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ORAL STATEMENT
URGENT DEBATE ON UKRAINE

**THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL MUST ACT DECISIVELY AND CREATE A MECHANISM
ON UKRAINE**

UN Human Rights Council
Forty-ninth regular session
28 February – 1 April 2022

Mr. President,

I am the director of Amnesty Ukraine, recording this from a safe place, but part of my team, my family, my friends are now in bomb shelters.

As I speak, Russian forces are encircling cities, they are bombing schools with cluster munitions, they are wreaking havoc on civilians and civilian infrastructure.

I have witnessed first-hand the unimaginable, horrors that I would wish on no one, and I fear the worst is yet to come.

Russia's invasion of my country is deplorable, it is a violation of the United Nations Charter; it is an act of aggression and an international crime. It cannot stand.

As a civilian in Ukraine, as a member of Amnesty International, I looked to the UN Security Council for protection, for myself, for my family, for my country, for all those fleeing; for the civil society community in Ukraine operating at great risk. Yet the Security Council is blocked by the same government that now invades and attacks. This is perverse; it is twisted; it is wrong.

I now look to the Human Rights Council and to the ICC, with the hope that their responses will be meaningful. This Council must create a mechanism to protect the most vulnerable, promote accountability, and preserve evidence of crimes.

I also look to Russia, where I see people taking to the streets to oppose this invasion. The same authorities that seek to crush my country are also seeking to crush their voices.

The Human Rights Council must act with courage and ambition to stand against all of these violations and crimes.

Thank you.