



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya
to the United Nations, New York
Security Council - 2021-2022

**BRIEFING ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE: SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN
CONFLICT AND TRAFFICKING OF HUMAN BEINGS**

MONDAY, JUNE 6TH 2022

STATEMENT BY AMB. MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

Thank you Mr President,

I thank **SRSR Pramila Patten, Ms. Natalia Karbowska and Ms. Sherrie Rollins Westin** for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Ukraine, and the Permanent Representatives of the affected countries in the region.

This morning, it is with a heavy heart that the Kenya delegation sends its condolences to the people and Government of Nigeria for the brutal murder of dozens of worshippers at St Francis Catholic Church in the town of Owo in Ondo State. Such an act of terrorism is a crime against humanity which we condemn in the strongest terms. It invites this Council to re-double its efforts to ensure terrorist groups are met with the strongest condemnation and opposition.

Mr. President,

Wars of aggression are a transgression of international law that opens the floodgates to serious violations against civilians, particularly when those wars breach the UN Charter. Even as we justly condemn war crimes, we must not forget that war itself is the greatest crime.

Sexual violence against women, children and men is the frequent outcome of war. And it is also used, deliberately, and sometimes systematically, as a weapon of war.

We recognise with the deepest concern the women, girls and boys in Ukraine who have suffered this uniquely horrifying crime.

We condemn their violation, and the violation of international law, the laws of war, the UN Charter, and the most basic human decency.

We call on all military commanders to ensure that those responsible for these atrocities are held accountable. Soldiers in the field should be subject to severe discipline for abusing civilians or captured combatants.

Political leaders should also be aware that using ideological labelling on entire populations increases the risks that rank-and-file soldiers will commit atrocities.

Leaders should, in all public communications, uphold the human dignity, worth and equality of the entirety of the people of Ukraine.

We urge all concerned United Nations agencies, and those in Ukraine and neighbouring countries to do their utmost to deliver medical and psychosocial support to the survivors of sexual violence and trafficking.

More should be done to ensure humanitarian corridors and safety from military targeting for the millions who remain vulnerable in besieged cities and villages.

We say this fully aware that the truest protection is the stopping of the war and the respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine.

In the meantime, there is a crucial need for effective cross-border coordination between border security personnel, early warning mechanisms, national and regional Women Protection Advisers (WPA), as well as humanitarian actors to protect those in danger of violations.

In this regard, we commend the signing of the UN Framework in early May to assist survivors of sexual violence whose purview also covers the prevention of conflict-related trafficking, amid rising displacement.

We also commend all individuals, institutions and governments that are helping in every possible way. We especially thank UN bodies and agencies including OCHA, UN Women, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA and UNDP for their reports and action briefs highlighting the plight of civilians especially women and children, and spearheading the UN's response.

We also applaud the brave women of Ukraine that are fighting for peace and for their country. We recognise with admiration the brave women who are leading in government and civil society.

We are further pleased to see the role of women as agents of change and urge their participation in decision-making at all levels in all aspects including diplomatic efforts to find lasting peace and security in Europe, and globally.

Mr. President,

I must again bring up the plight of Africans who are trapped in the war.

Unfortunately, we continue to see reports of racial discrimination directed at people of African descent who, like other fleeing Ukrainians are also seeking safety in European cities.

We recently heard Gerald Ezeani's heartfelt story of his experience while crossing the border from Ukraine to Hungary and then to Berlin. Though aware of his rights and the law outlined in the UN Charter which allows him the right of passage having been a valid resident of Ukraine, he experienced discrimination on the train where he was requested to disembark by 15 to 20 German police officers under claims that he was not "born" in Ukraine which would demand that he undergo further processing to leave. Given these appalling justifications, all the black people on the train

were requested to disembark and held for 23 hours where they endured unjust and inhumane treatment by law enforcement.

It is only for us to remind that people of African descent are equally human and deserving equal protections and facilitation in line with the UN Charter.

Mr. President,

The war in Ukraine continues to worsen the food insecurity in many countries especially in the Global South due to disrupted food supply chains and skyrocketing cost of farm inputs. As a mitigating measure, we support the call by the WFP for the urgent opening of Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea to allow for the export of food.

The humanitarian and developmental response must leave no country or region behind.

We commend the efforts of the African Union Chairperson and the Chair of the AU Commission to engage with leaders in a position to release Ukrainian grain into the world.

Mr. President, in closing, I reaffirm Kenya's support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine and our continued call for the prioritisation of dialogue as the only plausible avenue to resolve serious disputes.

I thank you.