



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

BRIEFING ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN UKRAINE

TUESDAY, 29TH MARCH 2022

STATEMENT BY AMB. MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

Thank you, Madame President,

1. I thank **ASG Joyce Msuya** and **WFP Executive Director David Beasley** for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of the distinguished Permanent Representative of Ukraine.

Madame President,

2. The war in Ukraine is a humanitarian catastrophe. More than ten million people have fled their homes. Three million have left the country as refugees. The speed with which the situation has deteriorated. The immense damage to civilian infrastructure. The shockingly high number of civilian and military fatalities on both sides. We are reminded of the carnage that we have only read in the history books, and therefore fear that it could get far worse.
3. We offer our heartfelt condolences to the families who are grieving for their relatives killed in the violence. We offer our condolences, as well, to the Government of Ukraine that must now try and provide aid to the people even as it resists a breaching of its territorial integrity by the Russian Federation.

4. We commend Ukraine's neighbours for opening their borders to receive refugees of multiple nationalities. We urge them to ensure that the protections sought are offered with no discrimination on any basis, particularly regarding race or religion.

Madame President,

5. It is not only Ukrainians who have fled from the bombings. Thousands of Africans who traveled long distances to seek their education in Ukraine have also had to flee for their lives.
6. These African students in Ukraine, and other parts of the world, travel to study as representatives of their families hopes for betterment.
7. Thousands made this hopeful journey to Ukraine. Now they are fleeing before the tanks and bomber planes sent into Ukraine by the Russian Federation. They have turned from hopeful students into fearful refugees.
8. Statistics are impersonal, they flatten the human experience. But a humanitarian crisis is human-sized. It is a million individual lives shattered by fear and violence.
9. Our delegation spoke to Korrine Sky, a Zimbabwean-born student doctor at Dnipro Medical Institute. Fleeing for safety, she joined close friends to make a dangerous 26-hour road trip to **Lviv** in Western Ukraine. It took almost four days to make the journey and cross the border to safety.
10. At the border she suffered the indignity and danger of racism. She encountered that racism as she fled the impersonal brutality of bombs.
11. She co-founded the **Black Women for Black Lives** to support thousands of African students fleeing Ukraine. They have raised funds, gotten word out, and assisted many who like them were fleeing from the conflict.
12. I urge everyone listening to this briefing to visit their website at <https://blackwomenforblacklives.org> for details on this heroic effort.

13. Today, Korrine is calling for the safety of civilians, particularly for the African students trapped in Kherson.
14. Civilians, including foreign nationals, in Ukraine are not party to the conflict and must not be a target. In this regard, all actors must prioritise the protection of civilians and objects indispensable to their survival in accordance with international law and international humanitarian law.
15. Special and urgent attention should be paid to those trapped in besieged cities and villages such as in Mariupol and Kherson. We call for the urgent activation of safe passages with no restrictions.
16. The response to Ukraine's humanitarian crises has shown how boldly and generously the world can react in solidarity. We commend OCHA, the World Food Programme, and the many other organisations and individuals who have come to the aid of the deserving people of Ukraine.
17. We urge the European Union and its members to offer their every support to the African students who have fled Ukraine. It seems eminently doable that those who have been students in Ukrainian institutions can receive offers to further their education in other countries, as well as the mental health and material support that they need.
18. We must also not forget our responsibilities in other humanitarian crises. Frequently, the Security Council is briefed on the shortfalls in financing of humanitarian aid in Africa and the Middle East. The situation now is even worse given the surge in food and energy prices due to the war in Ukraine and its resulting sanctions.

Madame President,

19. Development is being reversed worldwide as a result of the war. Livelihoods are being destroyed. Farmers needing affordable fertiliser are struggling to cope. Inflation is surging upward. The result of these domino-like effects will be stunted health for millions and an earlier-than-normal death for many others.
20. A few weeks ago, we were urging Building Back Better after COVID-19. Now we will need to add the war in Ukraine to that.

21. We urge the Secretary General to rally the UN, the major economies, and international financial institutions to design instruments that can cushion the most vulnerable from the effects of the conflict in Ukraine. Lacking such action, the solidarity required will eventually suffer from the rising inequalities and economic calamities.
22. **Madame President**, in the final telling, the most humane action that can be undertaken is a cessation of hostilities. We call for a cessation that has clearly defined contact lines and humanitarian corridors.
23. The cessation of hostilities should set the foundation for a lasting peace settlement that respects the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine. It should also lead to the design of a European security order that offers lasting security and not a generation of new wars. **I thank you.**