

# Ukraine has inspired the world with its courage and defiance against brutality: UK statement at the Security Council

Thank you, President.

On behalf of the United Kingdom, I thank the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for their briefings. We warmly welcome President Zelenskyy's participation in today's meeting.

Six months ago, even as this Council met late into the night to try and avert catastrophe, Russia launched an unprovoked and illegal invasion of Ukraine in violation of the UN Charter.

In the months that have followed, Ukraine has been subjected to the full horrors of war.

As we have heard today, thousands of civilians have been killed or wounded.

Over 17 million are now in need of humanitarian assistance.

Schools, hospitals and other medical facilities have been attacked. We have seen a pattern of Russian violations of international humanitarian law. And of Russian human rights abuses and violations including reports of torture, inhumane treatment and arbitrary detention.

Ukrainian citizens, including children, have been forcibly deported to Russia. 6 million people are displaced within Ukraine and over 6 million are refugees abroad.

The people of Ukraine are not the only victims of this war.

Beyond Ukraine's borders, Putin's decisions have had a devastating impact on the world's most vulnerable, with many millions across the world affected by rising food and fuel prices.

We again pay tribute to the work of the Secretary-General with Türkiye to negotiate the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

Today, in what would be another violation of the UN Charter, there are reports that Russia is planning fake referenda to illegally annex more territory from Ukraine.

Any such attempt would fool no one.

Russia has, after all, lied throughout their illegal invasion, using disinformation to create false pretexts, undermine Ukrainian sovereignty,

obscure the truth and hide war crimes.

And it would further demonstrate Russia's contempt for the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. Principles which, as Member States of this organisation, we have all committed to upholding.

President, 31 years ago today, Ukraine declared its independence with over 90% of Ukrainians voting in favour.

Today, that pride in Ukrainian identity and sovereignty remains as strong as ever.

We have all seen the courage and ingenuity of the Ukrainian people as they have fought to defend their nation against Russia's attack on their national sovereignty and right to self-determination. Ukraine's fight is a fight for the principles of the UN Charter. All of us in this Chamber have a responsibility to recognise that. It is a fight that has inspired the world with its courage and defiance against brutality.

So today, on Ukrainian Independence Day, we stand together with the nation of Ukraine and its heroic people who continue to resist Russia's attempts to rewrite international borders by force.

We once again call for Russia to withdraw its forces from Ukraine immediately. And we call for full accountability for Russia's crimes.