

The President of the Security Council presents her compliments to the members of the Council and has the honour to transmit herewith, for their information, a copy of a **letter dated 28 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/2022/166.

1 March 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

28 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 28 February on humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

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 on behalf of the Baltic States –
Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

UN Security Council Meeting

28 February 2022

New York

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Baltic States – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

We condemn in strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked large-scale aggression against Ukraine. Equally, we strongly condemn actions by Belarus, which have enabled and supported this aggression. Despite the calls by the international community to stop, Russia keeps escalating its operations, including by stepping up its attacks against cities in Ukraine. Using of indiscriminate weapons against residential areas has inevitably led to unbearable human suffering. There is steady stream of reports of increasing casualties among civilian population in Ukraine, including women, children and the elderly.

These developments are in stark contrast with the official claims by Russia regarding its efforts to avoid civilian casualties. Russia is relying on heavy censorship of the media space and blatant disinformation to convince its population of its supposedly noble aims in Ukraine. However, Russia cannot prevent the world from seeing the truth. As we are witnessing its bombs obliterating residential buildings, schools and kindergartens in Kharkiv, Kyiv and elsewhere, it becomes increasingly clear that Russia has zero respect for human life in its brutal war against Ukraine.

Let's be clear - Russia's aggression breaches peace and international law, including UN Charter, and international humanitarian law, which clearly states that all parties to a conflict have a legal obligation to ensure that military operations are planned and conducted in a way as to ensure the protection of civilians and civilian objects. International human rights law and international humanitarian law must be observed.

After 5 days of Russia's war, the humanitarian situation is already extremely concerning. Today UN agencies report 520 000 refugees and hundreds of casualties among civilian population in Ukraine. Tomorrow there will be more victims, unless Russia stops its senseless aggression.

The citizens of the Baltic states have long empathized with Ukraine efforts to defend its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. It was only natural, therefore, that our countries were the first to provide humanitarian aid, long before the conflict took shape in recent weeks. Let me assure you

that the Baltic States are mobilizing all available human and financial resources to help people of Ukraine. We are already receiving Ukrainian people fleeing the war and providing them with the necessary assistance. We are helping children and the elderly affected by conflict. And we are sending medical supplies and other assistance to those staying in Ukraine. I would like to highlight that these efforts are not only led by governments. Many individuals, NGO's and private companies are participating, too, with practical support. For example, millions of Euros aimed for humanitarian support to Ukraine have already been donated in the Baltic States in just a couple of days. This way our nations are expressing their solidarity and compassion with the brave people of Ukraine.

Now it is high time that the international community steps up its efforts, too. In this regard, we welcome the information provided by the distinguished briefers today. The Baltic States highly appreciate the efforts by the UN agencies, particularly those operating on the ground in these dangerous conditions. We fully support the Flash Appeal to be launched tomorrow to address the acute humanitarian needs of crisis-affected people in Ukraine. Furthermore, the Baltic States call on all countries to support international organizations that help provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Ukraine.

It is equally important to ensure that the international support can reach those in need. We call of on Russia to ensure rapid, safe, and unhindered access of humanitarian assistance for civilians, including humanitarian personnel and persons in vulnerable situations, including children and disabled people. The relevant provisions of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, must be respected. All those who violate these provisions must be held accountable by the international community. As it has been said repeatedly in this Council and the General Assembly, the world is watching.

Finally, this aggression against people of Ukraine should also be a matter of conscience of any single person who takes part in perpetrating crimes, who justifies them, or who tries to shelter Russia from the blame by referring to "equal responsibility of all sides". Russia is the aggressor here. History never forgets such actions.