



Statement by Foreign Minister HAYASHI Yoshimasa
at the Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly
23 February 2023

Mr. President, distinguished colleagues,

193 Member States in this General Assembly hall represent 193 different positions. Such diverse views, I believe, can converge on one specific point. We all want peace in Ukraine – or at least, the overwhelming majority of us want peace in Ukraine. This draft resolution is about peace.

However, peace must be based on principles. Hostilities must stop now, but this would not necessarily produce a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.

Imagine yourself. What if a permanent member of the Security Council launched an aggression against your homeland, grabbed your territory, and then ceased hostilities, calling for peace?

I would call it an unjust peace. It would be a victory for the aggressor if such actions were tolerated. It would set a terrible precedent for the rest of the planet. The world would revert to the jungle, where brute force and coercion would prevail.

Mr. President, distinguished colleagues,

Peace must be based on the principles of the United Nations Charter. That is why Japan supports this draft resolution entitled “Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine.” I urge my fellow colleagues gathered here today to vote in favor of it.

Russia must, first and foremost, withdraw its troops immediately and unconditionally from Ukraine. The General Assembly has demanded it, as has the Secretary-General and the International Court of Justice. Unfortunately, Russia seemingly cannot care about the General Assembly resolutions and the ICJ orders, as if they were just pieces of waste paper.

In addition, abusing the veto power is not enough for Russia. It also abuses its status as a nuclear weapon State with its irresponsible rhetoric. Russia's nuclear threats, let alone any use of its nuclear weapons, shall never be tolerated.

Russia should be held accountable for all of its acts in an appropriate manner. Other Member States should also refrain from supporting the aggression either directly or indirectly.

In this regard, the proposed amendments by Belarus are an attempt to distract the attention of the Member States from the fact that the Russian aggression is in violation of the very principles of the United Nations Charter. I urge fellow colleagues to vote against the amendments.

Mr. President, distinguished colleagues,

My heart breaks for the dire humanitarian situation of the people of Ukraine. Japan will continue to provide support for them along with fellow members of the international community.

At the same time, we must not forget that many other people around the world are suffering as well. Natural disasters, conflicts, violence, terrorism, food and energy crises, climate change, infectious diseases – the list goes on.

We need an integrated and tailored approach to deal with these issues, and that is what the UN excels at. However, the UN is now being tested. It has been damaged. We need to restore trust in this Organization. We need to unite ourselves again. We need to strengthen the entire Organization to grapple with today's ever more complex and interlinked challenges.

This will entail not only reform of the Security Council, but also enhanced roles for the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the Economic and Social Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, and other bodies of the United Nations.

Mr. President, distinguished colleagues,

Next year, we should not meet here to mark the second anniversary of this senseless war of aggression. Instead, we should work towards peace guided by the rule of law. Let us meet here for the 2024 Summit of the Future and make it a summit of peace. Let us mark 2024 as a year of a strengthened United Nations.

I thank you.

(566 words)