

Every day this war continues, the risks to international peace and security increase: UK statement at UN Security Council

Thank you Madam President, and I'd like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing and we look forward to hearing the briefing from Mr Grossi.

The United Kingdom and our partners called this urgent meeting because Russian forces last night 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 the plant remains safe.

We support the work of the IAEA in Ukraine and are relieved that, so far, they have reported that none of the safety systems in the plant were affected, and that there was no release of radioactive material.

Colleagues, 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 first Additional Protocol of the Geneva Conventions.

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.

Colleagues, 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 is not true.

President Putin misjudged the strength, resilience and will of the Ukrainian people against his invasion.

He underestimated the world's condemnation of his actions. 141 votes in the General assembly and the unprecedented sanctions on Russia demonstrate the strength of the global response.

Every day this war continues, the destruction it brings to Ukraine, the suffering it inflicts on the Ukrainian and Russian people, and the risks it poses to international peace and security, increase.

This must stop.

We call on Russia to end this violence, withdraw its troops and enter into serious peace negotiations.

I thank you, Madam President.