



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

Provisional

8986th

meeting

Friday, 4 March 2022, 11.30 a.m.

New York

President: Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates)

Members:

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Albania | Mr. Hoxha |
| Brazil | Mr. Costa Filho |
| China | Mr. Zhang Jun |
| France | Mr. De Rivière |
| Gabon | Mr. Nanga |
| Ghana | Ms. Oppong-Ntiri |
| India | Mr. Tirumurti |
| Ireland | Ms. Byrne Nason |
| Kenya | Mrs. Toroitich |
| Mexico | Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez |
| Norway | Ms. Juul |
| Russian Federation | Mr. Nebenzia |
| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . | Dame Barbara Woodward |
| United States of America | Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield |

Agenda

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

Ms. DiCarlo: The Secretary-General is gravely concerned by the escalating fighting throughout Ukraine.

Ukrainian cities are today under siege and facing repeated attacks. Over 1 million Ukrainians have already crossed Ukraine's borders and have been welcomed by their European neighbours. We applaud such solidarity and support. Everyone seeking refuge should be afforded protection without any form of discrimination. Millions of Ukrainians who remain in the country are being subjected to heavy and often indiscriminate bombardment and shelling. There have been thousands of casualties and the number is growing. The United Nations is significantly increasing its humanitarian assistance in Ukraine to respond to the escalating crisis.

The Secretary-General has followed with great alarm reports of heavy fighting around the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in Ukraine. We understand that a fire affected a training facility and not the cooling system or power centre. Military operations around nuclear sites and other critical civilian infrastructure are not only unacceptable but highly irresponsible.

Ukraine knows only too well the devastation of a major nuclear accident. The Chernobyl disaster in 1986

stands as a lasting example of why it is vital to ensure that all nuclear power plants have the highest standards of safety and security. Every effort should be made to avoid a catastrophic nuclear incident. The persistence and bravery of the Ukrainian personnel who continue to keep power plants safely operational during this crisis are to be applauded.

Attacks on nuclear power facilities are contrary to international humanitarian law, specifically article 56 of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts states that:

"Works or installations containing dangerous forces, namely dams, dykes and nuclear electrical generating stations, shall not be made the object of attack, even where these objects are military objectives, if such attack may cause the release of dangerous forces and consequent severe losses among the civilian population."

The Secretary-General welcomes the statements and actions by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on this issue and is ready to assist however he can. It is vital that all parties work with the IAEA to establish an appropriate framework that will ensure the safe, secure and reliable operation of Ukraine's nuclear power plants. Urgent and safe passage should be granted to IAEA personnel, should they need to travel to Ukraine to work with regulators.

We welcome the reported agreement between the Ukrainian and Russian negotiators during their second round of talks in Belarus yesterday. We understand that the discussion focused on the establishment of humanitarian corridors to allow safe passage for civilians and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We hope that this reported agreement is implemented without delay and that a full and unconditional ceasefire is quickly agreed and enacted. We urge the sides to continue negotiations and to make urgent progress on security, humanitarian and other issues.

As the Secretary-General has emphatically stated, the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders must be respected, in line with General Assembly resolutions. What we are witnessing in Ukraine today is inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Only diplomacy and negotiations can achieve a last truly lasting solution to the current

conflict. The fighting in Ukraine must stop, and it must stop now.

The President: I thank Ms. DiCarlo for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Grossi.

Mr. Grossi: I will proceed with my briefing on the current situation in Ukraine, especially after the events last night.

We have been in contact with the nuclear regulation agency of Ukraine from the very beginning of the conflict and we have been receiving updates and information from it without interruption. In general, the situation could be described as follows.

The nuclear installations and the nuclear facilities in Ukraine are quite important: four big sites, 15 reactors and associated facilities, plus the site of Chernobyl. Regarding Chernobyl, already last week we were informed, and it was so confirmed afterwards, that the Russian special military forces took charge of the site. At the same time, the operators of the Chernobyl plant continued to run its day-by-day operations over there.

A few days ago, we were again informed by the Russian Government that military forces were moving in the area of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant with the similar mission to take over control of that facility.

We have received information since then that their advance towards the perimeter of the nuclear power plant was met by opposition and groups of civilians blocking access to the plant.

Finally, last night, in the early hours of the morning, we received information that a projectile had impacted a building adjacent to the block of six reactors. The projectile impacted the building and a fire ensued, which, after some time, was put out by the fire brigade at the station. We can confirm through our contacts at the regulator, as well as directly from the plant, that no security or safety systems have been compromised. Only the building around the reactors themselves were hit by those projectiles and caught fire. Members may have seen some images of that in social media.

After that, the operations of and at the plant have continued. From a technical point of view, we consider that its operation is continuing normally, although, as I have stressed to the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), there is, of course, nothing normal about the situation when military forces are in charge of the site.

In terms of the next steps, we remain in permanent contact with the Ukrainian governmental nuclear regulatory authorities, as well as Energoatom, the company that operates those facilities and the operators there. That all constitutes the basis of the regular updates, of which we have received 10 or 12 so far and which have been made available on the IAEA website.

At the same time, I indicated this morning my readiness to travel, as soon as practicable, to Chernobyl in order to consult with our Ukrainian counterpart and, when and if necessary, the forces in charge to establish a stable framework to ensure the observance of the basic principles of safety and security, starting with the physical integrity of the facilities. Basic elements of that proposal have already been shared with the Ukrainian counterpart and the Russian authorities, who are, at this point, evaluating it. We believe that, as we have received a direct request for assistance, it is our duty at the IAEA to heed that call and try to provide assistance.

Needless to say, in particular, the mission of the IAEA, if and when it takes place, would not have anything to do with the political and diplomatic aspects that are within the purview of the Security Council. Such a mission would be strictly restricted and circumscribed to the safety and security of the nuclear installations in Ukraine, which, as facts have shown, are evidently at constant risk of damage and accidents.

I hope that these basic elements will help the Security Council in its evaluation of the situation. As I asked my Board of Governors in Vienna, we would ask Council members to support my efforts as Director General and those of the IAEA to ensure a basic element in this very difficult situation, which is the safety and security of this important part of the infrastructure of the country.

I stand ready to answer any questions and clarify any particular points that may not be clear. I am sorry for the poor quality of my connection. As Council members are aware, I am currently airborne. I am on my way to Tehran to deal with another issue, which is of direct interest to the Council, hopefully involving a solution to the outstanding aspects of the nuclear power programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The President: I thank Mr. Grossi for his briefing

I now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Mr. Grossi for their briefings.

The United Kingdom and our partners called this urgent meeting because last night Russian forces attacked the largest nuclear power station in Europe. We are grateful to the Ukrainian firefighters and authorities who got the fire under control and are working bravely to ensure that the plant remains safe. We support the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Ukraine and are relieved that so far, it has reported that none of the safety systems in the plant were affected and that there was no release of radioactive material.

This is the first time that a State has attacked a fuelled and functioning nuclear power plant. International law requires special protection for nuclear facilities, and it is difficult to see how Russia's actions were compatible with its commitments under article 56 of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts. It must not happen again. Even in the midst of an illegal invasion of Ukraine, Russia must keep fighting away from, and protect the safety and security of, nuclear sites.

President Putin said yesterday that the special military operation — or, as everyone else calls it, the war — was going to plan. Everyone around this table knows that that is not true. President Putin misjudged the strength, resilience and will of the Ukrainian people with regard to his invasion. He underestimated the world's condemnation of his actions. One hundred and forty-one votes in the General Assembly and the unprecedented sanctions on Russia demonstrate the strength of the global response.

Every day that this war continues, the destruction that it brings to Ukraine, the suffering that it inflicts on Ukrainian and Russian people and the risks that it poses to international peace and security increase. That must stop. We call on Russia to end this violence, withdraw its troops and enter into serious peace negotiations.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, and we are happy that we could listen to Director General Grossi. I would like to reassure him of our full support in his efforts.

Ten days into the so-called special operation — which, in reality, is Operation How To Invade Your Neighbour — and in the middle of a

large-scale human tragedy, we are running towards an overall catastrophe, first, for Ukraine, as well as for Russia and, as we see every day, with serious implications for Europe at large. Thousands have been killed, including at least 2,000 civilians. According to United Nations reports, approximately 12 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and 1 million have already fled the country — the fastest and largest mass exodus of people in complex situations in decades.

All developments of the major geopolitical crisis, artificially created by Russia's unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine, indicate unmistakably that it is headed towards further escalation. The adoption of General Assembly resolution ES-11/1 by an overwhelming majority just two days ago told Russia that it could not take the world hostage. Unfortunately, that loud call by the world asking Russia to stop its aggression has not been heard in Moscow, and Russia remains defiant and is stubbornly descending into an abyss.

The world was alarmed late last night by the news of the fire at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power station, caused by Russian shelling. Thankfully, the huge blaze at the site of Europe's largest nuclear power station was quickly extinguished, yet we remain gravely concerned, and it is alarming that Russian forces have captured the nuclear power plant. Russia's grip on a plant that provides more than one-fifth of Ukraine's electricity is a serious cause of concern that could have huge repercussions for civilians and Ukraine's economy. Fighting at the plant or any other disturbance could cause a potential nuclear disaster or radioactive damage and have irreparable consequences for Europe's environment. It is difficult not to recall the dreadful images of Chernobyl.

We welcome the quick response of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the reassurance that we heard from Director General Grassi, with regard to operationalizing its Incident and Emergency Centre for a full response, owing to the gravity of the situation. They should be given urgent and unhindered access to verify and monitor the conditions and ensure that all safeguards are in place, as the situation remains very challenging.

The Russian occupiers must immediately allow unfettered access for emergency service to the plant and whatever else is needed. We urge the IAEA to continue working closely with Ukraine with a view to providing

maximum possible assistance to the country as it seeks to maintain nuclear safety and security in the current difficult circumstances. It is important for the nuclear power plant to continue to be operated by its regular staff. We are very concerned about the reports from the operator that the situation remains difficult.

We call on Russia to end its aggression, withdraw its troops from Ukraine, halt the use of force near any nuclear power plant, and any civilian infrastructure in general, and respect article 56 of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions. Attacking civilians and civilian infrastructure constitutes a crime and perpetrators must and will be held accountable.

We welcome the establishment by the Human Rights Council of an international commission of inquiry to investigate war crimes committed in the aggression against Ukraine. Evidence must be gathered, documented and presented to the courts. For the purpose of accountability, we support the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in investigating and documenting crimes committed.

As Dag Hammarskjöld famously said, the United Nations was not created to take humankind to heaven but to save it from hell. It falls upon the Council to do what it can and what is needed to save Ukraine, its people and the whole of Europe from the hell to which Russia is headed with its relentless aggression.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): By the grace of God, the world narrowly averted a nuclear catastrophe last night. We all waited to exhale as we watched the horrific situation unfold in real time. I applaud the ability of the Ukrainian operators to keep all six reactors in safe conditions while under attack, and to report, as they were able, to their nuclear regulator. Moreover, we appreciate the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine for its continuous updates to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the international community. We are gravely concerned that the Ukrainian operators are now doing their jobs under extreme duress.

Russia's attack last night put Europe's largest nuclear power plant at grave risk. It was incredibly reckless and dangerous and threatened the safety of civilians across Russia, Ukraine and Europe. As a first step, we call on Russia to withdraw its troops from the plant to permit medical treatment for injured personnel; to ensure that operators have full access to the site and are able to communicate with nuclear regulators; and to

allow the operators to conduct shift changes to ensure the continued safe operation of the plant. Ukrainian firefighters and nuclear engineers must have full access to the nuclear facility to assess damage, particularly to water intake piping, and mitigate a further deterioration of the situation, if needed.

Nuclear facilities cannot become part of this conflict. Reliable electricity is vital for the nuclear facility, as are backup diesel generators and fuel. Safe transit corridors must be maintained. Russia must halt any further use of force that might put at further risk all 15 operable reactors across Ukraine or interfere with Ukraine's ability to maintain the safety and security of its 37 nuclear facilities and their surrounding populations.

The United States remains highly concerned about the fact that Russian military forces controlling the Chernobyl site have not permitted operators there to have a shift change since last week. That is highly irresponsible behaviour and causes grave concerns for the continued safe operation of both sites. We call on all countries to support IAEA Director General Grossi in his efforts to find arrangements going forward to ensure nuclear safety and prevent a nuclear catastrophe in Ukraine.

Over the past nine days, we have witnessed the devastating impacts of President Putin's war of choice on the Ukrainian people. Yesterday, the United Nations reported that Russia's invasion had turned half a million children into refugees. Russia has killed thousands of Ukrainians and sacrificed the lives of thousands more Russian soldiers in the process. Russia is destroying critical infrastructure, which is denying people drinking water to stay alive and gas to keep them from freezing to death in the middle of winter. The humanitarian impact of the destruction will be significant.

Some 141 nations across the world have called loudly and clearly on President Putin to stop this brutal, unjustified, unprovoked attack. Not only has he not listened, but we have just witnessed a dangerous new escalation that represents a dire threat to all of Europe and the world.

To my Russian counterparts, I say that the Council needs answers. We need to hear its representative say that this will not happen again, as our colleague of the United Kingdom just stated. We call on Russia to withdraw its troops and weaponry from Ukraine. We call on Russia to respect Ukraine's borders, its people and the Charter of the United Nations. We call on

Russia to respect its own troops enough not to send them into an unjust war or on a suicide mission against a nuclear power plant. We call on Russia to abide by its international law obligations. The world demands that Russia abide by international humanitarian law, which prohibits intentionally targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure, and allow humanitarian agencies full and secure access to people in need of aid.

The United States and its partners have called for a briefing on Monday on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine. We support the urgent work of humanitarian organizations on a humanitarian pause to allow for the safe passage and delivery of humanitarian supplies. President Putin must stop this humanitarian catastrophe by ending the war and ceasing these unconscionable attacks against the people of Ukraine. Mr. Putin must stop this madness and he must stop it now. Cooler heads must prevail. Russian forces are now 20 miles and closing from Ukraine's second-largest nuclear facility, so the imminent danger continues.

We narrowly avoided a disaster last night. The international community must be unanimous in demanding that Russia's forces stop their dangerous assault. As I have said before, the people of Ukraine are counting on us, and we must not let them down.

Mr. De Rivi re (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Grossi and Ms. DiCarlo for their briefings.

France is seriously concerned about the threats to the safety, security and nuclear safeguards caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. That is why France and its partners called on the Security Council to meet urgently.

On 24 February, Russian forces entered the Chernobyl zone. The operating team at the power plant were held against their will as Russian soldiers took control of the plant. On 27 February, a loud detonation was heard near a radioactive waste disposal site in Kyiv. This morning, a fire was reported at the largest nuclear facility in Europe, following the Russian attack.

As the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs said, France strongly condemns the attack on a nuclear facility, whose security must be guaranteed.

The consequences of a nuclear accident resulting from Russia's military aggression against Ukraine are potentially devastating for human health and the environment. In 2009, Russia, along with the rest of the General Conference of the International Atomic

Energy Agency (IAEA), adopted a decision according to which any armed attack on or threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Agency's Statute. The competence of the Security Council under such circumstances is also established in the resolutions of the IAEA General Conference.

Russia must immediately cease its dangerous illegal activities in order to restore the control of Ukrainian authorities over all nuclear facilities and materials within the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine. Russia must also authorize regular and unfettered access by facility personnel so as to ensure that the plants can be run safely.

We call for full respect of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and other relevant conventions.

France supports the efforts of the IAEA Director General to ensure ongoing monitoring of the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, in close contact with the Ukrainian authorities. We ask the Director General to use all instruments available to the Agency to support Ukraine's efforts to ensure the safety and security of all facilities around the country.

In that regard, France supports the proposal of the Director General of the IAEA for negotiations on commitments between the parties to the armed conflict in Ukraine, with a view to ensuring respect for the seven principles set forth during the Board of Governors meeting held on 2 March on the implications of the situation in Ukraine in the areas of safety, security and nuclear safeguards.

Finally, France reiterates its unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. Since 24 February we have witnessed the devastating human cost of Russian aggression. An immediate cessation of hostilities and the strict application of international humanitarian law is a matter of urgency; that is why France, along with Mexico, is putting forward a draft resolution with that goal in mind in order to put an end to the humanitarian tragedy that is unfolding before our eyes. Here, as in other cases, the Security Council must fully assume its responsibilities.

Ms. Byrne Nason (Ireland): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy

Agency, Rafael Mariano Grossi, for their briefings, and I thank Director General Grossi for his urgent call for action today. We are here today because of our concern about the ongoing situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant.

The Russian Federation's continuing unprovoked, unjustified invasion of Ukraine is wreaking havoc and destruction on Ukraine and its people. That aggression is inflicting enormous hardship and suffering. Ireland stands full square in unwavering solidarity with the people of Ukraine, who continue to show extraordinary courage and resilience in the face of that act of aggression.

The parties to the conflict must comply with international humanitarian law. That includes the obligation not to attack civilian objects and clear prohibitions against indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks. It includes the obligation to take all feasible precautions in an attack. We demand nothing less than full respect for those obligations.

The attack last night by Russian forces on the nuclear power plant at Zaporizhzhya has shocked us all and sent a chilling signal across Europe, indeed, across the globe. That further reinforces the concerns arising from the armed takeover by Russia of the nuclear facilities in the Chernobyl exclusion zone just eight days ago.

Ireland condemns the reckless firing against nuclear power plants. Armed attacks and threats against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitute violations of international law, including the principles of the United Nations Charter, Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions and the IAEA Statute. Director General Grossi has made that point abundantly clear.

In attacking such sites, the Russian Federation risks an environmental disaster compounding the extraordinary human tragedy that we are witnessing today in Ukraine. A radioactive release from any of those sites would also have serious repercussions for human life and health, agriculture and the environment in Ukraine, the Russian Federation itself and the wider European region.

We call on the Russian Federation to fully respect its obligations under the United Nations Charter, international law and the IAEA Statute. All

international nuclear safety and security standards must be maintained.

We call on the Russian Federation to allow Ukrainian personnel at the plant do their work safely and without undue pressure. It is crucial that safety systems at the plant not be compromised. Power supply to the plant must be maintained. That is essential not just for the six reactors at this site but also for the spent fuel stored there. There should be no interruption of basic services, including energy to the population across Ukraine.

Ireland commends the bravery and professionalism of the Ukrainian personnel at the plant and the Ukrainian nuclear regulator in seeking to ensure safety at the plant in very difficult circumstances. We are deeply concerned, however, for their safety and their well-being.

At this worrying time, Ireland fully supports the work of the IAEA and its incident and emergency centre in its ongoing monitoring and assistance in respect of the nuclear safety and security situation in Ukraine. We believe that it will be important for the IAEA Director General to keep the Council informed regarding nuclear safety and security in Ukraine.

Cavalier, reckless behaviour with dangerous forces such as nuclear power is utterly unacceptable. The prospect of a nuclear event at Europe's largest nuclear power plant will have global impacts. We all saw what happened at Chernobyl and Fukushima. That is a spectre that no one at this table should be willing to countenance.

The humanitarian implications of damage to civilian infrastructure cannot be overestimated. The electricity generated by the Zaporizhzhya plant powers homes and hospitals, ensuring that civilians can feed themselves and heat their homes and powering life-saving medical equipment. Let us be clear: civilian infrastructure should never be a target, and that must stop now.

Once more Ireland urges the Russian Federation to immediately cease all hostilities, unconditionally withdraw from the entire territory of Ukraine and to refrain from further threats or the use of force of any kind against Ukraine or, indeed, any other Member State.

To avert nuclear disaster, Ireland today calls most urgently for an immediate cessation of military activities at Ukraine's nuclear facilities. We call for the competent Ukrainian authorities to be allowed to

promptly regain full control over Zaporizhzhya and all their nuclear facilities.

One more time, we call sincerely for a return to dialogue and diplomacy in good faith.

Ms. Juul (Norway): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Rafael Mariano Grossi, for their briefings to the Council. We also thank the IAEA for providing frequent, factual updates on matters within the Agency's mandate.

We called this meeting along with partners because this is an unjust war, unjustly fought. Norway condemns the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine. And now, as reported, we see shelling and fighting in the immediate vicinity of a civilian nuclear power plant. It takes little imagination to understand the possible consequences of such action. It shows a blatant disregard for Ukrainian lives, for Russian lives and indeed life in Europe and beyond. It is irresponsible and unacceptable. Civilians can never be a target. A nuclear power plant can never be a target.

Yet this is only the latest in a string of assaults on homes, hospitals, schools, bridges, roads and other vital civilian infrastructure. Damage and destruction of a nuclear plant would put us all in danger. It can lead to a radioactive nightmare with the most severe long-term effects for generations.

International humanitarian law is not optional. We call on Russia to fulfil its obligation to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure. These actions also violate the obligation under international humanitarian law to maintain the physical integrity of nuclear facilities and keep them safe at all times. And we recall the 2009 decision of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency that

“any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency”.

We commend the efforts of the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine to keep the international community updated on the status of nuclear safety and security in the country. And our thoughts go to the staff — the men and women — working at nuclear facilities in Ukraine under these dire circumstances. We laud their commitment to ensuring continuing

nuclear safety and security. Their perseverance is an example to us all.

Russia bears full responsibility for this act of aggression and all the destruction and loss of life it has caused and will continue to cause. We reiterate our call upon the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its forces from Ukrainian territory and cease all threats and military actions, including in the vicinity of, and directed at, nuclear facilities.

A ceasefire is desperately and urgently needed. Diplomacy must win.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Today's meeting is another attempt by Kyiv authorities to kindle artificial hysteria around what is happening in Ukraine, and they are being assisted in this by their Western backers.

Today we have once again heard lies about how Russian troops attacked the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, and this is all part of an unprecedented campaign of lies and disinformation against Russia, which is trying to present the situation of the power plant as having allegedly been shelled by the Russian military as a result of which a fire broke out. These statements are simply untrue.

The city of Energodar, the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and the adjacent areas were brought under the control of the Russian army back on 28 February. As a result of negotiations with the management of the power plant, an agreement was reached to place it under the protection of the Russian military. The goal is to prevent Ukrainian nationalists or other terrorist forces from taking advantage of the current situation to organize a nuclear provocation. The goal is also to ensure the security of the station and prevent interruptions in power supply to the population of Ukraine and European consumers.

At present, the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and adjacent areas are being guarded by Russian troops. In order to do this, personnel with relevant experience, including experience in operating the engineering and technical facilities with which the nuclear power plant is equipped, have been brought in. The current situation is similar to that in the area of the Chernobyl power plant. The security of these facilities is being ensured jointly by the Russian armed forces and the Ukrainian operators of the nuclear installations. Our servicemen are not interfering in the work of the operators of

the Ukrainian power plants; they are limiting their objectives merely to ensuring their security.

As we were informed by the Russian Ministry of Defence, on the night of 4 March, while patrolling the protected area, but not the area of the power plant itself, rather the adjacent area, a Russian mobile patrol was attacked by a Ukrainian sabotage group. In order to provoke return fire on the building, small-arms fire was opened on Russian troops from the windows of several floors of the training complex located just outside the area of the nuclear power plant.

The Russian patrol returned fire on the Ukrainian saboteurs' firing points from the training complex and suppressed their fire. As they were leaving, the Ukrainian sabotage group set fire to the training facility. Let me emphasize once again that this building is not located on the territory of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant.

The fire brigades that arrived were able to extinguish the fire on the premises. At the time of this provocation, none of the regular employees of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant were on site in the training building. At present, the personnel of the power plant — who were not injured, as we were assured by the Permanent Representative of the United States — continues to work normally and is maintaining plant facilities and monitoring the radiation situation. The background radiation levels in the area of the nuclear power plant are normal.

All the nuclear power plant's facilities are under the control of the Russian military. Their security has been fully ensured, and the station continues to function normally, in accordance with technological requirements. The power units of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant were not damaged. Their condition is as follows. The first has been disconnected for repair. The second and third units have been temporarily disconnected by the decision of the station's management. The fourth is operating at 690 megawatts, and the fifth and sixth are being cooled.

According to the assessments of International Atomic Energy Agency leadership set out in the 4 March press statement, the operation of the nuclear power plant continues normally. Nothing is threatening the safety of the six power units. The radiation monitoring systems at the station are fully operational and there is no threat of a release of radioactive material.

I would like to remind the Council that in 2014 Ukrainian nationalists tried to destabilize the situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and in the city of Energodar. Western States ignored that egregious case back then, which could have led to disaster. We drew attention to that serious incident at the time.

Now, when the Russian military is doing all it can to ensure the safety and security of Ukrainian nuclear facilities, a massive anti-Russian propaganda campaign is unfolding based on absurd allegations that Russia is trying to create a source of radioactive contamination. I urge the Council to consider — what would be the point of doing that?

We are the best positioned to be aware and on top of the situation. We are also the party most interested in maintaining and ensuring nuclear, physical and general security in Ukraine. We are Ukraine's neighbours. Together with the people of Belarus and Ukraine, we lived through the tragedy of Chernobyl. We are therefore more interested than most in maintaining a normal radiation levels throughout the territory of Ukraine.

I would like to once again emphasize that the danger to the civilian population of Ukraine is not emanating from Russian troops, but rather from Ukrainian nationalists, who are holding the civilian populations of a number of large cities hostage and carrying out acts of sabotage and provocation, one of which we are now discussing. They then try to blame Russia for all of it.

Yesterday's incident at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant is a clear illustration of that. As to the reaction of my dear Western colleagues to this incident and their attempt to turn it into a global scandal, we have no doubt that the radicals and extremists in Ukraine were and are under the protection of these colleagues and therefore have carte blanche to do as they please. For the sake of their Ukrainian project, my Western colleagues are ready to forget about the future and well-being of ordinary Ukrainians, just as they tried to ignore the systematic shelling for eight years of the civilians of Donbas by the armed forces of Ukraine. We urge these colleagues to calm down their mentees, who, in the worst traditions of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant terrorists and their associates are hiding behind civilians, placing heavy weaponry and multiple rocket launchers in residential areas.

In Mariupol, nationalists have detained 60 citizens who were on their way to the humanitarian corridor that was established and forced them to the thirty-

fourth local school, which has been mined. Now those terrorists are using civilians as human shields and are blackmailing the advancing forces of the Donetsk People's Republic with their readiness to blow up a school full of hostages.

Furthermore, they are preventing civilians who wish to leave the cities from doing so. That practice is affecting not only Ukrainians, but also foreign citizens. The number of foreign nationals who are being forcibly held by Ukrainian nationalists is shocking. In Kharkiv, they are holding 3,189 citizens of India, up to 2,700 citizens of Viet Nam, 202 citizens of China. In Sumy, they are holding 576 Indian citizens, 101 Ghanaian citizens and 121 Chinese citizens. In Chernihiv, nine Indonesian citizens are being held.

Yesterday, in Kharkiv, nationalists fired on a group of Chinese citizens who were trying to independently leave into Russian territory, and two were injured. The Russian military is doing all it can to ensure the peaceful evacuation of foreign nationals. In the Belgorod region, at the Nekhoteyevka and Sudzha checkpoints, as of 6 a.m. today, 130 comfortable buses were stood ready to leave for Kharkiv and Sumy in order to rescue Indian students and other foreign citizens. Checkpoints have been equipped with temporary accommodations, rest facilities and hot meals, mobile medical stations have been equipped with stocks of medication. The evacuees will be later transported to Belgorod and, subsequently, brought home by air.

I would like to draw the Council's attention to another egregious episode, and we would ask the Secretariat's Rapporteur to provide some clarification in that regard. The Telegram channel of the so-called territorial defence of Kramatorsk published a message about the requisitioning of cars of United Nations mission personnel. If the Secretariat is not aware of that, we are ready to provide the relevant materials. That message states: "Sorry, but the end justifies the means. We have requisitioned United Nations vehicles, as we need them now". According to the nationalists, "there is full understanding on the part of the United Nations. There were no official statements or protests from the United Nations".

We are extremely concerned that United Nations mission vehicles could already be in the hands of terrorists and could be used for terrorist purposes. If the Secretariat is actually aware of this situation, as the nationalists claim, then we would like to receive an

explanation of why the United Nations did not inform Member States.

Mr. Tirumurti (India): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their briefings.

It is regrettable that the situation in Ukraine has worsened further since the Council last convened on this matter (see S/PV.8983). An immediate cessation of violence and end to all hostilities are essential.

We continue to carefully follow the developments regarding the safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear power reactors and facilities. India attaches the highest importance to ensuring the safety and security of nuclear facilities, as any accident involving nuclear facilities may have severe consequences for public health and the environment.

India accords the highest priority to the discharge by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of its safeguards and monitoring activities, in accordance with its statute, in an effective, non-discriminatory and efficient manner. We also take note of the latest information available with regard to the nuclear power plants and facilities in Ukraine, including the updates provided today by the Director General of the IAEA on the current situation.

While we are discussing the nuclear dimension of an unfolding conflict, the Council must acknowledge that there is a pressing humanitarian crisis confronting us in Ukraine, where the safety and security of innocent civilians including several thousand Indian nationals, in particular students, are at stake. We therefore hope that the second round of talks between the two sides contributes to the immediate establishment of a safe humanitarian corridor.

As reiterated by my Prime Minister in his conversations with global leaders, including of the Russian Federation and Ukraine, differences must be resolved through sustained dialogue and diplomacy. Commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States are key principles in that regard.

Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their briefings.

Like other delegations, I express my country's concern about the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plan. Although the information we are receiving is that the nuclear reactors were not affected and that radiation levels have not increased, that does not diminish the seriousness of the incident or the possible consequences of a greater impact.

The firing of missiles at or in the vicinity of a nuclear power plant violates the fundamental principle relating to the physical integrity of nuclear facilities, which must be secured at all times and under all circumstances.

In 2009, the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) unanimously approved decision GC(53)/DEC/13, reaffirming resolutions adopted in 1985 and 1990, stating explicitly that

“any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter ... international law”.

It is also necessary to mention the concern about the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Any incident at these two plants or any other could have serious health and environmental repercussions. Just a week since the start of the conflict, there are already more than 1.2 million refugees. The additional humanitarian consequences of a radiological accident releasing radioactive material would be so serious that it is imperative to take all the preventive measures available to us to avoid it.

There is no justification for military activities at these sites. They are clearly identifiable nuclear facilities and they are expressly prohibited from attack under international humanitarian law. The physical security of nuclear facilities, as well as the personnel guaranteeing their security, to which the IAEA Director General pointedly referred, must be maintained at all times. We support his initiative to ensure that the parties fully comply with their security commitments in the area of security for those facilities. The Zaporizhzhya incident should be added to a growing list of direct or collateral attacks on civilian infrastructure. International law, international humanitarian law and the conventions on nuclear physical security must be respected without exception. We call for the military action of the Russian Federation on Ukrainian territory to adhere to the principles of international law and the principle of proportionality of actions affecting civilian infrastructure, in particular nuclear facilities, equipment and radioactive materials.

Mexico reiterates its support for the Secretary-General's appeal for an immediate ceasefire that would allow for urgent humanitarian action. That is precisely the objective pursued by France and Mexico in the draft resolution that we have submitted for the consideration of Council members.

Ms. Oppong-Ntiri (Ghana): I wish to thank you, Madam President, for convening this emergency meeting of the Security Council at this critical moment in the situation in Ukraine, and Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director-General Grossi for the information provided.

Ghana is gravely concerned about the intensifying military escalations across several cities in Ukraine, in particular with the attack and shelling of sites close to nuclear power plants and facilities. It is a relief to learn that the situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant is currently stable and that radioactive emissions remain within acceptable range. Every effort must be made to mitigate the risk of accidental emissions, which pose an immeasurable threat to the lives of civilians and an already fragile environment.

We urge the continued support of the International Atomic Energy Agency to provide necessary assistance to the Ukrainian authorities so as to ensure the safety and security of nuclear installations and staff present on site.

We cannot forget the horrors of the 1986 Chernobyl accident and the consequent nuclear catastrophe, which have left in its wake long-term effects of radiation exposure to many people in Ukraine and parts of Europe even to date.

Ghana strongly appeals to the parties to exercise restraint and halt the use of force in all areas of critical infrastructure, including the nuclear power plants, and to respect their international obligations to protect human lives and to prevent potential disasters.

We take note of the ongoing diplomatic talks between the parties in Belarus and welcome the agreement reached to create a humanitarian corridor to allow for the evacuation of the millions of people caught up in the crossfires, as well as the considerations to provide food and medical supplies.

Together with the international community, we express our strong support for the peaceful resolution of this conflict and urge further constructive engagements by the parties at all levels in the pursuit of their security

interests and the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I listened attentively to the briefings by Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Grossi.

China is closely following the recent developments in Ukraine and expresses its concern about the relevant report about the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. According to the information the IAEA received from the Ukrainian nuclear authority, the main equipment of the nuclear power plant remain intact and the level of radiation unchanged. We also note the information and clarification provided by Russia on relevant matters.

China attaches great importance to nuclear safety and security and hopes the relevant parties concerned will act with great caution and, with specialized technical assistance from the IAEA Technical Secretariat, work to jointly ensure the safety of relevant nuclear facilities inside Ukraine.

The Ukrainian crisis is still undergoing complex changes. The most important thing right now is to ease tension, avoid more civilian casualties, intensify diplomatic efforts and return as soon as possible to the track of political settlement.

Russia and Ukraine have held two rounds of direct dialogue and negotiations and have reached a preliminary consensus on setting up a humanitarian corridor. China welcomes this and hopes that it can facilitate better protection of civilians and the safe evacuation of all foreign nationals, including Chinese nationals.

We encourage Russia and Ukraine to remain committed to stick to the overall direction of a political settlement and reach a negotiated solution that accommodates the legitimate concerns of the two parties and contributes to Europe's lasting peace and security. China welcomes all diplomatic efforts conducive to political settlement and has played and will continue to play a constructive role to this end.

The international community should stay cool-headed and rational and adopt a responsible, impartial and objective approach to creating a sound atmosphere and conditions for direct talks between the parties concerned. Any action must contribute to de-escalation and a diplomatic settlement, rather than add fuel to

the fire of further escalation and the deterioration of the situation.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting and Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Director General Rafael Grossi for their presentations.

We support and commend the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for remaining in constant contact with authorities in Ukraine and for fully discharging technical responsibilities and functions, as per the Agency's statute and related instruments. We commend the Agency's Director General for his offer to visit Ukraine and for his efforts to secure a commitment of all parties to ensuring the safety and security of nuclear facilities in the country.

I am almost embarrassed to reiterate that we are facing unprecedented dire circumstances. Not only are we witnessing an appalling humanitarian catastrophe in Ukraine, but now we are also confronted with the prospect of a nuclear incident of significant dimensions due to the situation in the nuclear facility in Zaporizhzhya. That is one more reason for the international community to strenuously call for an immediate and comprehensive cessation of all hostilities in Ukraine.

We are under threat of a radioactive incident of major proportions, which could have enormous consequences not only for Ukraine but for all of Europe. The complete de-escalation of military actions is past due. The provisions of international humanitarian law must be respected in their entirety. The safety of millions of people is at stake and now also subjected a nuclear threat.

In that regard, we appreciate Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for drawing the attention of the Council to article 56 of the first Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, according to which nuclear electrical generating stations

“shall not be made the object of attack, even when those objects are military objectives, if such an attack may cause the release of dangerous forces and consequent severe losses among the civilian population”.

Allow me to add that article 56 also applies to “other military objectives located at or in the vicinity of those works or installations”. The IAEA General Conference has adopted a number of decisions on the

protection of nuclear installations devoted to peaceful purposes against armed attacks, prohibition of attacks and threat of attack thereto. Those decisions must be respected at all times.

Brazil calls on all parties to refrain from any measure or action that could jeopardize the security of nuclear materials, as well as the safe operation of all nuclear facilities in Ukraine, as any such incident could have severe and enduring consequences for human health and the environment.

While expressing grave concern over the recent developments, we cannot turn a blind eye to the role that the Council should play but is not playing in the current situation. A number of meetings have been held in this Chamber on the situation in Ukraine. It seems that, no matter how many public meetings we convene, a ceasefire and the end of hostilities remain elusive. That is not a paradox, but rather a warning on the failure of the Council to act constructively in addressing the matter.

Brazil urges all members here to engage truly and actively to promote dialogue and rebuild trust. The General Assembly recently adopted resolution ES-11/1, urging Russia and Ukraine to seek a peaceful resolution of the conflict through political dialogue, negotiations, mediation and other peaceful means. This is the time not to further escalate the rhetoric, but to engage in conversations towards peace. There is an array of instruments available to the Council and to the parties under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council has — we have — the responsibility to create an environment conducive to a ceasefire and to lasting peace.

At this moment, we reiterate our appeal for a ceasefire and, most of all, for diplomacy.

Mrs. Toroitich (Kenya): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their briefings.

Kenya is deeply concerned by the reports made yesterday of a fire in the close vicinity of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in Ukraine. It is with relief that we learned from the International Atomic Energy Agency that the reactor's safety systems have not been affected and that radioactive material has not been released.

There are few more dangerous installations containing dangerous forces than nuclear plants

as regards the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of their destruction. On this occasion, good fortune intervened to safeguard the reactor. However, the fact that the armed conflict is still under way and features extensive ground, air and sea military operations means that the risk remains unacceptably high.

Rarely has there been a more urgent need to observe international conventions regulating the conduct of armed conflict. We therefore call for adherence to the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts, particularly part IV of Protocol II, whose article 15 states:

“Works or installations containing dangerous forces, namely dams, dykes and nuclear electrical generating stations, shall not be made the object of attack, even where these objects are military objectives, if such attack may cause the release of dangerous forces and consequent severe losses among the civilian population.”

Kenya also recalls resolution 2573 (2021), adopted in April 2021, the protection of objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, which highlights the significant effect that the destruction of essential infrastructure in many conflicts across the globe continues to have on civilians. Beyond the risk to nuclear plants, we urge that due caution be taken in any actions that may destroy civilian objects that are critical to the survival of Ukrainians. Harm to them can lead to an escalation of the armed conflict and make it all the more difficult to resolve.

Kenya calls for the military leaderships of Ukraine and the Russian Federation to establish mechanisms to reduce the targeting and threat to critical infrastructure. Such a mechanism can mirror the agreement made yesterday by both sides to the conflict to establish a humanitarian corridor, as well as a temporary local ceasefire, to enable aid deliveries. We encourage the continuation of that positive dialogue and call on the Russian Federation to urgently enter into negotiations to settle the conflict by peaceful means.

Finally, we take note of the resolution adopted yesterday by the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors. We thank the Director General for his regular updates and continuing efforts to ensure safety and security in all facilities in the country.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Director General Rafael Grossi for their briefings.

My country too is following the situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant with deep concern. Thereports that we have received about fires affecting the plant suggest a dangerous development in the conflict. The humanitarian and environmental catastrophe resulting from a serious nuclear incident would be hard to contain and recovery would be difficult. We clearly remember Fukushima and Chernobyl. The human costs are indeed incalculable in terms of both human health and the environment. We all must prevent such accidents from happening again.

The parties must therefore ensure the safety of the plant, as well as its reactors. They must also ensure that the plant and the surrounding area are not a target and remain protected from conflict, as damage to the plant could lead to dire consequences for the entire region. For that reason, we urge all the relevant parties involved to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to ensure and protect the safety of nuclear facilities in Ukraine and to establish a stable framework on the ground.

There are clear reasons for having special protections in place under international humanitarian law for facilities such as nuclear power plants. We again stress that any direct attack on a nuclear facility has the potential to lead to catastrophic and unimaginable consequences.

Nuclear safety is a critical issue for my country. Our participation on the IAEA's Board of Governors is a recognition of that concern. We will continue to make every possible effort to promote and maintain nuclear safety, and we support the Director General of the IAEA's proposal for negotiations between the parties around this matter and the implementation of agreed procedures. We also welcome the second round of bilateral talks between Ukraine and Russia yesterday.

The Security Council is responsible for maintaining international peace and security. As we know, nuclear threats are among the most devastating threats to humankind. The Council must make every possible effort to avoid a nuclear disaster, whether from

direct attack on a nuclear facility or as an unintended consequence of conflict. Such a disaster would have grave ramifications for generations to come. With regard to the conflict today, we again reiterate our call for a cessation of hostilities, for de-escalation and for dialogue mechanisms to be leveraged and supported by all of us. The risks of a failure in diplomacy are too grave to consider.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo to respond to any comments and questions.

Ms. DiCarlo: I would like to respond to the comment of the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, who referred to United Nations vehicles being requisitioned in Kramatorsk. At present, there are no United Nations staff in Kramatorsk. Thirteen vehicles were left there. At 10.45 a.m. this morning, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security spoke with guards at the compound. They confirmed that all 13 vehicles remain there.

The President: I thank Ms. DiCarlo for the clarifications she has provided.

I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): First of all, I would like to express my gratitude for the immediate reaction by the Under-Secretary-General to the lies of the Russian representative. We are all accustomed to the lies.

"We have survived the night that could have stopped the history of Ukraine and Europe," said the President of Ukraine this morning. Indeed, every day provides us with newer and newer evidence that it is not only Ukraine under Russian attack; it is Europe; it is the entire world; it is humankind; and, finally, it is the future of the next generations.

Russia seems to be furious that its plans to quickly invade Ukraine have already failed. Russia is furious that the Ukrainian people continue to courageously fight for its freedom. Russia is furious about the worldwide solidarity with Ukraine. In retaliation, Russia has resorted to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Russia does not even try to hide them. Residential areas of Ukrainian cities and villages across the country are being ruined by Russian bombs, shells and missiles. Peaceful civilians are being killed. Critical infrastructure is totally damaged. Just yesterday,

Russian air strikes killed 47 peaceful residents of the city of Chernihiv, including children. But that is not enough for Russia, or terror Russia, as one may already call it, because yesterday it committed an act of nuclear terrorism while shelling and seizing the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in the town of Enerгодар.

The lies of the Permanent Representative of Russia are not surprising. He may not be properly informed by his capital, and we saw that on many occasions in the Security Council. He had no idea what his capital and what the President were planning to do in the middle of one of our recent meetings. I would therefore not really rely on his words.

As a result of the shelling on the territory of the nuclear power plant, a fire broke out, killing and injuring several people. The Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant site, as well as the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, is currently under the control of the Russian Armed Forces. Employees of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant are monitoring the condition of the power units and ensuring their operation, in accordance with the requirements of the technical regulations for safe operation.

It is alarming that several employees responsible for maintaining nuclear security at the site were reportedly killed by Russian soldiers. There has been no rotation of personnel since yesterday morning. The building of Unit 1 main building is damaged. The overpass of the special building is damaged. The telephone line connection is disrupted and not available at the moment.

The stage of the power units now is as follows. Unit 1 is in outage. Its main building is damaged. The overpass of the special building is damaged. Units 2 and 3 have been disconnected from the grid and the cooldown of the nuclear installations is being carried out. Unit 4 is in operation at 690 megawatts of power. Units 5 and 6 are being cooled down.

State nuclear safety inspectors of the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine are not allowed access to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant site. Changes in the radiation situation have not been registered. Data from the automated radiation monitoring system of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant do not work. The cooling of the nuclear fuel within the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power units is maintained by dedicated systems of power units, in accordance with the requirements of the technical regulations for safe operation. If, at any point, the cooling process is

disturbed, that could cause radioactive damage across large territories and have irreparable consequences for the environment of the entire continent. Thousands of people, including civilians, who are currently unable to evacuate the area near the plant due to the ongoing shelling and fighting, would be affected.

I turn now to a pair of lies by the Russian Ambassador about the foreign students. This is an appalling example of gaslighting and an example of what he probably intended to present as almost an angelic message of peace. But let me remind him and all of us that Satan was also an angel — an angel that rebelled against God. I would like to ask the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation if he is still able to communicate with his capital, which is probably not the case. Who knows? I ask the Russian representative to appeal to the armed forces to ensure a safe corridor, to allow the foreign students to leave the areas of concern and to stop spreading lies. He knows very well what is going on there if he is indeed in contact with his capital.

The result of a nuclear disaster on such a scale — God forbid were it to happen — could exceed all previous accidents at nuclear power plants, including the Chernobyl and Fukushima nuclear power plant disasters. Russia has deliberately undertaken an armed attack against a nuclear power site — an action that has violated all international agreements with the IAEA, in particular the Agency's Statute and Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities.

The shelling of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant is also a gross violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We are disappointed by the reaction of the IAEA, whose statement did not go as far as to include any mention of the attacking side. We demand clear and decisive action from the IAEA.

The international community must respond adequately to the actions of the Russian Federation, which could lead to an unprecedented nuclear catastrophe. All Russian forces must be withdrawn from the nuclear power plant. Today, I have sent a letter

to the President of the Security Council, recalling the Council's decisions on no-fly zones during previous conflicts in order to prevent further civilian casualties, protect the civilian population from air attacks, including humanitarian personnel, and ensure access for humanitarian assistance and evacuation.

In that regard, we ask the Council to consider the issue of protection of nuclear power plants and other critical infrastructure in Ukraine. Urgent discussion on establishing a ban on all flights in the airspace over Ukraine should be a top priority for the Security Council. We would also like to recall that, on 30 March 2015, in a letter to the President of the Security Council, contained in document S/2015/225, Ukraine requested the deployment of an international peacekeeping and security operation in the territory of Ukraine, with the exact modalities to be defined in consultations with the Ukrainian side, while taking into account that Russia's armed forces could not be a part of the peacekeeping contingent because it is precisely the occupation armed forces that should be separated to maintain a ceasefire and peace. The failure of the Security Council to act, especially owing to the position of the Russian Federation as a party to the conflict, would be the historical responsibility of the Security Council and the entire Organization.

I should like to ask Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo to forward our request to Secretary-General

Guterres to ensure that every single body of the United Nations and every employee of the Secretariat respects General Assembly resolution ES-11/1 of 2 March and does not deviate from the language of the resolution or substitute it with ambiguities or falsities like "special military forces", when it is called aggression against Ukraine. A week of full-fledged Russian invasion has already resulted in thousands of people killed, more than 1 million refugees and destroyed infrastructure.

It is already the shared duty of the international community to stop the Russian murderers and terrorists by closing the skies over Ukraine, supporting Ukraine in terms of security and humanitarian assistance and expelling Russians from international institutions, as they do not deserve to be among civilized and responsible nations.

Einstein said that the world will not be destroyed by those who do evil — the Ukrainians can deal with evil — but by those who watch them without doing anything. The people of Ukraine are doing more than they can, including by paying the ultimate price — paying with their lives. Yet still, shamefully, there is a handful of those among us who do nothing. We must act now or it may be too late, not only for Ukraine, but for all of us.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.