



UN General Assembly: Ukraine vote



In late October, the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** resumed the 11th emergency special session to discuss the attempt by the Russian Federation to illegally annex the **Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhia** through the means of referenda. This emergency special session first opened in March of this year

but was put on hold in April. However, after the Russian Federation vetoed a **Security Council resolution** put forward to address the contentious issue, the states of Ukraine and Albania urged UNGA President Csaba Kőrösi to resume the emergency session.

With the resumption of the emergency session, the UNGA voted on a resolution entitled “**Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.**” The outcome of the vote was **143 states** voted for adopting the resolution, **5 states** voted **against**, and **35 states abstained** from voting. The five that voted against were Belarus, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, and the Syrian Arab Republic. These states did not explain why they voted no, but many who abstained provided a reasoning for their vote. South Africa, Pakistan, Algeria, and India cited “*other pressing issues*” not being addressed in the resolution but did not specify exactly what they wished had been included. Thailand abstained because they felt the vote further politicizes the situation rather than providing a platform for the two states to resolve the conflict in a diplomatic manner. While the resolution passed by a large margin, the Russian Federation still has not abided by the conditions. ➡ [Read more.....](#)

UN Humanitarian Agency Briefing on Ukraine

The current human rights situation in Ukraine is dire. In a recent briefing, the head of the **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)** discussed the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. He emphasized that while OCHA is doing what they can, the situation is grave and they need help from third party states and organizations. The war in Ukraine has led to thousands of deaths, millions of family separations, disrupted school schedules for over five million children, and an increase in trafficking and exploitation for women and girls. Over one third of the Ukrainian population has been displaced. Russian forces continue to attack healthcare centers and electricity grids. **OCHA expressed grave**



concern about this, especially as a harsh winter approaches. The priorities in the upcoming months are upscaling the delivery of coal, food, winter clothing, and other relief items, replacing damaged infrastructure such as homes and shelters, and providing medical, social, and psychological support to those affected and displaced by the war. **OCHA** urged the international community to contribute to closing the funding gap for humanitarian assistance, to provide help in demining Ukrainian territory so people can return to their homes, and to prepare a response for the impending bleak winter.

➡ Watch the [short video.](#) and ➡ [another](#)

Access to Information – a Survival Right

In her most recent report to the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**, **Irene Khan, the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Opinion and Expression**, expressed her belief that access to information is a “*survival right*.” During conflicts, people must be able to access trustworthy and accurate information from a variety of sources to better manage their safety. Recent **misinformation and disinformation** campaigns impede on the human right to access to information and lead to the erosion of trust, the incitement of violence, and the prolonging of conflict. Khan said that while misinformation has always existed, it is now being targeted toward civilians through social media. She emphasized that states are the *duty bearers* of human rights and thus have a responsibility to teach **media literacy** and to **mitigate the spread of misinformation.** ➡ Watch [the short video](#)



Preparation for 2023 Water Conference



Water is the element that determines all life on the planet and access to it is a fundamental human right; - the only human right to be explicitly cited in the 17 SDGs. However, as **Secretary General Antonio Guterres** noted three years ago, “*Forty per cent of the world’s people are affected by water scarcity. Eighty per cent of waste-water is discharged untreated into the environment. And more than 90 per cent of natural disasters are water related.*” A major **UN Conference on Water**, the first to be held since 1977 will be held at the **UN HQ in New York in March 2023**. Preparations are already underway with a view towards engaging all groups and ensuring a participatory preparatory process. In late October, the President of the General Assembly convened a two-day preparatory meeting. **October 24th** featured an open consultation with 1,200 stakeholders from all branches of Civil Society, at the UN HQ and online. Five roundtables made it possible for 100 people

to share “*game changing*” ideas as to how to address the urgent water crisis and accelerate action on **SDG 6**. The submission of written interventions was also welcomed.

The **High-Level meeting of Member States** on **October 25th** finalized the themes for the Interactive Dialogues to be held during the March Conference and received feedback and input from the **Consultation Day**. Drawing the two-day event to a close, the **President of the UNGA Csaba Korosi** highlighted the success of the meeting, noting the shared goals and common mission uniting all who attended in preparation for the important **Water Conference** in March next year.

➔ Watch [a brief video](#)



Did you know that...?

- At the current rate of progress, governments need to scale up their efforts by **four times** to be on track with **SDG 6** for access to clean **water and sanitation for all by 2030**.
- By 2030, nearly **600 million** children worldwide could be living in areas of extremely **high water stress**.
- Global sea levels are projected to rise **30-60 cm** by the end of this century, even if we stay within **2° of global warming**.
- An estimated **700 million** people will be displaced due to droughts by 2030.
- **2 billion people** worldwide are without adequate access to **water, sanitation, and health (WASH)**. *2/3 of these are in the global South.*
- **40%** of healthcare facilities lack appropriate access to water, **20% without access to sanitation**

Mind the Gap: Girls’ Rights Now

October 11th marked the 10th anniversary of the International Day dedicated to Girls – IDG. The official UN commemoration was established by means of a GA resolution at the United Nations in order to recognize girls’ rights and, promote their fulfilment. This year the NGO Working Group on Girls worked with partners to host the Girls’ Speak Out at the United Nations, focusing on the theme: **Mind the Gap: Girls’ Rights Now**. The hybrid event brought the voices of girls from around the world to the global stage at the UN HQ and engaged countless groups around the globe. We were happy that the RSHM contributed 5 short videos from girls in their schools and social projects in Brazil. ➔ [Read more](#) about the day. ➔ [Watch a video](#) they submitted.



NOVEMBER - ACTION ALERT



During the period **7th – 18th November**, the **UN climate conference** will take place in **Sharm-El-Sheikh**, the Sinai Peninsula, **Egypt**. We invite you to join the virtual pilgrimage during this important time of call for action to address the climate crisis.

- ➔ Read more about the [triple planetary crisis](#)
- ➔ Follow the [daily reflection Calendar](#) for **November**
- ➔ Join the virtual pilgrimage “[Shoeless on Sinai](#)”.
- ➔ Support the call for a [fossil fuel treaty](#).

Distribution

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