

Statement by HE Archbishop Gabriele Caccia
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations UNGA 77

11th Emergency Special Session

Mr President,

We have heard many words over these past hours. The Holy See is taking the floor with a succinct and heartfelt plea to end the madness of this conflict that, with every ongoing hour, takes innocent lives and deepens the wounds among peoples, destroying the mutual trust upon which the international order depends.

Just a few days ago, Pope Francis made this heartfelt appeal and I quote: "In the name of God and in the name of the sense of humanity that dwells in every heart, I renew my call for an immediate ceasefire. May weapons be silenced and may conditions be sought for the start of negotiations that will lead to solutions that are not imposed by force, but consensual, just and stable."^[1]

His Holiness clearly indicated that solutions must be "based on respect for the sacrosanct value of human life, as well as on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country."^[2]

Having addressed a direct appeal to the Presidents of the Russian Federation and Ukraine, as well as to all the protagonists of international life and the political leaders of nations,^[3] Pope Francis stressed that we, gathered here in this chamber, have a role to play and must "do everything possible to bring an end to the war, without allowing [our]selves [...] to be drawn into dangerous escalations, and to promote and support initiatives for dialogue."^[4] These words take on greater weight with the added threat of nuclear escalation, and makes even more urgent the transformation of "the hearts of those who hold the outcome of the war in their hands, so that the hurricane of violence may cease, and peaceful coexistence, in justice, may be rebuilt."^[5]

The affirmation of the clear principles of international law that are underlined by the resolution before us, and are clearly enshrined in the UN Charter, should be understood as opening a path to a just and peaceful solution, and not as a way to aggravate the conflict, which has already created too many victims.

From this hall may the clarion call of Pope Paul VI sound out again: "No more war!"

Thank you, Mr. President.

[1] Pope Francis, Angelus, 2 October 2022.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Cfr. Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Pope Francis, General Audience, 12 October 2022.