarity against Mr Vladimir Putin's grotesque escalation of missile attacks launched to the cities across Ukraine, from Belarus, from Russia, from the Caspian Sea, from Crimea. Now, half the downpour of missiles may have been intercepted by air defences, but half of course hit their targets, killing civilians, taking out water, taking out heating installations, to terrorise the population into submission.

Ukraine urgently needs more air defence as we've already heard from President Volodymyr ZELENSKY. They've only got 10% of their needs - there is a two and a half thousand kilometre border. We know even in Belarus they've got rockets, missiles, drones from Iran, attacking all our freedoms.

Mr Vladimir Putin knows his war is illegal, as Russia, of course, was expelled from the Council of Europe for breaking rules that they'd signed up to in terms of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and then committed an unprovoked attack on a sovereign democracy, unleashing mass killings now on civilians.

He knows his referenda are also illegal in occupied areas. They're done at gunpoint - they aren't even done with the consent of the Russian people, who wouldn't vote for more land they don't need for the blood of Russian soldiers.

It's clearly farcical to suggest that that referendum somehow legitimises the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

He is losing ground, and so he's escalating into state terrorism, targeting civilians on an industrial scale, in breach of the Geneva Convention.

His mass call-up has backfired; those who've been keeping their heads down in Russia are now resisting their sons being sent to their death.

Hundreds of thousands are leaving Russia.

The talk of a 5% income tax increase to pay for more guns isn't going down well, to pay for land Russia doesn't need.

Now we have the misinformation campaign that if Putin were replaced, he would be replaced by someone even worse, which is another act of propaganda desperation.

Meanwhile, China stands in support of Russia, knowing that the fall of Ukraine would trigger a green light for the invasion of Taiwan.

What's more, of course it is rendering Russia as a dependent state on China, so vast swathes of land now leased, of course, by China, of Russian land, will eventually become Russian.

So we've got this farcical situation where Russia is taking over other people's territories. Over time its own territories will be taken, because it's cutting itself away from the economic and political ties to the west.

Ultimately, we want a return in Russia of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and economic relations.

This is the price of peace - but that price will only be won with complete military withdrawal, with international justice pursued by this body, and reconciliation.

That task will require a doubling of all our efforts, in all our countries, to ensure that this brutal attack, and such brutal attacks in the future never ever succeed.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): The next speaker in our debate is Mr Bernard FOURNIER, from France.

Mister FOURNIER, you have the floor.

Mr Bernard FOURNIER (France, EPP/CD): Mr President, dear colleagues,

Confronted with important setbacks for its army and great logistical difficulties, the Russian Federation has chosen to intensify the conflict, having recourse, once again, to bombing, trying to destroy strategic infrastructure, particularly energy infrastructure, and bringing about terror.

I vigorously condemn these bombings, just as I obviously condemn the sham referenda organized to justify annexing Ukrainian territory. Ukraine's territorial integrity must be respected. I am very pleased to that end with the vote we had yesterday in the United Nations General Assembly, despite the large number of abstentions.

We are also discovering in parallel the crimes committed by the Russian military. Mass graves, which show the scale of these crimes, which must be documented and must not go unpunished. This terror strategy is also being applied by Vladimir Putin's regime in Russia: the mass mobilisation decided on 21 September has caused many of the Russians concerned to flee their country. The issue of how to receive these persons and the status they should receive will rapidly become very current. We are also seeing during this mobilisation campaign that it is particularly targeting minority ethnic groups. It is also unacceptable that prisoners throughout Russia be sent to fight in Ukraine.

Measures limiting public freedoms are also ever more numerous. A new law is prohibiting any form of criticism of the army, which was already punished with 15 years of imprisonment. Opposition demonstrations are also being repressed. Russia is being smothered and any form of criticism of its military operations is being rooted out, including at the highest level.

I would also like to congratulate Vladimir Kara-Murza on receiving the Václav Havel Prize.

As matters progress, Russia's regime will become ever more radical, and we see now that there is an ever-present threat of recourse to nuclear weapons. This threat must be taken seriously, but we should not give in to it; we must continue to support Ukraine, who is fighting to preserve its sovereignty.

This war is reminding us that peace is fragile and our values have not been acquired for once and for all. So, this organisation needs to be ever stronger, so as to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Bernard FOURNIER.

The last speaker in the debate, because the I have to interrupt the list of speakers, will be Ms Olena KHOMENKO, from Ukraine.

You have the floor.

Ms Olena KHOMENKO (Ukraine, EC/DA): Dear Mr President,

Dear rapporteur,

Dear colleagues,

Every day brings more grave news about Russia's atrocities in Ukraine.

Recently, Zaporizhia has become among the favourite targets of Russia's military, alongside with other cities.

Other recent outrageous actions of the Russian military include shooting down convoys of civilians who were trying to escape the occupied territories.

A few days ago, we were shocked by a video of Ukrainians being shot and thrown in a mass grave near Kupiansk.

Endless list of horrors. Endless reports of other war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide of Ukrainians. More and more terrifying cases are being unveiled with every new liberated territory.

But the most terrifying is not the fact of these acts of extermination. What's most terrifying is to understand that international legal order has become paralysed and incapable of protecting human lives. Russia brutally destroys it and enjoys impunity.

With no perspective for fair justice and inevitability of punishment, the Russian political leadership continues to send deadly orders to kill the innocent.

Europe should stand resolute to vigorously defend human life as the highest value. It should stay strong to defend the international legal order.

Political declarations and resolutions are not enough. In fact, there is no international order in place if we cannot ensure punishment for those who are undermining it.

The rule breaker has to be punished with all the severity of the law. Otherwise, impunity will become an attractive invitation for other assertive regimes to follow the line of Russia's actions to pursue their ambitions at the expense of other nations.

It is the primary responsibility of European nations to show that such brutal behaviour in Europe shall not be tolerated and will be severely persecuted. We are the hosts of the continent and not the hostages of one insane regime of criminals.

Inevitability of punishment should be a crystal-clear message for Putin and his decision makers. Now they feel themselves impune and immune because they do understand that they will most likely escape charges under ICC procedures. But they have to be charged.

Justice must prevail if we want to preserve the legal order.

This has to be done through an establishment of a special tribunal on Russian political leadership for crimes of aggression. If it's approved, and supplementary to the ICC, this mechanism will enable to deliver swift individual sentences for Russia's top political leadership.

As you all heard today, the President of Ukraine attaches high priority to the issue. This view is widely shared among Ukrainian politicians and wider society. A respective working group on the tribunal has been just formed by Presidential decree. An inter-faction group has been formed in the Verkhovna Rada. Intense activities happening around this issue with foreign political decision makers.

I'm finishing, Mr President.

To this end, we welcome respective references in the resolutions of this Assembly and its executive Ministerial Committee. But more actions have to be taken. The process on its practical establishment has to start now to signal to Russia's political leadership that is serious.

Thank you, dear colleagues.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Olena.

As I said, you are the last speaker in this debate.

I have to interrupt the list of speakers. The speeches of members on the speakers list who have been present during the debate but have not been able to speak may be given to the Table Office for publication in the Official Report. I remind colleagues that typewritten texts can be submitted, electronically if possible, no later than four hours after the list of speakers is interrupted.

I call Mr ZINGERIS, Rapporteur, to reply. You have 5 minutes to respond, Emanuelis.

Emanuelis, you have to take the right microphone, that one is not functioning.

No, the other one, take the other one.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Rapporteur): I am sorry. That was a tragicomic mistake.

So, from my point, all speakers especially the last, Ms Olena KHOMENKO, starting with Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA, of course, the other representatives mentioned all points that are inside of the topic. All points inside of the report. So, thank you for supporting. Thank you. Thank you for supporting the topics inside of the report, and I would like to say, coming from point to point, that you covered in your speeches all paragraphs from our report. Thank you for supporting all of them.

I think this, Mr Tiny KOX, this Assembly actually designed like that. It was here, probably in 1960, that approved the dangerous delegation proposal not to recognise the occupation of the Baltic states. Can you imagine? And it was approved with unanimous voting – in 1960 – by the Soviet Union. That means after Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Now, we are facing a stage where, for the first time in the history, probably, Mr Tiny KOX, we have other examples but for the first time, dear Ms Despina CHATZIVASSILIOU-TSOVILIS, in our history we have such unanimous support to a resolution, when we are facing after the Second World War a major violation against international law and the international community, and actually mankind.

The voting yesterday in the United Nations means mankind. The act of Russia is against all spectrum of issues related to mankind including everything: food crisis, attack against democracy, human rights, attack against sovereignty of the countries, not looking to the four regions by the sham artificial referendums declared Russian territory.

We understand that it will be like a joke if there were not hundreds of thousands of victims behind that. It is an unprecedented event, and we will continue, Mr Tiny KOX, in our Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, we will continue to have the reports. The reports will continue in the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy about this issue, and we will come to the other steps reacting to the brutality of Russia if Russia will not stop, and Russia's regime is officially declared here in the resolution as a terrorist regime in Russia.

So, from my point of view, I would like to go to a few points, especially to the special ad hoc international tribunal to prosecute the crimes of aggression against Ukraine. We must be clear in our determination to ensure the comprehensive system of accountability for a series of violation of international law arising from the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine. We should have a register of damages, let's say. International compensation mechanism including a register of the damages. We would like to encourage all member states to open their legal systems for the Ukrainian victims during the war of aggression, asking to start the procedures even underway to the international special tribunal, to make cases against Russian violators of human rights, which means Russia's aggression, violations on the occupied territories. Bring back immediately Ukrainian citizens from becoming captives in Russia. Bring back Ukrainian citizens who they brought from occupied territories to Russia for so-called re-education. It is absolutely purely a Joseph Stalin-type of action by Russia, reminding us that Russia continues the bad habits – terrible habits – of dictator Joseph Stalin.

So, we have here an appeal, Mr President, dear friends. An appeal to the upcoming heads of states of governments of the Council of Europe member states to gather for a fourth summit, putting the issue of accountability of the Russian Federation and increasing support to Ukraine at the top of the agenda of the upcoming summit. The summit should dedicate enough time to the item of the Russian aggression, to such an exceptional human tragedy.

So, the resolution that will be passed by us, includes everything just mentioned by you, but we have in mind that Russia started their occupational strategies, including Georgia, Moldova - it was 2008 before, in Moldova, Transnistria region, and now Ukraine. We should stop Russia, which is becoming a terrorist entity against all of us, and we should praise Ukraine for doing mature homework in human rights, even during the bombing.

Thank you for all the laws done, dear friends, from the Ukrainian delegation, from all parties in your parliament linked to the standards of human rights of the Council of Europe. You are doing that now under bombing and under the terrible sound of sirens. Thank you for being a mature democracy and fighting for all of us. We are ready to be until the end of victory on your side.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Emanuelis.

Thank you, Mister Rapporteur.

Does the Vice-chairman of the Committee Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN wish to speak?

That is so.

You have 2 minutes, Kimmo.

Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN (Finland, SOC, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy): Thank you very much, Mr President.

I will speak on behalf of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy here.

First of all, I would like say thanks very much to Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS, the rapporteur, for this very, very important report.

Earlier this morning, President Volodymyr ZELENSKYY emphasised how the entire international community must play a strong role during the current aggression.

This urgent debate, exactly, is a small but significant demonstration that the Assembly intends to keep denouncing the Russian aggression, and that it will push to keep Russia accountable for its aggression.

The draft resolution approved in the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy sends a clear and straightforward message regarding the outrageous escalations by the Russian Federation.

And I stress, first: the sham referendums must be considered null and void, and with no legal or political effects.

Secondly, the attempted annexation of these regions by the Russian Federation is an affront to international law and will never be recognised.

Thirdly, threats of nuclear warfare are reckless, apocalyptic, and in breach of international law.

Colleagues,

Given the unprecedented threat of the Russian aggression to the most basic values of the Council of Europe, the draft resolution also appeals to the heads of state and government of Council of Europe member states to gather for a fourth summit and put the issue of accountability of the Russian Federation high on the agenda, exactly what Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS just said.

We also support from the Committee side in that way.

The resolution was unanimously adopted in Committee this morning. It was enriched by numerous amendments, most of which were supported unanimously.

I count on all colleagues to join us in sending a clear and united message.

Thank you very much.

Mr Stéphane BERGERON (Canada): *Speech not pronounced (Rules of Procedure, Art. 31.2), only available in French.*

Mr Bertrand BOUYX (France, ALDE): *Speech not pronounced (Rules of Procedure, Art. 31.2), only available in French.*

Mr Alain MILON (France, EPP/CD): *Speech not pronounced (Rules of Procedure, Art. 31.2), only available in French.*

Mr Francesco SORBARA (Canada): *(Undelivered speech, Rules of Procedure Art. 31.2)*

Honourable colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this current affairs debate. Russia's unprovoked aggression in Ukraine is now more than seven months old. During that time, we have witnessed events within Europe that we had all hoped were consigned to the past. Mass graves and war crimes committed on a large scale. Open threats of the use of nuclear weapons. The annexation of territory by force.

Add to that list the weaponization of hunger. Make no mistake about the message that Russia has sent to the world as it continues to impede the production and export of grain and other agricultural products in Ukraine. Russia is willing to threaten millions with the possibility of starvation in order to get what it wants. And the effects are already dire. The World Food Programme has warned that the world is on the verge of a "hunger catastrophe" as 50 million people across 45 countries are currently "teetering on the edge of famine."

Faced with an impossible situation as the cost of aid remains more than 44% above 2019 levels, humanitarian organizations are having to make difficult decisions to prioritize those most in need. Since August, the World Food Programme has taken the extraordinary step of chartering ships to export tens of thousands of tons of grain through the Black Sea to countries like Afghanistan and Ethiopia as part of the export agreement brokered by the UN and Türkiye, navigating conflicts on both sides to get food where it is most needed.

But interruptions to Black Sea shipping is only part of Russia's weaponization of hunger. The Food and Agriculture Organization estimated in July that Ukrainian cereal production would drop by 40 percent this year due to reductions in harvested land and limited access to inputs, meaning that the effects of this terrible conflict will continue to be felt by the world's hungry as harvest after harvest in Ukraine succumbs to the realities of war.

We are seven months into a conflict that Russian leaders expected to win in a matter of weeks, and those same leaders have turned to increasingly drastic measures in an attempt to achieve their goals, or as it now appears, stave off defeat. Perhaps no measure has been more callously indifferent to the suffering of vulnerable people than Russia's weaponization of hunger.

Thank you.

Mr Héctor VASCONCELOS (Mexico): *(Undelivered speech, Rules of Procedure Art. 31.2)*

Mister President,

Dear colleagues,

In the context of the enormous tragedy of the war in Ukraine, I would like to bring to your attention Mexico's proposal, stated last September, which, in my view, has been relegated by the international community.

The initiative by Mexico's President, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, proposes the establishment of a truce, between the parts and in the battlefield, that would allow for the creation of a special Commission, which would seek a political dialogue that, in turn, could bring about a political settlement.

Possible members of such a Commission would be His Holiness Pope Francis, the Secretary General of the United Nations and the Prime Minister of India. Such Statesmen of world standing, lacking in local interests, would perhaps help in establishing negotiations which are missing today.

Of course, the proposal is unusual and daring, and stands far from usual diplomatic practices. However, circumstances in Ukraine, both in geopolitical and economic terms, force us to find new and unorthodox means that could open up new horizons. This is especially important given the obvious inefficacy of standard procedures.

As the war continues and negotiations fail, millions of human beings die, are injured or forcibly displaced and destruction in entire regions turns the land into a true Wasteland, as T.S. Eliot would have said.

The ghost of nuclear weapons, which at the beginning of the war was unmentionable, is now, just a few months later, a possibility that is being discussed every day when we talk about the biggest international conflict since the Second World War. In facing novel situations, we must think in a creative manner.

Thank you.

Mr Éctor Jaime RAMÍREZ BARBA (Mexico): *(Undelivered speech, Rules of Procedure Art. 31.2)*

Thank you very much, Mr. President,

Dear fellow parliamentarians,

The war in Ukraine has lasted for many months, leaving behind death, suffering, resentment, division, economic misery and instability in the world.

In Latin America, in Mexico, we see with deep sadness that this armed conflict continues to claim lives; we see how declarations of war get radical and how the threat of the use of nuclear weapons looms over the world, when we thought that this nightmare had been overcome decades ago.

The National Action Party of Mexico, as a political institution of long tradition, has historically defended peace, freedom of nations and democracy as form of government. We condemn the absurd war in Ukraine, express our full support to the Ukrainian people and repudiate the unnecessary attack that continues to cost lives.

Our national leader, Marko Cortés Mendoza, has led spaces for dialogue with various diplomatic representatives of Europe in recent days, during a tour in which he visited the European External Action Service in Belgium and the Bundestag in Germany, in order to strengthen democracy against populism, promote the relationship between our countries, promote institutions and guarantee freedoms.

On September 29, just a few days ago at the headquarters of our country's Congress, we held a meeting with deputies from the Ukrainian parliament and the Ukrainian Ambassador in Mexico, Oksana Dramaretska. In this event, we set up a Friendship Group among Ukrainian and Mexican legislators, to strengthen communication and dialogue between both countries; the National Action Party in the Mexican Congress is an ally of Ukraine in this war.

Our party's position has always been to search for peace in this conflict. From the first moment, we expressed our rejection to this war and given the passivity of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who has not had the will to join the political and economic sanctions against Russia, which other countries have implemented since the beginning of the conflict, we demanded from the Mexican government a stronger condemnation of the invasion.

We must always be on the justice's side. For this reason, the National Action Party and other civil society and business actors, have demanded Mexico immediately to institute sanctions of various kinds, mainly economic, in the face of the atrocities committed by the government of Vladimir Putin.

Today, Mexico is experiencing the consequences of the anti-democratic government of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and the world needs to know it: we are facing setbacks and threats to human rights, the economy, public security and freedom of expression, as serious as those that threaten Europe nowadays. Our country is being militarized, the violence is out of control, and it is a threat to national security and the security of the region.

Rulers who act like tyrants are besieging both in Ukraine, as in Mexico and in many other parts of the world, democratic institutions and constitutional order.

Therefore, for Mexican legislators it is very important to be able to strengthen ties with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, to be able to communicate and maintain a very respectful dialogue; that allows us to defend democracy, freedoms and prevent Mexico from falling into authoritarianism and social conflict, as has happened in other Latin American countries.

Mexico is with Ukraine!

Mexico fights for democracy within its borders and in the world!

Mexico wants peace!

Ms Carmen LEYTE (Spain, EPP/CD): *(Undelivered speech, Rules of Procedure Art. 31.2)*

It has been 8 long months since Russia invaded Ukraine, the terrible consequences are thousands of deaths, homes destroyed, human rights violations, and an escalation of horrors that does not seem to end.

I want to show my solidarity and admiration with the people of Ukraine and their President, whom we have heard today in this House, for their determination and courage to defend their country, and to show my gratitude because they are not only defending their country, they are defending all our countries.

Russia, with this invasion, has broken all international agreements, has continued with an escalation of terror: attacking civilian targets, buildings, hospitals and adding more deaths with its indiscriminate attacks.

For 8 months thousands of women, the elderly and children have had to leave their country and have become asylum seekers overnight.

For all this, the International Community has to stand by the side of Ukraine, we owe it to all those who are fighting for freedom. All countries must do more. We talk that this war has seriously eroded the entire economy, that it has increased energy costs, our shopping basket and food security and I am sure that the situation will be worse this winter, but that cannot be excused for us to falter. The priority must be to help Ukraine, providing them with more security and the weapons they need to be able to defend themselves, this is the way we have to show our solidarity effectively and not with empty words.

We cannot allow the imperialist dreams of Putin, but not of the Russian people who are also suffering part of the consequences, to achieve their objective of curtailing freedom and attacking a sovereign state with impunity.

Peace has to come without Ukraine losing its territorial integrity, with compensation to rebuild its country and with international courts judging these crimes one day. Peace cannot come at any price because we owe it to the dead, the wounded and the families torn apart by this invasion.

From the Parliamentary Assembly we have the obligation to defend Democracy, human rights and the Rule of Law, the leitmotiv of the Council of Europe, which is why I would like to congratulate Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS on his report, which of course I will vote in favour.

Vote : Nouvelle escalade dans l'agression de la Fédération de Russie contre l'Ukraine

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you so much, Mister Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy.

That closes the debate.

The Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy has presented a draft resolution to which 14 amendments have been tabled.

I understand that the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy wishes to propose to the Assembly that amendments 8, 9, 6, 3, 1, 4, 2, 5 and 13 to the draft resolution, which were unanimously adopted by the Committee, should be declared as agreed by the Assembly.

Is that so, Mister Kimmo KILJUNEN?

Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN (Finland, SOC, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy): Exactly so.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much.

Does anybody object?

I see there is an objection. Could you please explain to which amendment or amendments you object, sir?

Mr Givi MIKANADZE (Georgia, SOC): The only amendment we object to is Amendment No. 4.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you.

As there is an objection against amendment 4 to be declared adopted, it will be taken individually later.

And the Amendments 8, 9, 6, 3, 1, 2, 5, and 13 to the draft resolution have been agreed to.

I now call Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA to support Amendment 10.

You have 30 seconds.

Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA (Ukraine, EC/DA): Yes.

Dear Colleagues,

We have agreed with the esteemed rapporteurs that we will support his sub-amendment, which rephrases Amendment 10.

Thank you very much.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Dmytro NATALUKHA.

I have been informed that the Rapporteur wishes to propose an oral sub-amendment, which reads as follows:

"In Amendment No. 10 replace the words 'that facilitates terrorism' with the following words 'that support external aggression, and therefore share all the responsibilities of the consequences of that aggression'" so that the whole amendment reads now:

"And that the Russian political parties that have previously voted for illegal decisions encroaching on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and other countries, shall be treated and recognised as groups and entities that support external aggression, and therefore share all responsibilities of the consequences of that aggression".

In my opinion this sub-amendment is in order under our rules.

However, do 10 or more members object to this sub-amendment being debated?

I do not see that... fewer than 10 members seem to object.

So, I call the rapporteur to support his oral sub-amendment.

You have the floor, Mister Emanuelis ZINGERIS.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Rapporteur): We had a very fruitful discussion, thank you, and we we achieved an agreement with that. I think it will be fruitful to describe the political system that supported this terrible aggression, that means the political system in Russia that was used to support the aggression like responsible for all consequences, absolutely.

Well it's not only members of parliament, but all the political system.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister ZINGERIS.

Is there anyone who wishes to speak against the oral sub-amendment?

I do not see any.

What is the opinion of the mover of the main amendment you have already heard?

Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA is in favour of it.

The Committee is obviously in favour.

I will now put the oral sub-amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

I call for the results to be displayed.

The oral sub-amendment is adopted.

We will now consider the main amendment as amended.

Does anybody wish to speak against the amendment as amended?

I do not see any.

The Committee is obviously in favour.

I shall not put Amendment 10 as amended to the vote.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

I call for the results to be displayed.

The amendment is adopted.

Then we move further. I understand that Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA wishes to withdraw Amendment 11 to allow for a conciliation oral amendment proposed by the rapporteur.

Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA (Ukraine, EC/DA): Dear Chair, you are absolutely right.

I would like to withdraw the sub-amendment, Amendment 11, and instead, encourage to support the oral sub-amendment instead of it.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much, Mister Dmytro NATALUKHA.

Does anybody else wish to propose?

No?

We have the original to propose this amendment.

It is not the case.

Does anybody wish..

This has been withdrawn, thank you very much.

The rapporteur has presented an oral amendment proposed by the committee.

The oral amendment reads as follows:

"At the end of paragraph 4 add the following words: 'in this regard the Assembly should look into the issue of the seat of the Russian Federation in the United Nations Security Council'".

The President may accept an oral amendment on the grounds of promoting clarity, accuracy, or conciliation if there is no opposition from 10 or more members to be debated.

In my opinion the oral amendment meets the criteria of Rule 34.7.8.

Is there any opposition for the amendment to be debated?

I do not see...

Therefore, I call the rapporteur to support the oral amendment.

Mister Emanuelis ZINGERIS, you have 30 seconds.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Rapporteur): I'm in favour, and thank you for the agreement amongst us.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you so much, Mister Emanuelis ZINGERIS.

Does anyone wish to speak against the oral amendment?

I do not see.

The Committee is obviously in favour.

I shall now put you amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

May I call for the results to be displayed.

The oral amendment is adopted.

I now call Ms Boriana ÅBERG to support Amendment 4.

You have 30 seconds.

Ms Boriana ÅBERG (Sweden, EPP/CD): Dear Colleagues,

Mr Mikheil Saakashvili is a Ukrainian citizen. He is a Ukrainian official. He is an opponent to Mr Vladimir Putin. I think it's very important that he should be mentioned in this context, and he and other political prisoners should be released.

Please, dear colleagues, look who has signed this amendment. They are leaders of political groups, leaders of national delegations, and people who are very active here in the Parliamentary Assembly.

So please, support this amendment.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Boriana.

Does anybody wish to speak against this amendment?

Mister Indrek SAAR, you have the floor.

Mr Indrek SAAR (Estonia, SOC): I have to speak against Amendment 4, and call you to reject it, because there is an oral amendment which clarifies better the text referring to the immediate release of Vladimir Kara-Murza and the need to Mr Saakashvili's case to be reviewed.

This amendment was, unfortunately, not present in the Committee, but this is a much more coherent and responsible way to point out both concerns.

Thank you.

Please reject it so that we can amend it in the proper way.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): What is the opinion of the Committee on the amendment, Mister KILJUNEN?

Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN (Finland, SOC, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy): It was, obviously, agreeing with the original thing, but now, obviously, we haven't taken position on the oral statements yet.

So, we are without opinion on that one.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much.

Then I now shall put the amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

I now close the vote.

Can we see the results to be displayed?

The amendment is adopted.

I have received an oral amendment from the rapporteur, which reads:

"After paragraph 9, add a new paragraph: In this respect the Assembly wholeheartedly welcomes the passage on 12 October by the United Nations General Assembly, by a three-fourths majority of the resolution, titled Territorial Integrity of Ukraine Defending the Principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which recalls the obligation of states under Article 2 of the United Nations Charter to refrain from the threat of the use of force against the territorial integrity of any state, condemns the organisation by the Russian Federation of illegal so-called referendums, and declares that subsequent attempted legal annexation of these regions have no validity under international law".

The President may accept an oral amendment on the grounds of promoting clarity, accuracy or conciliation, and if there is not opposition from 10 or more members to it being debated.

In my opinion the oral amendment does meet the criteria of Rule 34.7.8 and therefore can be debated.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Rapporteur): Yes.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Is there any objection?

No.

If that is the case, we will ask Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS to support the oral amendment.

You have 30 seconds, sir.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Rapporteur): Thank you.

That is a major issue. Yesterday at night there was an urgent debate of the General Assembly.

Probably, it happened for the first time after the Second World War.

The General Assembly came to a resolution about the breach of the Chart of the United Nations, the most important Paragraph 2, the one related to crucial obligations of member states.

From my point of view it's extremely important to include it because of the reason of yesterday's resolution at night.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): We have to deal with a lot of issues, Emanuelis, so we have to continue.

What is the opinion of the Committee on the oral amendment?

Mister KILJUNEN?

Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN (Finland, SOC, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy): It was approved.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): The Committee is unanimously in favour.

I now shall put the amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

I call for the results to be displayed.

The oral amendment is adopted.

I now call Ms Oleksandra USTINOVA to support Amendment 12.

You have 30 seconds.

Ms Oleksandra USTINOVA (Ukraine, ALDE): Thank you so much, dear colleagues.

We've already mentioned this in the speech of the rapporteur and in my own speech.

These amendment talk about asking the states to provide necessary air defence systems together with the financial support and reconstruction for Ukraine.

We're asking for the defensive weapon, which means this is the special weapon that will shoot down the missiles and the bombs that are coming to our cities every day.

After what happened on Monday, when 12 Ukrainian cities were shelled and more than 100 rockets and missiles were sent, this is critical for us.

Thank you so much.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you.

Does anybody wish to speak against the amendment?

I don't see anybody.

The opinion of the Committee, Mister Kimmo KILJUNEN?

Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN (Finland, SOC, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy): Strong majority in favour.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much.

I shall now put the amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

May the results be displayed.

The amendment is adopted.

I now call Ms Maria JUFEREVA-SKURATOVSKI to support Amendment 7.

You have 30 seconds.

Ms Maria JUFEREVA-SKURATOVSKI (Estonia, ALDE): Dear Chair,

Dear Colleagues,

This amendment proposes to declare the current Russian Federation's regime as a terrorist regime.

Please support it. Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much.

I have been informed that the rapporteur wishes to propose an oral sub-amendment, as follows:

Delete the words "Russian Federation a terrorist regime" and replace with "current Russian regime as a terrorist one"

So that it reads:

“Declare current Russian regime as a terrorist one”

In my opinion, the oral sub-amendment is in order under our rules.

However, do 10 or more members object to the oral sub-amendment being debated?

I do not see that.

I would like to ask the rapporteur to support his oral sub-amendment.

Again, you have 30 seconds, Emanuelis.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Rapporteur): I would like to say that after-debates in the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy and exchanging the most important views between the people who were involved in that formulation, we achieved some clear formulation of that, to declare the current regime as a terrorist one, in Russia.

For that reason, I would like to say thank you to everyone who was involved in this roundtable.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Emanuelis ZINGERIS.

What is the opinion of the mover of the main amendment?

Ms Maria JUFEREVA-SKURATOVSKI.

Thank you very much. You are in favour.

What is the opinion of the Committee, Mister Kimmo KILJUNEN?

Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN (Finland, SOC, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy): The majority is in favour of the oral sub-amendment as amended.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Then I now will put the oral sub-amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

May I see the results being displayed.

The oral sub-amendment is adopted.

We will now consider the main amendment as amended.

Does anyone wish to speak AGAINST the amendment as amended?

I do not see.

The Committee is obviously in favour.

I shall now put Amendment 7 as amended to the vote.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

I call for the results to be displayed.

The amendment is adopted.

I now call Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA to support Amendment 14.

You have 30 seconds, again.

Mr Dmytro NATALUKHA (Ukraine, EC/DA): Dear Mister Chairman, thank you very much.

Here, again, as previously we have agreed with the rapporteur on a joint wording, and I would like to support his oral sub-amendment of this amendment.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Dmytro NATALUKHA.

I have been indeed informed that the rapporteur wishes to propose an oral sub-amendment as follows.

In Amendment 14 replace the words "that facilitate terrorism" with the following words: "that support external aggression and therefore share all responsibilities of the consequences of the aggression".

In my opinion the oral sub-amendment is an order under our rules. However, if there are 10 or more members to object this oral sub-amendment being debated...

I do not see so.

Then, I would like to ask the rapporteur to support his oral sub-amendment.

Again, you have 30 seconds.

Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Rapporteur): Thank you.

It was the same as was repeated in the first case. A few minutes ago, it was repeating the same formulation, about the essence of Russia's aggression and of political system in Russia.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you, Mister Rapporteur.

Does anybody wish to speak against the oral sub-amendment?

I do not see any.

We already heard the opinion of the mover of the main amendment.

What is the opinion of the Committee, Mister KILJUNEN?

Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN (Finland, SOC, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy): Unanimously in favour as already sub-amended.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): I will now put the oral sub-amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

I close the vote.

The results are now being displayed.

The oral sub-amendment is adopted.

We will now consider the main amendment as amended.

Does anybody want to speak against the amendment as amended?

I do not see anyone.

The Committee is obviously in favour.

I shall now put Amendment 14 as amended to the vote.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

I call for the results to be displayed.

The amendment is adopted.

We will now proceed to vote on the draft resolution contained in Document 15631 as amended.

The vote is open.

The vote is closed.

The results are now displayed.

The resolution is adopted unanimously.

Thank you very much.

Congratulations to the rapporteur.

This Assembly will hold its next public meeting this afternoon at 3:30 p.m., with the agenda which was approved on Monday morning.

The sitting is adjourned.

Sorry, colleagues, please remain for a moment.

There is a point of order by Mr Jeremy CORBYN.

Mr Jeremy CORBYN (United Kingdom, SOC): Mister President,

Very briefly, I'm sorry to delay people, on a point of order.

In the vote on the Counting Islamophobia Anti-Muslim Racism in Europe debate, Document 15616, vote No. 4569, I inadvertently did not cast my vote in favour of the document.

I'd be grateful if the official report could include my strong support for this document.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much, Mister CORBYN.

The sitting is adjourned.

Sorry, but we... OK Mister CORLĂȚEAN, if I close the sitting, I close the sitting.

Mr Titus CORLĂȚEAN (Romania, SOC): Sorry, Mister President, I signalled but you didn't see me, with all due respect.

Also as a point of order, to take note of the fact that on the Amendment No. 4 on the report that we just finished, my vote through error of understanding what was happening in the plenary, my real vote is abstention.

Thank you.

Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL, President of the Assembly): Thank you very much.

We have taken note of that.

This sitting is adjourned.

See you again at 3:30 p.m.