



General Assembly

11th Emergency Special Session

The situation in Ukraine

New York, 3 December 2025

Statement read by Pascale Baeriswyl, Permanent Representative of Switzerland

Unofficial translation

Madam President,

“Children in Ukraine have experienced a year of horror. Millions of children are going to sleep cold and scared and waking up hoping for an end to this brutal war. Children have been killed and injured, and many have lost parents and siblings, their homes, schools and playgrounds. No child should ever have to bear that kind of suffering.”

These were the words of UNICEF Director Catherine Russell in 2023. Nearly four years have passed since Russia's large-scale invasion, yet this description remains the harsh reality for children across Ukraine. The attacks, which include indiscriminate attacks carried out by Russia in violation of international humanitarian law, are having a severe impact on the civilian population as they prepare for winter.

In addition to this already devastating reality, thousands of children have been separated from their parents or guardians, either by being deported to the territory of the Russian Federation or by being forcibly transferred within the temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine. Let us be clear: the forced transfer or deportation of civilians is strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law. Furthermore, separating children from their parents or those closest to them is not in the best interest of the child. This is a fundamental principle enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a convention that has been ratified almost universally. On the contrary, children must be afforded special protection and assistance, as required by international law.

The adoption of today's resolution, which Switzerland fully supports, sends an important message: this practice must stop immediately. Switzerland calls on the Russian Federation to comply without delay with its obligations under international law and to ensure the immediate return of the children to their parents, guardians, or other caregivers. We recall that the forced transfer and deportation of children, as of any



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population, constitute war crimes. In this regard, we take note of the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court and reiterate our full support for the Court.

The consequences of war should never weigh on the shoulders of a child. That is why Switzerland is actively committed to protecting children affected by armed conflicts. We continue our efforts to locate, identify, and return missing persons, including children, in close cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross and its Central Tracing Agency, while supporting the Ukrainian authorities in their efforts.

Madam President,

The only way to ensure the full protection of children is for this war to end. Switzerland remains firmly committed to a comprehensive, lasting, and just peace for Ukraine, based respect for international law, including the Charter of the United Nations.

Thank you for your attention.