



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



**Arria Formula Meeting on  
“Violations of international humanitarian law  
against Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilian detainees”**

**13 January 2025**

Greece’s Statement delivered  
by HE Ambassador Evangelos Sekeris,  
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, New York

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Thank you, Madam President. I would like to thank the United Kingdom for convening this important meeting, as well as the briefers for their invaluable yet sobering accounts.

I would also like to commend the OHCHR, as well as the Independent International Commission of Inquiry for their excellent work. Their latest reports reveal the harrowing truth regarding the violation of International Humanitarian Law and the human rights of the Ukrainian people by the aggressor state, Russia, and a worsening of these violations across the board.

Civilian casualties have now exceeded 40.000. Quite strikingly, there is now evidence that torture is being systematically used against civilians and prisoners of war by the Russian authorities in a coordinated manner, thus amounting to a potential crime against humanity.

Since August 2024, credible allegations of executions of Ukrainian POWs have increased exponentially.

Madame President,

I would like to stress Greece's clear and principled stance on the need to respect international humanitarian law and human rights law, as fundamental pillars of international law.

Greece, as a party to the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war, as well as to the Additional Protocol 1 of 1977, condemns in the strongest terms the inhumane treatment of prisoners of war and civilian detainees by the Russian Armed Forces and Russian occupying authorities in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. We also call on Russia to ensure unfettered humanitarian access to PoWs and civilian detainees and cooperate fully with all international monitoring and investigative bodies.

In the same vein, Greece has signed the Montreal Pledge, adopted at the Ministerial Conference on the Human Dimension of Ukraine's Peace Formula last October, for the return of deported children and prisoners of war. In this spirit, we welcome the latest exchange of prisoners of war, which took place on 30 December 2024 under UAE mediation. We encourage all sides to continue with these positive steps, in full compliance with international humanitarian law.

Furthermore, it is crucial that we ensure accountability and we support international efforts in this regard. We firmly believe that violations of International Humanitarian Law and war crimes committed, inter alia, against prisoners of war and civilian detainees, should be thoroughly investigated by the relevant international institutions and the perpetrators be brought to justice.

Madam President,

In view of these violations, we cannot help but stress the fundamental premise of the UN Charter; the prohibition of the use or the threat of use of force. Greece's foreign policy has always been defined by its commitment and adherence to International Law. Let us therefore reiterate our consistent approach since the very beginning: our resolute condemnation of Russia's war of aggression, which constitutes a manifest violation of the UN Charter, and a serious threat to European security, as well as to global peace and stability.

We also reaffirm our unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and its inherent right of self-defence against the Russian aggression, as enshrined on Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Madame President,

Greece remains committed to supporting Ukraine for as long as it takes, along with its partners and allies.

I thank you.