



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



**Security Council Arria-Formula Meeting on
“Implementing international humanitarian law: prisoners of war, civilian
detainees and foreign fighters, in the context of Russia’s war against Ukraine”
10 August 2026**

Greece’s Statement delivered
by Mr. Ioannis Stamatekos,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, Madame Chair,

And I thank the Permanent Missions of Latvia, the United Kingdom and Ukraine for convening this meeting. I also thank ASG Fuentes Julio for her remarks and the briefers for their invaluable yet sobering accounts.

Greece remains deeply concerned by the mounting body of credible evidence verifying grave violations committed by the Russian Armed Forces against Ukrainian military personnel and civilians, as well as against foreign nationals.

Successive reports by the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and other credible organizations continue to document patterns of systematic torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, sexual violence, denial of adequate medical care, and deaths in captivity. The latest report documents 129 summary executions of captured Ukrainian military personnel since February 2022, while nearly all of the released Ukrainian prisoners of war reporting torture or other forms of ill-treatment.

Equally alarming are the findings concerning arbitrary detention of civilians in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, enforced disappearances and transfer of protected persons into the territory of the Russian Federation.

According to this year’s Secretary-General CRSV report, and reports of the UN Human Rights Office, hundreds of men and women in service, but also civilian detainees and civilians in residential areas, have been subjected to sexual violence.

Ukrainian combatants are denied prisoner-of-war status, while civilian detainees are denied their right to a fair trial, including the principle of presumption of innocence, and

non- retroactivity of laws, as well as the right to be tried by an independent and impartial tribunal. Illegal Russian courts in the occupied territories apply Russian criminal law, contrary to Russia's own international obligations as an Occupying Power. Many detainees are deported to Russia and tried before military courts, which is a war crime.

All these practices, constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. International humanitarian law, in this case, the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions, establishes clear obligations that are not optional nor reciprocal. They apply in all circumstances and must be respected by all parties. Greece is also deeply concerned by reports concerning the recruitment of foreign nationals from at least 17 countries into the Russian army.

Madame Chair,

We call on Russia to abstain from further violations of international law, ensure the humane treatment of all prisoners of war and civilian detainees, grant unhindered access to independent international monitors, release unlawfully detained civilians, and hold those responsible accountable for their actions.

In this regard, we take note of the readiness of competent Ukrainian authorities to conduct investigations, take action against human rights violations attributed to them and improve detention conditions.

In conclusion, Madam Chair,

Respect for human dignity is a legal obligation and a moral imperative. Greece fully subscribes to national and international efforts to ensure accountability for all violations perpetrated during this war and bring those responsible to justice. In this context, we fully support the work of relevant international judicial mechanisms. We firmly believe that only by upholding international law and the principles of the UN Charter will we ensure a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, and it is essential that the humane treatment of PoW and civilian detainees is included in any peace talks.

I thank you.