



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

BRIEFING ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE  
(PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS)

THURSDAY, MAY 5<sup>TH</sup> 2022

STATEMENT BY AMB. MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

**Thank you, Madam President,**

1. Congratulations on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council this month. I thank the Secretary-General for his remarks, and welcome him back to New York after his extensive and important travels. I also thank the other briefers for their presentations and their work, and welcome the participation of Ukraine's distinguished Permanent Representative as well as the Deputy Prime Minister of Poland and of other Permanent Representatives here today.

**Madam President,**

2. The briefings we have heard make it clear that the war in Ukraine, caused by the armed breach of the country's territorial integrity by the Russian Federation, is causing extreme suffering.
3. It is also sadly clear that sufficient care is not being accorded by combatants to the protection of civilians. After all, the millions of civilians who have fled their homes only did so because they understood that their lives and properties would be directly harmed in the course of the conflict.
4. We are gravely concerned by the latest developments in **Mariupol, Iziium, and Popasna**, among other cities. The reports from these cities reveal heavy artillery shelling and airstrikes that are destroying civilian objects at scale. These acts constitute a violation of the UN Charter, international law and international humanitarian law.
5. Kenya condemns the disproportionate use of force, the use of human shields, and the exploitation of civilian suffering as a tactic of war.

6. As important as it is for the Security Council to be clear in its condemnation of those violating our shared values and rules, it is more urgent to stop the present cycle of escalation.
7. Public statements by the combatants and their allies suggest that there is little respite from violence that civilians in Ukraine can look forward to. Instead, weapons and soldiers are being deployed in ever greater numbers.
8. The war itself, and its aims, are being communicated as existential. There are even repeated mentions of the possible use of nuclear weapons being made in the media.
9. The increased battlefield engagements combined with its propaganda counterpart in the shaping of domestic and international public opinion, plus the apocalyptic tone may lead to a far more dangerous escalation. With the result being even more Ukrainians being harmed.
10. Connected to the harm being done to the civilians in Ukraine is the harm that the war is causing in other parts of the world. The inability of Ukraine to export its harvests and fertilisers is directly contributing to the immiseration of many millions and

serious harm is being caused to their food security. This is particularly the case in relatively poor and food insecure countries in the Global South, including those in Africa.

11. The unprecedented sanctions in response to the war are also reshaping global development, food security and even political stability.
12. With every new mention of nuclear weapons as part of the conflict continuum or promises of unceasing war until one side is permanently disabled, global equity and debt markets will exit riskier emerging market economies. And investors will delay or cancel the investments that we need to deliver sufficient jobs to our young people.
13. **Madam President**, it is therefore our contention that the civilians in Ukraine, while under the more immediate threat of extreme violence, are united in their interest for safety with billions of other civilians globally.
14. It means that the whole world has a stake in an immediate cessation of hostilities for humanitarian purposes, followed by a

structured ceasefire that enables meaningful negotiations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

15. In addition, if we want the global markets to play a part in the development of the Global South, rather than the reverse, then Europe's security order must be placed on a stable footing.
16. Added to the growing global economic crisis, that stable security order in Europe is also needed if we are to limit the harm to civilians from climate change. The present arraying of major geopolitical forces in a growing conflict will make it next to impossible to undertake ambitious climate change action.
17. Even before this war started, agreement on climate adaptation and mitigation action was plagued by lack of trust, changing goalposts and unmet commitments.
18. If climate change is indeed, as the science informs us, leading to serious harms to humanity, then we can count this war and its deleterious impact on multilateralism as yet another worldwide blow to the safety and security of civilians.

**Madam President,**

19. The multilateral system at this rate may not survive the multiple major crises we are causing while undermining its ability to solve them. As a minimum response to protecting the peace, Kenya urges member states to place more trust in the good offices of the Secretary-General.
20. The historical record of the use of these good offices is replete with shortcomings but also with great successes. The decisive factor has been the extent to which conflicting states, and their most influential allies, give the Secretary General space to help mediate conflicts at all stages.
21. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's recent trips to Russia and Ukraine where he sought commitments for a ceasefire, safe humanitarian passage, and to encourage negotiations. We urge the parties to embrace his readiness to mediate. Their doing so will signal their regard and respect for our United Nations.

**Madam President,**

22. I underscore, **in conclusion**, that the continued undermining, and even destruction, of multilateralism will only lead to more

war. It will be a catastrophe for civilians in multiple regions and countries. Stopping the war in Ukraine offers us all an opportunity to live up to the Charter's promise to protect succeeding generations from our own shortcomings.

23. **I reaffirm Kenya's** respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

**I thank you for your attention.**