

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 14 March 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/2022/224.

14 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

14 march 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 14 March under title "Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe".

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

H.E. Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh
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

14 March 2022

New York

Madam President,

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

We welcome the briefings by the OSCE Chairman in Office, minister Zbigniew Rau, and the UN Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo.

Unfortunately, our meeting is not taking place during peace time. As we speak, there is a large-scale war conducted by Russia against Ukraine that has triggered a massive human rights and humanitarian catastrophe in Europe on a scale unseen in decades.

In this difficult moment we stand united with the people of Ukraine, who have shown nothing but resilience, courage and determination to live in freedom and defend their country against a foreign invader.

We strongly condemn Russia's brutal and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, that is supported by another UN and OSCE member state – a co-aggressor – Belarus.

Madam President,

It is important to recall the principles the UN and OSCE were built upon - the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act. They mutually reinforce each other by building a foundation for a peaceful rules-based international order to benefit us all. Today this order is aggressively challenged.

Those who commit aggression and war crimes must be stopped and held accountable by the international community. In this context, we recall the UN GA resolution “Aggression against Ukraine”, supported by 141 states, demanding Russia to immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine.

Madam President,

Russia's violation of the UN and the OSCE founding principles did not begin on 24 February. There's a long list of Russia's actions, which have

undermined international security for a long time. Among others, it includes breaching arms control instruments, using prohibited chemical weapons at home and abroad, violating the territorial integrity of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, interfering in elections of other states, as well as distorting of history and spreading disinformation at unprecedented scale.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an ugly culmination of the pattern we have seen for years.

Madam President,

We welcome the strong leadership by the OSCE Chairmanship in Office – Poland – who offered the OSCE as a platform for the Renewed European Security Dialogue for states to address their security concerns, including those raised by Russia. Unfortunately, Russia has refused to engage in a substantial discussion, and instead, while insisting on its ultimatums, launched a destructive war against Ukraine.

We encourage the OSCE to exploit its unique position as the world's largest regional security organization and make full use of all the instruments available at its disposal towards resolving this conflict. We welcome international co-operation mechanisms, inter alia, those established between the OSCE and UN, aimed to contribute substantially to the advancement and protection of human rights and our common security.

Recently 45 participating States of the OSCE, including Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, with support from Ukraine invoked the OSCE Moscow Mechanism to assess violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in connection with Russia's invasion. We look forward to this mission, which will gather facts on such violations, including possible war crimes and crimes against humanity. All information or documentation derived from this mission will be delivered to appropriate accountability mechanisms. Russia's leadership will be held accountable for the atrocious crimes they have committed.

Currently, one of the main objectives on the ground is fast and effective humanitarian assistance to affected population of Ukraine. We underline the importance of ensuring the safe passage of civilians as well as safe, timely and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance. Coordination of all efforts and avoiding duplication is key. Being among states which have actively contributed to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, we support

consideration to provide UN OCHA with SMM's resources, which would enable UN OCHA to deliver assistance to those suffering more efficiently.

Madam President,

Right before Russia's invasion in Ukraine, the Baltic States and Ukraine invoked the Mechanism for consultation and cooperation in accordance with the Risk Reduction Chapter of the Vienna Document due to unprecedented Russian military activities around Ukraine and non-notified major joint Russia-Belarus military exercise in Belarus. Our legitimate concerns were met with complete disregard and an attempt to use this mechanism as yet another venue for spreading Russia's lies.

As it is now evident, Belarus was the enabler for Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. In this light, we find it unacceptable for Belarus to chair the Forum for Security Cooperation of the OSCE in the second trimester of 2022 (April-August). Russia and Belarus not only fail to implement the OSCE's political-military agreements, but breach all fundamental principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

While our attention is focused on Russia's war against Ukraine, there are many other important issues on the agenda of the OSCE. In particular, we would like to highlight the Russian illegal military presence in Moldova and Georgia, as well as issues pertaining to military transparency.

We also call for a global condemnation of massive human rights abuses and severe restrictions on individual freedoms in Russia and Belarus, including as regards to the freedom of expression, freedom of association and media freedom. In an attempt to create an alternate reality at home for the Russian public and justify its aggression against Ukraine, it has shut down almost the entire independent media and arrested thousands of peaceful anti-war protesters.

Madam President,

Let me conclude by reminding that it is an obligation by each member of the international community to stand up against those who violate the principles and rules, which underpin international law and the UN Charter. Fundamental principles of respecting sovereignty, territorial integrity, and refraining from the use of force are clear and not for debate.

Russia's war against Ukraine is a litmus test for the ability of the UN and the OSCE to uphold international peace and security. This is defining moment for all of us.