

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Michal Mlynár,
Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations
at the

**Debate on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the
membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council**

7 – 8 March 2022

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, let me express Slovakia's full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Slovakia recalls the resolution "Aggression against Ukraine" adopted by an overwhelming majority of 141 States during the UN General Assembly's 11th emergency session on Wednesday last week. We condemn in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which grossly violates international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and undermines international security and stability. We stand by Ukraine and reiterate our unwavering commitment to its sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. We are deeply alarmed and horrified by the human impact of the ongoing military aggression and of the indiscriminate attacks, killing innocent civilians, including children, and forcing millions to flee their homes. We deplore the senseless loss of life and call for unimpeded access for humanitarian assistance. Protection of civilians in line with international law must remain our utmost priority.

Mr. Chair,

The position of my delegation on a possible review of the membership of the Security Council is consistent and well documented. My country supports the expansion of both categories – permanent and non-permanent membership – and calls for an increase to no more than 25, respecting geographical balance. The new members of the Council should as a principle have the same responsibilities and obligations as the current members. I wish to underscore that the reformed Council should include one additional non-permanent seat for the Eastern European Group.

Mr. Chair,

The other cluster for today's debate is the right of veto. The permanent membership of the Security Council was granted privileged status in 1945 for their importance in the aftermath of the World War II. Meanwhile the world has significantly changed since then, the privileged status of 5 Member States has inexplicably remained untouched. Instead of a working system of collective security, we have been increasingly witnessing its failure and an abuse of the anachronistic privileged status, in particular the right to veto.

On Friday 25 February, the incapacity of the Security Council to act reached yet another level. The use of veto by the Russian Federation in position of an aggressor, thus a direct party to the conflict in Ukraine, was the sole reason preventing the Security Council in fulfilling its primary responsibility for maintenance of international peace and security. This was not only a flagrant abuse of veto, but also a flagrant abuse of the UN Charter. We hope that this situation will turn into a much needed impetus for all of us to bridge our different views on the exact setup of the reformed Security Council. The failure of the current system is apparent, the checks and balances in the Charter, including its Article 27 section 3, are not sufficient, and as the practice proves, not even applicable to prevent the abuse of veto.

Mr. Chair,

Slovakia has previously joined others in our call to suspend the veto powers in cases of mass atrocities as well as in relation to the core crimes under the international law. Taking into account the current circumstances, we believe a more complex change and urgent action are needed.

I thank you.