

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 13 January 2025 from the Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the
President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Chair's summary of the Arria-formula meeting of the Security Council held on 25 October 2024 on the theme "Systematic violations of international humanitarian law committed by the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the territory of the Russian Federation" (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**



Annex to the letter dated 13 January 2025 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Summary of the Arria-formula meeting on the theme “Systematic violations of international humanitarian law committed by the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the territory of the Russian Federation”

Introduction

On 25 October 2024, the Russian Federation hosted an Arria-formula meeting with a view to giving members of the Security Council and all other interested States Members of the United Nations a chance to get unbiased first-hand information about the crimes committed by the Armed Forces of Ukraine and foreign mercenaries against civilians in the Kursk region and other territories of the Russian Federation, in violation of international humanitarian law. It was a follow-up to the previous Arria-formula meeting on the theme “Crimes of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the nationalist battalions”,¹ held on 13 August 2024.

The main objectives of the discussion were to display the proof of immense suffering of the civilian population, including women, children and the elderly, as well as to ensure accountability for the committed crimes.

The meeting was held in person at United Nations Headquarters and was livestreamed online through United Nations Web TV² and X.³ It was chaired by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Vassily Nebenzia.

The guest panellists were Rodion Miroshnik, Ambassador-at-large of the Russian Foreign Ministry on the crimes of the Kiev regime; Maxim Grigoriev, member of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation and Chairman of the International Public Tribunal on Ukraine; and Alexander Zuev, a witness to the crimes of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Excerpts from recorded testimonies of Ukrainian prisoners of war, as well as footage of eyewitness accounts of the atrocities committed by the Kiev regime, were presented.

All Council members and three other States Members of the United Nations delivered statements.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Nebenzia recalled the main goal of the ill-fated Ukrainian Kursk incursion, which had attempted to gain territories, including the Kursk nuclear power plant, as a bargaining chip in eventual peace negotiations and divert Russian army reserves from Donbass. He exposed what the Ukrainian nationalists and foreign mercenaries were doing to peaceful cities and their inhabitants. Namely, they routinely and deliberately attacked civilians, engaged in looting, and deployed and used heavy weapons, including artillery and air defence systems, from residential areas, thus using local civilians as “human shields”. According to survivors, the Ukrainian military shot at innocent people in their own homes and during attempts to evacuate, with full understanding of their non-combatant status.

Based on the testimonies of victims and witnesses, he explained that systematic atrocities and grave mass violations of norms and principles of international humanitarian law had become a hallmark of Kiev’s military strategy. He underscored

¹ <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1c/k1c78db8iz>.

² <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1x/k1xdmqs9iv>.

³ <https://x.com/RussiaUN/status/1849888751012434066>.

that the foray into Kursk had been planned with the help of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) specialists, since the Ukrainian military did not have the necessary capacities and intelligence to prepare and carry out such operations themselves. Mr. Nebenzia especially emphasized that evidence was being collected to ensure the accountability of the Ukrainian criminals and mercenaries.

Statements by the panellists

Mr. Miroshnik, Ambassador-at-large of the Russian Foreign Ministry on the crimes of the Kiev regime, highlighted that, since the beginning of 2024 alone, close to 5,000 civilians in Russian regions had been affected by attacks by Ukrainian militants, with 718 people killed, including 49 children. He pointed out that among the most widespread crimes of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and mercenary formations were murders of civilians, forcible detention, sexual violence, looting, targeted destruction of civilian infrastructure and private housing, and deliberate attacks on civilian transport, medical, social and religious institutions.

He exposed the terrorist tactics of the Ukrainian military during their Kursk incursion. They had tried their best to destroy all civilian energy infrastructure and means of communication and shot evacuation convoys with the goal of cutting off the evacuation routes for civilians. Based on the appeals of relatives and the identification carried out, he reasonably assumed that at least 1,100 civilians had been forcibly detained in the territory controlled by the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Mr. Miroshnik recalled that Ukrainian servicemen, according to their own confessions, had not received any warnings from their commanders about the inadmissibility of looting and murder, and the need to respect the human rights of the civilian population.

Mr. Grigoriev, a prominent civil society leader and Chairman of the International Public Tribunal on Ukraine,⁴ shared witnesses' first-hand accounts that he had been collecting as part of the evidence base for the crimes of the Kiev regime against people of different Russian regions, and submitting to national and international judicial authorities for the prosecution of criminals.

He provided compelling evidence of the Armed Forces of Ukraine systematically carrying out their heinous crimes against a peaceful population with a full understanding of the civilian status of the victims.

He demonstrated video testimonies of several residents of Sudzha in the Kursk region that he had interviewed. One of them stated that Ukrainian soldiers had killed his wife and wounded his toddler. Mr. Grigoriev clarified that, according to international humanitarian law, certain categories of persons, such as women and children, should enjoy special protection in times of conflict. Intentional killings of civilians by Ukrainian soldiers constituted war crimes that had no statute of limitations. He cited several examples where the Kiev regime had purposefully shelled and destroyed Russian civilian and medical facilities, reminding that the destruction of civilian infrastructure was a gross violation of the Geneva Conventions.

Mr. Zuev shared his personal experience as an eyewitness to Ukrainian atrocities in the Kursk region. He had opted out of evacuation and stayed in his hometown while intense fighting was being waged. He recalled that, since August 2023, he had helped rebuild apartment buildings after the Ukrainian side shelled them. In May 2024, his crew had been deliberately attacked by drones. In August 2024, during the foray into Russian territory by the Armed Forces of Ukraine, residential houses, cars, public roads and other civilian infrastructure had been destroyed.

⁴ <https://tribunalukraine.info/?lang=en>.

He gave an example of one town where residents had been forced to live without gas for two months and without electricity for two weeks because drones were constantly damaging the nearby power plant. He highlighted the widespread use of “Lepestok” PFM-1 mines by Ukrainian militants in order to cause harm to innocent civilians.

Statements by States Members of the United Nations

The participants representing the Western countries accused Russia of “justifying its aggression in violation of international law and principles of the United Nations Charter”. They claimed that Ukraine had a right to defend itself in line with Article 51 of the Charter and stressed their resolve to stand with the Kiev regime. The representative of the United States denounced the meeting as an attempt “to distort history”, and the representative of Japan called it “a waste of United Nations resources”. The representatives of the United Kingdom and France referenced the latest report of the so-called Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine and accused Russia of various crimes. The representative of Slovenia dismissed the evidence presented as “selective references to international law violations and attempts to set double standards in applying international humanitarian and human rights law”. The representative of Switzerland suggested that “the situation in Kursk and other regions was a direct consequence of Russia’s military aggression”. The representative of the Republic of Korea underlined the need for “accountability for all war crimes in due course”.

The representative of China called on the parties to the conflict “to remain calm, exercise restraint, strictly abide by international humanitarian law and make every effort to protect the safety of civilians and civilian infrastructure”. He also drew attention to joint efforts with Brazil and other countries from the global South to promote a political settlement of the crisis. The representative of Sierra Leone stressed the “need for independent and impartial investigations to ensure accountability”. The representative of Ecuador voiced concerns over the “constant escalation of violence and geographical expansion of the battlefield”. The representative of Algeria asserted that “a just and lasting peace should be built on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and the legitimate security concerns of both parties should also be taken into consideration”. The representative of Mozambique urged military commanders and political leaders to “restrain their own forces from committing atrocities”.

The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela insisted that “definitive unipolar victory is something that should be discarded” and supported “sincere dialogue in good faith with a view to reaching an understanding between Russia and NATO to encourage relevant international agreements to be respected and put an end to expansion of military blocs and enable us to move towards the establishment of truly balanced effective, indivisible and sustainable European security”. The representative of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea acknowledged that “the Ukrainian crisis did not happen in a vacuum” and reminded of its root causes, which “lie in the hegemonic policy of the United States and the West”. He underscored that “the Ukrainian radical nationalist forces that came to power chose the way of confrontation with Russia, inciting Russophobia and glorification of Nazi collaborators”. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic recalled how the Kiev regime had “perpetrated endless violations of international humanitarian law in Donbass against civilians” for many years and how “provocations from the Western countries and NATO led to increasing tensions between the two countries, further hate speech against Russia and targeting of its national security”.

Conclusion

The Arria-formula meeting provided unbiased information about the crimes committed by the Armed Forces of Ukraine and their foreign accomplices against peaceful civilians in the Kursk region and other territories of the Russian Federation in violation of international humanitarian law, supported by conclusive evidence from the victims and eyewitnesses of their numerous outrageous atrocities. The discussion presented a valuable opportunity to understand the true intentions of those who have been orchestrating the reckless incursion by the Ukrainian military and proved the genuinely terrorist nature of the Kiev regime.
