

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 23 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/2022/259.

24 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

New York, 23 March 2022, No 19.1-1/181

Excellency,

We have the honor to transmit a joint Statement by Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in connection to the draft resolution presented by the Russian Federation on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine on March 23.

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
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Republic of Lithuania

Her Excellency Ms. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh
President of the UN Security Council
United Nations
New York

Statement by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in connection to the draft resolution presented by the Russian Federation on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine

23 March, 2022

The Russian Federation is waging a war against civilians in Ukraine. It is killing, injuring and forcing to flee women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

These are facts, confirmed daily by the United Nations.

The presentation of the draft resolution is a cynical attempt to turn international law and the lives of civilians into a political cover, endorsed by the Security Council, of its unjustified and illegal aggression against Ukraine. It is also a reflection of Russia's absolute disregard for international law, including international humanitarian law, in its war against Ukraine.

It is the Russian aggression that caused and is driving the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

It is Russia which has through indiscriminate attacks as well as the targeted shelling of civilians and civilian infrastructure caused the death of hundreds, but likely thousands of civilians, including children. It is Russia which continues to bomb hospitals and healthcare centres, schools, homes, and places of shelter. It is Russia which has attacked civilians to whom it promised a safe passage. It is Russia whose actions constitute recurring serious violations of international humanitarian law.

All these elements are a glaring omission in the Russian-presented draft.

We also emphasise that only a few weeks ago Russia used its status as a permanent member of the Council, vetoing the Security Council's call to end its aggression, cease the use of force, and protect the civilians affected by it.

Whatever the attempts by the Russian Federation to distract the international community, its obligations under international law stand:

- It needs to respect international law, including international humanitarian law and the UN Charter.
- It needs to ensure the protection of civilians at all times.
- It needs to ensure safe passage of the civilians who wish to leave and the movement of humanitarian goods and personnel, and honour the agreements made in this regard.
- It needs to ensure safe, timely and unhindered humanitarian access and the safety of all humanitarian workers.

The actions of the Russian Federation demonstrate it has no intention to follow these internationally agreed norms. Its actions and the content of the draft resolution presented do not add up. In fact, Russia's proposed text calls for the very opposite to the actions of the Russian forces in Ukraine. Therefore the draft resolution proposed by Russia has no credibility.

We stand with the people of Ukraine. We also stand in solidarity and continue to provide support to the work of the humanitarian organisations providing life-saving assistance, including the local organisations, the ICRC and the Ukrainian Red Cross Society.

We also stand for accountability for all violations of international law, including war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the course of the Russian aggression. There will be accountability, including through internationally established courts – as affirmed by the order of ICJ on provisional measures, as well as the investigation opened by the ICC prosecutor.

For these reasons we welcome that the Council has not adopted the draft resolution before it today.

Shortly - if the Russian Federation actually cares about the protection of civilians in Ukraine, they need to end targeting them and stop this unjust war now.