



America-Ukraine Program

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Eurasia News

Zelensky Addresses UN General Assembly



Ukrainian President Zelensky addresses the UN General Assembly. Photo Credit: BBC

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President Zelensky calls for Tribunal & Removal of Russian Veto



Ukrainian President Zelensky addresses the UN General Assembly. Photo Credit: BBC

Speaking to the General Assembly via a pre-recorded address, President Zelensky presented a peace formula predicated above all on punishing Russia for its crimes.

Before presenting the formula, President Zelensky listed the crimes that Russia is guilty of as: “trying to steal our territory,” the “murders of thousands of people,” the “tortures and humiliation of woman and men,” and the “catastrophic turbulence that Russia provoked with its illegal war” for both Ukraine and “every nation that is represented in this hall of the UN General Assembly.”

For such crimes, President Zelensky repeated his call for sanctions on Russia, not only on trade but also on the travel of Russian citizens and declared that Russia should pay for the war with its assets via the creation of a UN compensation mechanism, which he said, “is one of the most terrible punishments for Russian officials, who value money above everything else.”

However, more notable were his pleas that Russia be stripped of its vote in the General Assembly and its veto as a member of the Security Council and that a “Special Tribunal” be created to punish Russia for the war crimes being committed daily in Ukraine.

Regarding Russia’s veto and voting votes, President Zelensky said that aggressor nations must be isolated from international organizations that they are a party to so long as their aggression lasts.

The Special Tribunal, a plan for which Ukraine will present to the UN, would then help signal “to all would-be aggressors, that they must value peace or be brought to responsibility by all states.”

President Zelensky received support from the Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin who said that Russia should be removed from the Security Council.

The other points in Ukraine’s peace plan were as follows:

1. Protection of life, meaning that Ukraine must receive aid to defend themselves.
2. Restoring the security and territorial integrity of Ukraine by capping Russian energy exports, defense aid for Ukraine, and declaring Russia a state sponsor of terrorism.
3. Security guarantees for Ukraine provided by other UN member nations.
4. Ukraine’s determination to continue fighting.

President Zelensky’s formula provides a realistic path to ending the conflict. An equitable diplomatic solution cannot be reached if Russia occupies Ukrainian territory and commits unspeakable war crimes against the people. Continuing to ramp up pressure against Russia and making the continuation of the war untenable are the only solutions.

Other UN News

United States Emphasizes Russian Threat, War Crimes



President Joe Biden addresses the General Assembly, Photo Credit: PBS

President Biden continued to call out Russia for their brutal war of aggression, saying that “Russia has shamelessly violated the core tenets of the United Nations Charter,” while also highlighting Russia’s nuclear blackmail and their war crimes in Izyum.

Biden emphasized that allowing Russia to “pursue their imperial ambitions” without imposing consequences will continue to imperil the values upon which the United Nations is built and called for United Nations member states to make clear their resolve to oppose Russia.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken, speaking at the UN Security Council Ministerial Meeting on Ukrainian Sovereignty and Russian Accountability criticized Putin for expanding the war and rendering a diplomatic solution to the conflict impossible, emphasizing that Russia’s war could be ended by the choice of Vladimir Putin.

Blinken attacked Putin for choosing the first week of the General Assembly to “add fuel to the fire that he started,” which “shows his utter contempt for the UN Charter, for the General Assembly, and for this council,” while asking that the Security Council demand the end of Russian nuclear extortion.

Blinken also highlighted a clear pattern of Russian war crimes, not just by single units, but by the Russian armed forces in the territory that they control. Secretary Blinken voiced continued American support for examination of the evidence of Russian crimes and the persecution of those committing them.

China Supports Peace Talks but Claims “legitimate” Russian Concerns



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi Addresses the General Assembly Photo Credit: Reuters.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, attending the General Assembly in place of President Xi Jinping said that China supports efforts to resolve the Ukrainian “crisis” peacefully. According to Wang, China’s chief concern is facilitating peace talks.

However, Foreign Minister Wang fell short of putting any pressure on Russia to negotiate on an equitable basis with Ukraine by suggesting that the “fundamental solution is to address the legitimate security concerns of all parties.”

As Biden, Zelensky, and many world leaders have repeated, the ongoing war is for the continued existence of Ukraine as a sovereign state and is a war conducted entirely as a result of Putin’s delusional dreams of empire.

While China has not outright supported the war, they have also criticized Western sanctions, offering Russia a crucial economic lifeline as Western states work to cutoff Russia from the world. Any peace talks must therefore take place with the understanding that Ukraine’s security concerns are the only ones to be discussed.

Lavrov Meets Swiss President and Questions Swiss Neutrality



Swiss President Ignazio Cassis shakes hands with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. Photo Credit: swissinfo.ch.

Swiss President Ignazio Cassis met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov last week, repeating Switzerland’s readiness to provide its good offices to Russia and Ukraine, an offer not taken up by Russia in the meeting.

Last month Ukraine accepted Switzerland's offer to represent their interests in Russia, but Russia rejected this suggesting that Switzerland, a state that has had its neutrality internationally recognized since 1815, was no longer neutral as a result of supporting sanctions against Russia.

In a Twitter post following the meeting, the Russian Foreign Ministry said that Switzerland should "return to neutral state policy, which in previous years won the Confederation recognition in the international arena."

President Cassis, both in his meeting with Lavrov, and his speech to the General Assembly, criticized what he called Russia's "sham referendums" and communicated Switzerland's concern about the use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine.

Cassis addressed concerns about Swiss neutrality in his General Assembly speech as well, saying that Switzerland is "committed to upholding the principles of freedom, democracy and the rule of law."



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