

UN has 'narrow window of opportunity' to turn the tide on raft of global ills, warns Ukraine President

20 September 2017 – Transnational terrorism and use of force international relations, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, human rights violations and environmental fragility are but a few of today's global challenges, the President of Ukraine to the United Nations General Assembly, calling on the world body to "act now" to tackle those and pressing concerns.

"Now is the time to act, and although only a narrow window of opportunity exists, the United Nations should be at the forefront of that process," Petro Poroshenko told delegates in New York for the Assembly's 72nd annual general debate.

He said Ukraine could not have agreed more with the call for the universal respect of sovereignty, as expressed in the General Assembly Hall yesterday. And while the UN was founded on the principles of peace and security, based on sovereignty and respect for borders, those principles had been flagrantly violated by a permanent Security Council member against his country.

"Ukraine has suffered from conflict for the last three years, resulting in the deaths of 10,000 people and the occupation of seven per cent of its territory, while 20 per cent of the economy has been seized, destroyed or simply stolen," Mr. Poroshenko explained, adding that the "most horrific [action] was the Kremlin's tactic to increase human suffering."

He said Russia has violated Security Council resolutions and ignored requests from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)) for full access to the occupied parts of Crimea. "The situation requires a proper response from the international community," he said, noting that Russia is not contributing to international security, but is rather its biggest threat, "as it is in conflict with almost all its neighbours and has undermined every effort to restore Ukraine's sovereignty."

For decades, Ukraine had been a resolute contributor to global peace and security, he said, notably by giving up its nuclear arsenal. An advocate for non proliferation, Ukraine resolutely condemned the recent actions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, he said, also expressing deep concern over the conflict in Syria. Concerned by the numerous, unresolved conflicts in Africa, he expressed Ukraine's commitment to the [2030 Agenda](#) and implementation of the [Paris Agreement](#).