



Check against delivery

**Joint statement of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia
on agenda item 83
Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the
Strengthening of the Role of the Organization
4 November 2024**

Mr. Chair,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and my own country Ukraine.

The United Nations Charter remains the central pillar of international law, binding its Member States to uphold peace, security, and the rule of law. At its core, Article 2 mandates that states resolve disputes peacefully, avoiding in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Yet, as recent events remind us, these principles continue to be tested.

During this year's deliberations at the Special Committee on the UN Charter, our three nations emphasized that the UN offers multiple avenues for peaceful conflict resolution. Article 52, for instance, supports the use of regional organizations and frameworks to mediate disputes and maintain stability.

However, for the third year in a row, progress on this front was stymied, as the Committee was unable to adopt a significant portion of its report. A single delegation refused to incorporate key elements of the debate – a move that effectively gutted the report of crucial content. Russia, in particular, has exploited the report's consensus adoption process to systematically exclude sections essential to our nations, undermining the purpose of the Committee.

Such obstructive behavior stands in direct contravention of UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/53/101, adopted in 1999, which calls for good faith negotiations within a mutually agreed framework and a constructive atmosphere, free from actions that could undermine progress. Regrettably, these guidelines are often disregarded, especially with regard to Chapter VI, Article 33 of the Charter, which Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia have repeatedly utilized in pursuit of peaceful solutions.

The pattern of Russian aggression seen in Ukraine today traces back to similar policies toward Georgia and Moldova in the early 1990s. This trajectory intensified with Russia's full-fledged military aggression against Georgia in August 2008, culminating in occupation of the regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali. Recent escalations make clear that impunity only emboldens further violations of international law. Diplomatic and judicial efforts notwithstanding, Russian forces remain illegally stationed in Moldova and Georgia, while Moscow has continued expanding its military footprint in Ukraine since 2014. The full-scale invasion in February 2022, executed while Russia presided over the Security Council, is a stark reminder of the challenges facing the international community in enforcing the UN Charter.

Mr. Chair,

Less than two weeks ago Ukraine finalized the process of Ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and will be its 125th member. Ratification of the Rome Statute is a clear signal that Ukraine shares the principles of an international order based on laws and rules and is willing to act in line with those principles.

Ukraine also acknowledges the ICJ's fundamental role in the judicial settlement of disputes between States within the United Nations system. We reiterate our commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes. We recognize the crucial role of the ICJ in maintaining and promoting the rule of law when any kind of dispute arises, including each and every situation of improper interpretation, application or fulfillment of an international instrument.

Since the beginning of the Russian aggression in February 2014, Ukraine has filed two cases against Russia for the gravest violations of international law. In its 31 January judgment, the ICJ ruled that Russia had violated international law in three separate respects: Russia violated the International Convention on the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and its obligation to comply with the ICJ's order on provisional measures under which Russia is obliged to suspend its ban on the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People. It is the first case since the ICJ's inception in 1945 that has found the Russian Federation in violation of international law.

In its judgment of 2 February 2024, the ICJ concluded that it had jurisdiction over the dispute Ukraine brought days after Russia launched its full-scale invasion, addressing the false allegations of genocide that were Russia's express pretext for invading. Moreover, the Court emphasized Russia's violation of the provisional measures order of 16 March 2022, which is legally binding and obliges Russia to cease hostilities. It is also clear that Russia has acted and continues to act in violation of this Order on a daily basis for nearly three years.

In this regard, we recall 6 Resolutions of the eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UNGA adopted during more than a year of full-scale invasion in Ukraine, which explicitly demonstrated overwhelming support and unity of the UN Member States regarding sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine, as well as underlined the need to reach a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Chair,

Russia continues illegal occupation of Georgia's Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions. Any illegal occupation, however temporary, resulting from the unlawful use of force, constitutes an act of aggression pursuant to UNGA Resolution 3314 of 14 December 1974. Russia intensifies its military presence in both regions, steps towards deployment of Russia's naval base in Ochamchire, Abkhazia region installation of barbed wire fences and other artificial barriers along the occupation line, as well as continues restriction of freedom of movement, killings of peaceful Georgian civilians, illegal detentions and kidnappings, ethnic discrimination of Georgians. In parallel Russia enhances process of incorporation of both occupied regions into Russia's political, military, economic, social, judiciary and other spheres.

Facing ongoing military aggression by Russia, Georgia has been adhering to the peaceful conflict resolution policy, based on two main pillars – de-occupation of the Georgian regions on the one hand, and reconciliation and confidence building between the communities across the occupation line on the other. Furthermore, Georgia is committed to utilize every peaceful means at its disposal, including, inter alia, engaging in negotiation formats, namely the Geneva International Discussions (GID) which is designed to ensure the implementation of the EU-mediated 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement, as well the return of IDPs and refugees, and Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms (IPRMs) under the GID.

Resorting to judicial remedies is another peaceful conflict resolution instrument used by Georgia. In this context, I wish to recall numerous rulings of the European Court of Human Rights, where the court confirmed Russia's illegal occupation and effective control over the Georgian territories not only during and after the 2008 war but even long before that. The Court also stressed Russia's full responsibility for mass human rights violations in the occupied regions. Moreover, the International Criminal Court concluded its investigation on Situation in Georgia in 2022, issued arrest warrants against the representatives of the occupation regime for the war crimes committed during Russia's military aggression in 2008 and uncovered alleged role of Russian high military official.

Mr. Chair,

Negotiations, as key means of settling states disputes, have been continuously used by the Republic of Moldova since 1993. Moldova reiterates the call for the demilitarization of the Transnistrian region, including the complete, unconditional, and immediate withdrawal from its territory of the troops of the Russian Federation stationed illegally and the evacuation/ destruction of the ammunition stocks from the warehouse in Cobasna.

In this regard, Moldova recalls the relevant 5 UNGA resolutions adopted since 1999 on cooperation between the UN and the OSCE, and emphasize the commitments undertaken by the Russian Federation at the 1999 Istanbul OSCE Summit on the withdrawal of its military forces and armaments from the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

In conclusion Mr. Chair,

Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Georgia strongly assert that the United Nations must take decisive actions to address threats to international peace and security. The people of our three nations continue to face threats to their sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence.

In this context, the UN Charter and its core principles must be applied with conscious and responsible manner. Adopting a comprehensive report from the Committee is crucial in addressing violations of the Charter and in strengthening efforts toward peaceful dispute resolution.

I thank you!