

**Statement by Sir Ronald Sanders
Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda
Introducing the Resolution on “The Crisis in Ukraine” at the Permanent
Council of the Organization of American States on 25 March 2022.**

All our countries are living in a deeply troubling time.

As we gather here, at this important meeting of the Permanent Council, the international legal order is fighting for its life.

Peace and security in the world – and, indeed, peace and security in our hemisphere – has been dependent on respect for international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter and the OAS Charter, both of which require suppression of acts of aggression and conformity with the principles of justice and international law.

Peace and security are now gravely threatened, destabilising the world economy, and the economies of every country on the planet with no exception.

Those conditions have quickly impacted every person in the world, and more particularly the poorest, the powerless and the least resilient.

High prices for oil, shortage of food supplies, increased cost of food, of air and sea transportation; higher costs for the supply of water and energy – all of these developments have touched every person in all our societies, especially the poor and vulnerable.

Our societies are at serious risk of destabilisation.

The crisis in Ukraine caused by the aggression of the Russian Federation has not spared any of our nations.

Therefore, Madam Chair, every member state of this Organisation of American States has to be deeply concerned for themselves and for world peace and security.

Unquestionably, each of our countries is also deeply disturbed that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine has been violated.

Small countries, such as mine, are especially troubled, because we are militarily and economically powerless.

The only defence we have is respect for and adherence to international law.

When international law is violated, our defences are breached and we are exposed to aggression, in all its forms, that we have little capacity to resist.

Events in Ukraine have unfolded before our eyes.

No one can deny the loss of life and the displacement of millions of people; none can refute that innocent women and children, including babies have been the hapless victims of military action in densely populated cities; no country can turn a blind eye to the dire humanitarian crisis which is worsening even as we now meet.

Over the last three weeks – and up to yesterday - the overwhelming majority of our member states have twice voted in the United Nations General Assembly to express condemnation of all violations of international law, including international humanitarian law.

However, our own organisation is yet to make a collective statement on this matter, even though Ukraine and the Russian Federation are both permanent observers to the OAS and sit among us.

This is why the delegations of Guatemala and Antigua and Barbuda, with the support of several other member states, have brought this important Resolution to the Permanent Council.

We thank the member states that have cosponsored this Resolution and the overwhelming majority of delegations that have pledged their support.

We want an end to this military assault in Ukraine.

We want a return to international law.

We want the humanitarian situation in Ukraine to be addressed to end the suffering of its people.

We want dialogue and negotiations to end the hostilities and to restore peace.

And, we want all our member states and permanent observers to honour their responsibilities to the principles and values in the OAS Charter.

Madam Chair, in this connection, Antigua and Barbuda moves that we submit the Resolution to a vote, and we now formally do so now.

I respectfully request a roll-call vote, in accordance with article 58 of the Rules of Procedure of this body, Madam Chair.