

The President of the Security Council presents his compliments to the members of the Council and has the honour to transmit herewith, for their information, a copy of a **letter dated 17 February 2022 from the Permanent Representatives of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to the United Nations** addressed to the President of the Security Council, and its enclosure.

This letter and its enclosure will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2022/127.

17 February 2022



PERMANENT MISSION
OF ESTONIA TO THE UN



Permanent Mission of Latvia
to the United Nations



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

17 February 2022

Excellency,

We have the honor to transmit a Joint Statement by Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in relation to the Security Council's meeting of 17 February 2022 on the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

We would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Annex: as stated.

Sven Jürgenson

Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of the
Republic of Estonia

Andrejs Pildegovičs

Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of the
Republic of Latvia

Rytis Paulauskas

Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of the
Republic of Lithuania

**His Excellency Mr. Vassily A. Nebenzia
President of the UN Security Council
United Nations
New York**

Statement by the Republic of Latvia

UN Security Council Meeting

17 February 2022

New York

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Baltic States – Estonia, Lithuania and my own country Latvia.

Mr. President,

I would like to thank the briefers today – Undersecretary-General DiCarlo, Special Representative Kinnunen and Chief Monitor Çevik – for providing a comprehensive insight in the latest developments regarding the topic of today's discussion.

This is the second time within less than a month that the Security Council has discussed the aggression against Ukraine. Since January 31, the situation has become increasingly dangerous. Therefore, we repeatedly draw the international communities' attention to the threats to international peace and security. The UN has a duty to do everything possible to prevent further escalation. Let me reiterate our countries' unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

We strongly condemn the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine since February 2014.

We strongly condemn the shelling of Stanytsia Luhanska by pro-Russian forces in the Donbass region of Ukraine this morning. This is a very dangerous provocation and clear violation of the Minsk agreement.

We strongly condemn the Russian State Duma's decision to submit a call to President Putin to recognize the non-government controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts of Ukraine as independent entities. This would be a very serious violation of international law, the UN Charter and of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, also undermining the Minsk agreements.

We do not recognize and continue to condemn the illegal annexation of Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol by Russia. We remain concerned over the increasing militarisation of the peninsula, the severe deterioration of the human rights situation there, including systemic persecution of Tatar community.

Mr. President,

The Russia instigated conflict in Ukraine has claimed around 14 000 lives, displaced 1,5 million persons and has resulted in countless suffering on both sides of the contact line in eastern Ukraine.

We reiterate our full support to the efforts towards peaceful and sustainable resolution of this conflict, namely, in the Normandy format, the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) and the OSCE, including its Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

We reconfirm the importance of the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements and reiterate our full support to the French and German efforts within the Normandy format, as well as Polish as Chairman in Office of the OSCE efforts, underlining Russia's responsibility as a party to the conflict.

Yet, despite all international efforts, until now we have seen little progress towards a resolution of this conflict. Ukraine's constructive approach has not been reciprocated by Russia.

We condemn Russia's continued aggressive actions and threats against Ukraine, and call on Russia to de-escalate the situation and to abide by international law.

We call on Russia to immediately stop fuelling the conflict by providing financial and military support to the armed formations it backs, to withdraw the Russian troops and materiel from the eastern border of Ukraine and the Crimean peninsula, as well as to reverse the policy of massive issuing of Russia's passports to Ukrainians living in the temporary occupied territories of Ukraine and stop their forced conscription to the Russian Armed Forces.

Mr. President,

Despite all the recent diplomatic efforts at all levels, including by the US, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland and other countries, Russia keeps escalating the situation and continues military build-up around Ukraine's borders. Moreover, Russian troops are deployed in large scale and non-transparent manner in Belarus as well. This adds-up to the current escalation and is of direct concern to us.

Kremlin continues to use a false narrative that Russia is forced to defend itself from a threat, even as the opposite is true - it is Russia who is threatening Ukraine and other neighbours. Russia is not a victim as it attempts to portray itself – it is the aggressor strengthening its security at the expense of others. By its own actions in the occupied regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the

Transnistrian region, the illegal annexation of Crimea, Russia has contributed to significant deterioration of security environment in Europe.

Notions of “spheres of influence” have no place in the 21st century. Contemporary international order is based on rules applied equally to all states. Sovereign states have freedom to choose or change their own security arrangements. No third country has a veto right over the sovereign choices of other states.

Mr President,

In response to the recent tensions, the EU has made clear in the December and January EU Council Conclusions that any further military aggression against Ukraine will have massive consequences and severe costs, including restrictive measures to be coordinated closely with our transatlantic partners.

We call on Russia to respect principles of UN Charter, deescalate and to choose a diplomatic track offered.

It is our duty as members of the UN to defend the rules-based international order. The UN Charter prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. This is one of the clearest principles of international law that all States must abide by. Disputes should be resolved peacefully and not by the use of force – this is not just the right thing but a legal duty, according to the Article 2.3 of the Charter. UN members must condemn such violations of the UN Charter and defend its key principles.

I thank you.