

Russia has brought us to the brink. We urge Russia to step back.

Mr President,

We meet this evening because, earlier today, President Putin announced the Russian Federation's recognition of the independence of the so-called "Donetsk People's Republic" and 'Luhansk People's Republic' and issued a decree to send Russian military forces into Ukraine as so-called "peacekeepers".

Colleagues,

The actions Russia has chosen to take today will have severe and far-reaching consequences. First, to human life: an invasion of Ukraine unleashes the forces of war, death and destruction on the people of Ukraine. The humanitarian impact will be terrible on civilians fleeing the fighting. We know that women and children will suffer most.

Second, to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a UN Member State, which is protected and guaranteed by the UN Charter. As the Secretary-General said earlier Russia's decisions are a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and inconsistent with the principles of the UN Charter.

Third, to international law. The actions taken today make mockery of the commitments Russia has made through the Budapest Memorandum and the Minsk Agreements, endorsed by Security Council resolution 2202. In seeking to redraw borders by force Russia's actions show blatant contempt for international law.

The United Kingdom will be announcing new sanctions on Russia in response to its breach of international law and attack on Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. There will be severe economic consequences to its actions.

Colleagues,

Now more than ever the Council must shoulder its responsibilities for peace and security and defend the principles of the UN Charter.

This Council must be united in: calling on Russia to de-escalate immediately; condemning aggression against a sovereign nation, and defending the territorial integrity of Ukraine; calling on Russia to respect its obligations under the Charter to the peaceful resolution of disputes.

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