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As delivered

STATEMENT BY
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THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

21 February, 2022
Security Council Chamber
United Nations
New York

Mr. President,

1. The decision by the Russian Federation to recognize the non-government-controlled regions of Ukraine and to send in troops there have stunned the world. Ghana deeply regrets the decision of the Russian Federation to turn its back on the Minsk Agreements and the dialogue required to address concerns over its implementation.
2. When Ghana joined this Organization in 1957, we were under no illusions that the international order was perfect. However, we were convinced, and still are, that the principle of the sovereign equality of states, which constitute the basis of this Organization and our multilateral order, is the veritable foundation for a stable world. We believe that the United Nations represents the best attempt at maintaining peace across the nations, forging relations and cooperation between and among our peoples, and holding forth the prospect of a better tomorrow. It is for this reason that Ghana, like many other Members of the Organization, has solemnly committed itself to uphold the Charter and international law. We believe that through multilateralism, we can improve cooperation to make the world a better place for its citizens and for generations unborn.

3. Through this Organization, and our common actions on principles such as self-determination within the context of the United Nations, the countries that existed under colonial rule have been assisted to become sovereign and politically independent States. By its sheer convening power, this Organization has set out a pathway for dialogue for all its members, regardless of differences in political ideology, and encouraged the development and maintenance of friendly relations. By the actions of this Organization the rights of peoples across the world have become more respected by their governments and their wellbeing better guaranteed.

Mr. President,

4. I would be clear. Ghana supports the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine, the borders with which it joined this United Nations as a bona fide Member. We do not support any actions that violate Ukraine's sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity. By our principles, Ghana does not recognize any entity outside of the clear arrangements that have been established by the Charter and the principles of international law for the recognition of States.

5. As an international community, we have pulled back from many dangerous scenarios when reason and logic have prevailed and, on this occasion, we echo the voice of the Coalition of Peace, for restraint by all parties. While the sound of war may be loud, the voice of peace runs deeper.
6. We urge restraint on all unsettled but accepted situations across the globe and remind Member States of the need to protect the collective security mechanism which requires adherence to the core principles of the Charter and international law. The true test of greatness lies not in ones 'ability to use power, but in the capacity to constrain its use, when that would be an obvious choice by those of a lesser capacity.
7. We hope that within this Council and perhaps outside of it also, we shall find a resolution of the existing situation in Ukraine and in a manner that does not impair the existing mechanisms for peace. While Ghana and the African Member States have always held that the use of the veto power is anachronistic and counter-productive to the effective workings of our modern arrangements for maintaining global peace and security, that concern has never been rendered more acute than in situations such the one we see now.

8. Even though it may be enough on many occasions to say that we are against the actions of a Member State that goes against the international norms, on this occasion, we are all required to do more, in reaffirming our common commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter. Besides the immediate cost of instability, all countries, including the most vulnerable in the developing world, may pay a steep economic price for the actions that destabilize a part of Europe.
9. We note with great concern reports of foreign troops being sent across the borders of Ukraine. We reiterate our continuing concern over the situation of the civilian populations of Ukraine in Donetsk and Luhansk. We urge all parties to strictly comply with the tenets of international humanitarian law.

Mr. President,

10. We may be at the precipice, but we have not fallen over. The path of dialogue and diplomacy still remains. We urge the reversal of escalatory actions and also invite the Secretary-General to renew his good offices on the situation in eastern region of Ukraine, in close coordination with the OSCE and all other relevant partners.

I thank you.