



United Nations Office in Ukraine  
Представництво Організації Об'єднаних Націй в Україні

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10 May 2022

Dear Mr. Radutskyi,

Thank you very much for your letter and request. I would like to start by reiterating our utmost commitment to responding to the grave humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and to delivering lifesaving assistance to meet the urgent needs of civilians across the country. To this end, humanitarian organizations continue to deliver food, urgent medical supplies, protection services and other essential relief to key locations across Ukraine. We are committed to doing this in close coordination with national and local authorities to rapidly respond to the priorities as they evolve.

The United Nations shares the concerns shared in your letter from 18 March, 2022 № 04-18/16-2, about the dangers of a possible release of chemical and biological materials during military actions. Rest assured that my office is coordinating the UN's response to this significant threat. As you may be aware, the prevention of the use of chemical and biological weapons is one of the key priorities of the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA). Therefore, any possible or threat to use such weapons would univocally violate United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 regarding the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which was adopted unanimously on 28 April 2004, and covers "threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression." Moreover, UNSCR 1540 states in its opening paragraph: "proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, constitutes a threat to international peace and security".

Both the Russian Federation and Ukraine are States parties to the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, which effectively prohibits the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use of biological and toxin weapons. As of now there are no confirmed indications of the use of biological and toxin weapons by the parties in the conduct of military actions. Nevertheless, the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has expressed concern about recent unconfirmed reports of the use of chemical weapons in the Ukrainian port of Mariupol and is thus closely monitoring the situation.

To this end, the issue of a possible release of chemical materials during the Russian military aggression to Ukraine was raised by the UN representatives during the recent meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Compact Working Group on Emerging Threats and Critical Infrastructure Protection (ETCIP), chaired by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) with strong support of UNODA. The focus of this working group is to promote coordination and coherence in the work of the signatories to the Global Compact to support the efforts of Member States to prevent and respond to emerging terrorist threats, including those related to the use of chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological (CBRN) materials, and to enhance the protection of critical infrastructure.

In his opening remarks the Acting Chair of the ETCIP Working Groups, who represents UNICRI, informed the members about your appeal to the UN RC, as well as technical request for the delivery of personal protection and laboratory equipment formally submitted to UNICRI by the State Service of Emergency Situations of Ukraine. Meanwhile, with the support of my office, UNICRI in close cooperation with the OPCW will hold virtual trainings aimed at strengthening the level of preparedness and response of municipal authorities to possible chemical incidents. This training, preliminarily scheduled for May 2022, will be organized under the initiative of the Ukrainian Association of District and Oblast Councils for specialists of local administrations involved in civil protection.

In addition, the World Health Organisation (WHO) is providing training in hospital preparedness and the provision of health supplies for chemical events. In association with Ministry of Health Protection



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of Ukraine, WHO has already distributed personal protection equipment in the country and has trained around 1500 health workers over the past several weeks and will roll out advanced practical trainings for referral hospitals.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has initiated a mapping and compilation of the environmental damage caused by the invasion of Ukraine, which also covers pollution due to the release of chemical materials. UNEP is actively preparing for field assessments in Ukraine and has rapidly deployed a senior team member to lead these activities. UNEP is also supporting OCHA on the deployment of an environmental field advisor to help address the environmental dimensions of the humanitarian crisis.

Finally, I will appoint one of my staff to coordinate a coherent response of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes to possible threats derived from the release of chemical and biological materials during military actions in Ukraine and I am hopeful that close collaboration with your committee on these matters will be established.

The United Nations in Ukraine avails itself of this opportunity to express our solidarity with the Ukrainian people suffering from the invasion by the Russian Federation, which is resulting in civilian deaths, including children, and renew to the Committee on Public Health, Medical Assistance and Medical Insurance of the Verkhovna Rada the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

*Osnat Lubrani*  
(D01356DDA27740B)

Osnat Lubrani

UN Resident Coordinator in Ukraine  
Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine

*To: Mykhailo Radutskyi, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Nation Health, Medical Care and Health Insurance, Parliament of Ukraine.*