

Address by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski at UN Security Council Meeting

Mr President,

please allow me a few extra sentences, because I was called out by name by the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, and I feel I need to answer. First of all, he calls the events of 2014 in Kyiv, in Ukraine, a “bloody coup”. I was indeed there with the foreign ministers of Germany and France, and there was no coup. The President of Ukraine, Mr. Yanukovich, was voted out of office by a democratically elected Parliament of Ukraine, including by his own Party of Regions, because he carried out a massacre in which 100 or more Ukrainian civilians were killed. Mr. Lavrov also claims, and I quote from the transcript, that “in the territory of Ukraine there’s a total ban on the Russian language in all spheres.” I was in Kiev 10 days ago under Russian bombs and I can assure him that the Russian language is widely spoken there.

He is of course right that national minorities have the right to speak their language in offices, in courts, in schools. If this is what he demands, then he needs the application of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Minorities. I don’t think Ukraine would object to that, and the international community, including Poland, would support that.

He has the right to demand the application of that Convention. He does not have the right to send tanks and ballistic missiles into Ukraine. Thirdly, he calls the government and the president of Ukraine “Nazis”.

Russian elections to the Duma have also been criticised as being not sufficiently democratic. There's a way of resolving it. My proposal is that there should be democratic presidential elections under international supervision in both Russia and Ukraine on the same day.

Mr. President,

as you said, and as we heard from the briefing by Undersecretary DiCarlo and others, Russia is escalating the war.

Unable to move forward on the frontline, Russia is deliberately targeting Ukrainian civilians. Passengers on trains, street vendors, even cyclists. Power plants, factories, and shopping malls. The port of Odesa, which as has already been said normally exports 50 million tons of grain to Africa and Asia.

Russia is now bringing the same tactics into Europe. On September 13th, a Russian jet-powered drone hit a Ukrainian train barely two kilometers from a border-crossing with Poland. Another followed on the 17th. Drones and missiles have also attacked border crossings with Moldova and Romania.

Russia planted an armed drone at Leipzig Airport in Germany. Russian drones and aircraft have violated the airspace of, among others, Lithuania, Estonia, Norway and Finland. Russian hit squads have killed people in Spain, Britain, Poland and Germany.

Now they are reaching across the Atlantic. On September 15th, U.S. Attorney's Office here in the Southern District of New York charged members of a Russian intelligence network with "conspiring to finance terrorism and commit murder for hire in the United States".

Cyberattacks, sabotage, clandestine operations, and military pressure. These are not isolated incidents. It's a pattern.

Russia is escalating because Russia's leadership is panicking. After more than four years of a senseless colonial war, Vladimir Putin has achieved nothing. He is running out of troops and resources and needs a pretext to mobilize. His unnecessary war has killed or wounded one and a half million Russians. Millions of Ukrainians and other Europeans are increasingly in danger. At any moment, Putin might try to provoke a NATO country and spread the war further, as we have heard from others.

To the representatives of the Russian Federation, I have this to say: You have been trying to conquer Donbass for over twelve years and Kyiv for over four. You have been stopped by heroic Ukraine, a country with one tenth of Russia's GDP. But Poland has almost half of your GDP, Europe has ten times your GDP and NATO has 25 times your GDP.

You can still kill a lot more people, but you cannot win.

You can stop this imperial war of choice at any time. Don't endanger Europe and the world any further. Stop destroying Russia's future.

Sergey, I know you're listening. Tell your boss: Enough is enough.

Thank you.
