

FIVE CLAIMS, ONE COUNCIL

At the high-level briefing on Ukraine during UN General Assembly week, Russia's Foreign Minister told the Council that a peace treaty was "initialed" in 2022 and banned by Boris Johnson, that Ukraine has imposed "a total ban on the Russian language in all spheres", that Crimea voted in a "referendum", that Kyiv's leaders are "terrorists" — and that "we are not going to have a pause". Each claim against the record; the last one is the one to keep.

UKRAINE EVIDENCE HUB
VERIFIED RECORD
SEP 2026

17,257

civilians killed in Ukraine since 24 Feb 2022, incl. 835 children; 53,693 injured — read to the same meeting by the UN [A](#)

USG DiCarlo, 10227th meeting, 23 Sep 2026

100 - 11

General Assembly vote declaring the Crimea "referendum" of no validity (58 abstentions) [A](#)

UNGA res. 68/262, 27 Mar 2014

143 - 5

General Assembly vote declaring the 2022 annexations of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia invalid (35 abstentions) [A](#)

UNGA res. ES-11/4, 12 Oct 2022

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documents presented by Russia at the 10227th meeting for the claim that a "legally binding" treaty was initialled and then "banned"; what was initialled in Istanbul is contested — Charap–Radchenko and the NYT drafts describe the communiqué as largely Ukraine's proposal (Tier C), while Putin in June 2023 displayed a draft he said had been initialled [C](#)

Transcript of the 10227th meeting; NYT, 15 Jun 2024; Charap–Radchenko, Foreign Affairs, 16 Apr 2024

BOTTOM LINE

The Istanbul story has documents — and Lavrov tabled none. At the 10227th meeting Russia presented no document. What was initialled in 2022 is contested: Charap and Radchenko describe the 29 March communiqué as largely Ukraine's proposal (Tier C), and Lavrov himself says the principles were Ukraine's; in June 2023 Putin displayed a draft he said had been initialled. The drafts that followed (published by the NYT in June 2024) show Russia adding a veto for itself over any guarantee, limits on Ukraine's army and the repeal of language laws. Nothing was "banned"; nobody has produced the treaty.

"Total ban in all spheres" is not what the law says. The 2019 State Language Law exempts private communication and religious rites in its second article; the Venice Commission criticised parts of it and recommended changes — and confirmed its scope is the public sphere. Poland answered in the room: "the Russian language is widely spoken there."

Crimea and "Novorossiya" are adjudicated. Resolution 68/262, resolution ES-11/4, the ICJ's order of 16 March 2022 and two Grand Chamber judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (25 Jun 2024, 9 Jul 2025) leave no open question of fact for the Council to revisit. Putin himself said on 17 April 2014 that Russian servicemen "stood behind" the Crimean "self-defence".

The sentence that was true. "We are not going to have a pause in our special military operation." Ukraine has accepted an unconditional ceasefire since March 2025; the UN asked for one again at this meeting. The Council heard, from Russia, who refuses it.

Fair to say. The Venice Commission did find faults in the language law and UN special rapporteurs have criticised the 2024 law on religious organisations; Ukraine should answer both. Neither is a "total ban".

THE FIVE CLAIMS

Sergey Lavrov · 23 Sep	"After several rounds in [Belarus] and Istanbul, the Ukrainians proposed key principles for settlement... The document was initialed by the delegations of Ukraine and Russia... The then UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson banned ..."	No evidence presented
Sergey Lavrov · 23 Sep	"...there's a total ban on the Russian language in all spheres... [and] in the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church."	Misstates the law
Sergey Lavrov · 23 Sep	"...there was the referendum in Crimea for independence from the Nazi Kyiv regime and joining Russia."	Already adjudicated
Sergey Lavrov · 23 Sep	"...the Kyiv regime cannot consider itself a government that represents the inhabitants of Crimea, Donbass and Novorossiya... They are terrorists instead."	Already adjudicated
Sergey Lavrov · 23 Sep	"...we are not going to have a pause in our special military operation. Europe, whatever it thinks, just wants to get a pause... to pump the Kyiv regime with weapons."	Fair to say — and contradicted by Russia's own "never refused negotiations"

WHAT WE ASK

Answer the Istanbul claim with the published drafts (NYT, 15 Jun 2024) and ask Russia to table the "initialed" treaty it describes · answer "total ban" with art. 2(2) of Law 2704-VIII and the Venice Commission's opinion, and commit publicly to implementing the Commission's outstanding recommendations · decline to re-litigate Crimea and the annexations: cite 68/262, ES-11/4, the ICJ order of 16 Mar 2022 and the ECtHR judgments · keep "we are not going to have a pause" on the record as Russia's answer to the Council's ceasefire call, beside the 46-state declaration · ask the Secretariat to read the civilian toll at every Ukraine meeting.

Sources: UN transcript of the 10227th meeting, 23 Sep 2026 · Polish MFA, Sikorski's statement, 23 Sep 2026 · DPPA, DiCarlo's briefing · joint declaration of the EU and 46 states, 23 Sep 2026 · NYT, 15 Jun 2024 · Charap and Radchenko, Foreign Affairs, 16 Apr 2024 · Kyiv Post/The Times, Jan 2024 · Venice Commission CDL-AD(2019)032 · Law 2704-VIII · UN special rapporteurs, 1 Oct 2025 · UNGA 68/262 and ES-11/4 · ICJ order 16 Mar 2022 · ECtHR GC 25 Jun 2024, 9 Jul 2025 · Kremlin 17 Apr 2014 · Peskov 28 Aug and 12 Oct 2026 · Nebenzia 9 Oct 2026 · full list on page 6



THE OCCASION AND THE RECORD		
Format	Security Council high-level briefing, 10227th meeting, agenda "Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine"; held during the high-level week of the 81st General Assembly	
Convener / presidency	France held the Council presidency in September 2026 (the UN transcript labels the presiding speaker "France, Council President"); the summary SC/16460 does not name the chair	
Date and place	Wednesday 23 Sep 2026, morning, suspended at about 2:44 and resumed in the afternoon; Security Council Chamber, UN Headquarters, New York	
Briefer	Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs	
Record	UN Meetings Coverage SC/16460, 23 Sep 2026; UN auto-generated transcript (transcripts.un.org/en/sc/10227; cuts off during the resumed session); Poland's statement as published by the Polish MFA	
Outcome	No outcome document. Joint declaration of Ukraine, the EU and 46 states read at a stakeout before the meeting: "Since March 2025, Ukraine has agreed to a full, immediate and unconditional ceasefire... We call on Russia to finally do the same." The United States did not join it.	

THE SPEAKERS		
Sergey Lavrov	Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation · under EU, UK, US, Canadian and Australian sanctions since Feb–Mar 2022	Spoke for Russia (from 1:09:35 in the transcript); left before Poland's reply
Rosemary DiCarlo	UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs	Briefed: at least 17,257 civilians killed incl. 835 children, 53,693 injured since 24 Feb 2022; more civilians killed or injured in the first eight months of 2026 than in all of 2025; called for "an immediate, full and unconditional ceasefire"
Radosław Sikorski	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland	Replied to Lavrov by name on the "coup" of 2014 and the "total ban" on Russian: "the Russian language is widely spoken there"
Andrii Sybiha	Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine	Called for a full, unconditional ceasefire and said Russia blocks peace; co-presented the 46-state joint declaration with Kallas and Barrot

WHAT OTHERS SAID		
United States	"The killing has to stop"; "It is not about winning; all sides are losing" — about 25,000 casualties a month; ready to mediate trilateral talks. Neutral on responsibility; did not join the 46-state ceasefire declaration.	
China	"The negotiating table is the starting point for peace." Neutral; did not address Lavrov's claims.	
France (Jean-Noël Barrot, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs)	Russia is "annihilated, ruined, isolated"; "the stubbornness of only one man has already doomed 500,000 Russians to death"; ceasefire on the current line and a moratorium on energy and Black Sea attacks.	
European Union (António Costa, President of the European Council)	Moscow's repeated threats against EU member States are "a dangerous escalation"; the EU "supports all efforts to end the war".	
Latvia (President Rinkēvičs)	"The task of this Council is to stop this war."	
Denmark (Foreign Minister Løkke Rasmussen)	"Europe is not, and will not be intimidated"; no settlement without Ukraine.	
United Kingdom (Ed Miliband, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs)	"NATO is, and always will be, a defensive alliance"; "it is time ministers told Putin the truth. The world knows that Russia is failing in this war."	
Poland (Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Sikorski)	"After four years of senseless colonial war, Vladimir Putin has achieved nothing"; replied to Lavrov by name — "there was no coup" in 2014 and "the Russian language is widely spoken" in Ukraine (Polish MFA text).	
Romania (President Nicușor Dan)	Drone incursions into Romania, Black Sea navigation and the EU Maritime Security Hub.	
Finland (President Stubb)	"This year, Russia acquired roughly 900 square kilometres, but Ukraine got 800 square kilometres back"; "Someone has to tell the aggressor this will not have a military solution."	
Slovakia (President Pellegrini)	"Borders must never be changed by force"; "Even a partial ceasefire could lead to a broader agreement."	
Netherlands (PM Rob Jetten, also for Belgium and Luxembourg)	"Aggression does not pay and never will"; backed the Special Tribunal and the Claims Commission.	

WHAT THE STATEMENTS LEFT OUT	
- The UN's own figures read minutes before he spoke: 17,257 civilians killed, 835 of them children, 53,693 injured; the first eight months of 2026 worse than all of 2025 (DiCarlo, 23 Sep 2026). Lavrov's statement does not mention a civilian toll. - The content of the 2022 drafts: Russia's 15 Apr 2022 text required that all guarantors — including Russia — agree before any response to an attack on Ukraine, i.e. a Russian veto on Ukraine's defence; earlier drafts capped Ukraine's army and required the repeal of language laws (NYT, 15 Jun 2024; Charap and Radchenko, Foreign Affairs, 16 Apr 2024). - What happened between Istanbul and the "ban": Bucha was uncovered on 1–3 Apr 2022 (OHCHR documented 73 civilians killed while Russian forces held the town, 7 Dec 2022); the missile on Kramatorsk station killed 61 on 8 Apr 2022. - Article 2(2) of the State Language Law (2704-VIII): the law "does not extend to the sphere of private communication and the performance of religious rites"; the Venice Commission's opinion of 6 Dec 2019 reads the law as regulating public use and asks Ukraine to amend specific provisions — not to lift a ban. - Resolution 68/262 (100–11–58), resolution ES-11/4 (143–5–35), the ICJ order of 16 Mar 2022 (13–2) and the ECtHR Grand Chamber judgments of 25 Jun 2024 and 9 Jul 2025 — the legal record on Crimea and eastern Ukraine that the Council and courts have already settled.	

HOW IT TRAVELS	
Russia's MFA published the statement the same day. The Istanbul claim is a recurring item: Putin used it on 14 Jun 2024; Lavrov has repeated it since (TASS, 21 Oct 2024). The auto-generated UN transcript is public; the claims travel without Sikorski's reply, which came after Lavrov had left the Chamber.	

CLAIM, RECORD, CONCESSION (1-2)

Each claim as made, with the date, the venue and a link; the record it runs into, with the tier of the evidence; and what it concedes. Words in square brackets are the Hub's.

UKRAINE EVIDENCE HUB
VERIFIED RECORD
SEP 2026

CLAIM 1 · SERGEY LAVROV · 23 SEP

"After several rounds in [Belarus] and Istanbul, the Ukrainians proposed key principles for settlement... The document was initialed by the delegations of Ukraine and Russia... The then UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson banned the Ukrainians from concluding a legally binding document."

UN auto-generated transcript, 10227th meeting (from 1:09:35)
transcripts.un.org/en/sc/10227

NO EVIDENCE PRESENTED

Evidence C

No document was tabled at the 10227th meeting. What was initialled in Istanbul is contested: Charap and Radchenko (Foreign Affairs, 16 Apr 2024) and the drafts published by the NYT describe the 29 Mar 2022 communiqué as largely Ukraine's proposal — a list of principles (neutrality with guarantees, Crimea deferred), not a treaty (Tier C); in June 2023 Putin displayed a draft treaty that he said had been initialled by the Ukrainian delegation. The drafts that followed are published: Russia's 15 Apr 2022 text made any guarantor response conditional on the agreement of all guarantors, including Russia — "in essence a veto"; the 17 Mar text demanded limits on Ukraine's army and the lifting of all restrictions on Russian (NYT, 15 Jun 2024). Charap and Radchenko, working from the drafts, conclude the talks failed over these terms, Bucha and the course of the war; Johnson told The Times he "expressed concerns" and called the sabotage claim "total nonsense" (Jan 2024). On the "ban": no document, no date, no witness has been offered in four years.

What the claim concedes: In Lavrov's own account the "key principles" were Ukraine's proposal, offered a week into the invasion — the opposite of a party that refuses to negotiate.

CLAIM 2 · SERGEY LAVROV · 23 SEP

"...there's a total ban on the Russian language in all spheres... [and] in the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church."

UN auto-generated transcript, 10227th meeting
transcripts.un.org/en/sc/10227

MISSTATES THE LAW

Evidence A

Law 2704-VIII (2019) regulates the state language in public life; art. 2(2): the law "does not extend to the sphere of private communication and the performance of religious rites". The Venice Commission (CDL-AD(2019)032, 6 Dec 2019) "fully understands the need to promote the use of Ukrainian as the State language", criticises the differential treatment of Russian against EU languages, media quotas and the sanctions mechanism, and recommends amendments — a critique of a public-sphere law, not of a ban. Law 3894-IX (20 Aug 2024) allows the dissolution of religious organisations affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church; it concerns organisational ties, not liturgical language. In the Chamber, Poland's Foreign Minister replied: "I can assure him that the Russian language is widely spoken there" and that minorities "have the right to speak their language in offices, in courts, in schools" (23 Sep 2026).

What the claim concedes: That language rights are a matter of law and monitoring — fields in which the Council of Europe has reviewed Ukraine and in which Russia has refused all monitoring of occupied territory, where Ukrainian-language schooling has been eliminated (OHCHR periodic reports).

Sources: UN transcript of the 10227th meeting, 23 Sep 2026 · Polish MFA, Sikorski's statement, 23 Sep 2026 · DPPA, DiCarlo's briefing · joint declaration of the EU and 46 states, 23 Sep 2026 · NYT, 15 Jun 2024 · Charap and Radchenko, Foreign Affairs, 16 Apr 2024 · Kyiv Post/The Times, Jan 2024 · Venice Commission CDL-AD(2019)032 · Law 2704-VIII · UN special rapporteurs, 1 Oct 2025 · UNGA 68/262 and ES-11/4 · ICJ order 16 Mar 2022 · ECtHR GC 25 Jun 2024, 9 Jul 2025 · Kremlin 17 Apr 2014 · Peskov 28 Aug and 12 Oct 2026 · Nebenzia 9 Oct 2026 · full list on page 6

FACT-CHECK
V1 · 21 OCT 2026



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log

CLAIM, RECORD, CONCESSION (3-5)

Each claim as made, with the date, the venue and a link; the record it runs into, with the tier of the evidence; and what it concedes. Words in square brackets are the Hub's.

CLAIM 3 • SERGEY LAVROV • 23 SEP

“...there was the referendum in Crimea for independence from the Nazi Kyiv regime and joining Russia.”

UN auto-generated transcript, 10227th meeting
transcripts.un.org/en/sc/10227

CLAIM 4 • SERGEY LAVROV • 23 SEP

“...the Kyiv regime cannot consider itself a government that represents the inhabitants of Crimea, Donbass and Novorossiia... They are terrorists instead.”

UN auto-generated transcript, 10227th meeting
transcripts.un.org/en/sc/10227

CLAIM 5 • SERGEY LAVROV • 23 SEP

“...we are not going to have a pause in our special military operation. Europe, whatever it thinks, just wants to get a pause... to pump the Kyiv regime with weapons.”

UN auto-generated transcript, 10227th meeting
transcripts.un.org/en/sc/10227

ALREADY ADJUDICATED

Evidence A

General Assembly resolution 68/262 (27 Mar 2014, 100–11–58) affirms Ukraine's territorial integrity and declares the 16 Mar 2014 referendum as "having no validity". The European Court of Human Rights, Grand Chamber, Ukraine v. Russia (re Crimea), 25 Jun 2024: Russia exercised effective control over Crimea from 27 Feb 2014 and is responsible for a pattern of violations there. Putin, 17 Apr 2014: "our military personnel was behind the backs of Crimea's self-defense" (RIA Novosti English) — after having said on 4 Mar 2014 that the armed men were "local militias". The ICC has issued warrants for crimes in occupied Ukrainian territory since 2023.

What the claim concedes: That the vote was held under the control of forces Russia later admitted were its own.

ALREADY ADJUDICATED

Evidence A

Resolution ES-11/4 (12 Oct 2022, 143–5–35) declares the "attempted illegal annexation" of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions invalid and demands reversal. The ICJ ordered Russia on 16 Mar 2022 (13–2) to "immediately suspend the military operations". The ECtHR Grand Chamber, Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia (9 Jul 2025), found Russia in effective control of the "DPR/LPR" from 11 May 2014 and responsible for violations there, including the downing of MH17. "Novorossiia" has no territory, government or recognition; "terrorists" has been applied by Russia to the elected government with which it negotiated in 2022 and 2025.

What the claim concedes: That Russia's war aim is the removal of a government, not the protection of anyone — which is why no pause is acceptable to it (claim 5).

FAIR TO SAY — AND CONTRADICTED BY RUSSIA'S OWN "NEVER REFUSED NEGOTIATIONS"

Evidence A

The sentence is Russia's position and is consistent with its record: the 30-day ceasefire proposed at Jeddah on 11 Mar 2025 was accepted by Ukraine and not by Russia; Peskov, 28 Aug 2026: talks "deeply on pause"; Peskov, 12 Oct 2026: no 60-day ceasefire for elections. It is inconsistent with what Russia's Permanent Representative told the same Council on 9 Oct 2026: "Russia has never refused to engage in negotiations". The UN's call at this meeting was for "an immediate, full and unconditional ceasefire as a first step" (DiCarlo); 46 states and the EU stated that Ukraine "has agreed to a full, immediate and unconditional ceasefire" since March 2025 and called on Russia "to finally do the same".

What the claim concedes: Who refuses the ceasefire. The Council asked; Russia answered.

Sources: UN transcript of the 10227th meeting, 23 Sep 2026 · Polish MFA, Sikorski's statement, 23 Sep 2026 · DPPA, DiCarlo's briefing · joint declaration of the EU and 46 states, 23 Sep 2026 · NYT, 15 Jun 2024 · Charap and Radchenko, Foreign Affairs, 16 Apr 2024 · Kyiv Post/The Times, Jan 2024 · Venice Commission CDL-AD(2019)032 · Law 2704-VIII · UN special rapporteurs, 1 Oct 2025 · UNGA 68/262 and ES-11/4 · ICJ order 16 Mar 2022 · ECtHR GC 25 Jun 2024, 9 Jul 2025 · Kremlin 17 Apr 2014 · Peskov 28 Aug and 12 Oct 2026 · Nebenzia 9 Oct 2026 · full list on page 6



WHAT RUSSIA SAYS, WHAT THE RECORD SHOWS

Each line sets a Russian statement against the finding of a mandated body or, where none exists, an independent investigation. Tiers are marked on every source.

UKRAINE EVIDENCE HUB

VERIFIED RECORD

SEP 2026

THE RECORD			
QUESTION	WHAT RUSSIA SAYS	WHAT THE RECORD SHOWS	SOURCE
Istanbul 2022	Treaty "initialed"; Johnson "banned" it	No document presented at the 10227th meeting; what was initialled is contested (Charap–Radchenko / NYT drafts: communiqué largely Ukraine's proposal, C; Putin displayed a draft he said was initialled, Jun 2023); the 15 Apr Russian draft added a Russian veto over guarantees; no treaty, no ban documented	NYT 15 Jun 2024; Charap–Radchenko 16 Apr 2024; Johnson, The Times, Jan 2024 (C)
Russian language	"Total ban... in all spheres"	Law 2704-VIII regulates public use; art. 2(2) exempts private communication and religious rites; Venice Commission recommends amendments	CDL-AD(2019)032, 6 Dec 2019 (A); Sikorski, 23 Sep 2026 (A)
Crimea 2014	"Referendum... for independence"	"No validity" (100–11–58); Russian effective control from 27 Feb 2014; Putin's admission 17 Apr 2014	UNGA 68/262; ECtHR GC 25 Jun 2024 (A); Kremlin (RU)
Donbas, "Novorossiia"	Kyiv "cannot consider itself a government"; "terrorists"	Annexations invalid (143–5–35); suspend operations (13–2); Russian control from 11 May 2014	UNGA ES-11/4; ICJ 16 Mar 2022; ECtHR GC 9 Jul 2025 (A)
Ceasefire	"We are not going to have a pause"	Ukraine accepted an unconditional ceasefire, Mar 2025; UN calls for one; Kremlin: "deeply on pause", no 60-day ceasefire	Joint declaration 23 Sep 2026; DiCarlo (A); Peskov 28 Aug, 12 Oct 2026 (RU)
Civilians killed since 24 Feb 2022	Not mentioned	17,257 incl. 835 children; 53,693 injured	DiCarlo, 23 Sep 2026 (A)

FAIR TO SAY

The Venice Commission did conclude that the 2019 law "fails to strike a fair balance" between promoting Ukrainian and protecting minority languages, and recommended amendments — on media quotas, the sanctions mechanism, education timelines and the distinction between EU and non-EU languages. Ukraine has adopted a Law on National Minorities (2022, amended 2023) and should implement the remaining recommendations.

Five UN special rapporteurs said on 1 Oct 2025 that Law 3894-IX, by "equating religious affiliation with threats to national security", is "incompatible with international human rights standards" and urged a review. That is a legitimate criticism — of a law on organisational ties with the Moscow Patriarchate, not a ban on a language.

Negotiations did take place in Belarus and Istanbul in March 2022, Ukraine did table principles on neutrality, and the record of why they failed is contested among historians. Whether a draft treaty was initialled is also disputed — Putin displayed one in June 2023 that he said had been. What is not contested is that Russia presented no document to the Council at the 10227th meeting and has produced no evidence of a "ban".

Sources: UN transcript of the 10227th meeting, 23 Sep 2026 · Polish MFA, Sikorski's statement, 23 Sep 2026 · DPPA, DiCarlo's briefing · joint declaration of the EU and 46 states, 23 Sep 2026 · NYT, 15 Jun 2024 · Charap and Radchenko, Foreign Affairs, 16 Apr 2024 · Kyiv Post/The Times, Jan 2024 · Venice Commission CDL-AD(2019)032 · Law 2704-VIII · UN special rapporteurs, 1 Oct 2025 · UNGA 68/262 and ES-11/4 · ICJ order 16 Mar 2022 · ECtHR GC 25 Jun 2024, 9 Jul 2025 · Kremlin 17 Apr 2014 · Peskov 28 Aug and 12 Oct 2026 · Nebenzia 9 Oct 2026 · full list on page 6



ESTABLISHED, PATTERN, POSITION

What mandated bodies have established, what the record shows as a pattern, and what is a position — kept apart. Then the lines to take and the questions to expect.

UKRAINE EVIDENCE HUB

VERIFIED RECORD

SEP 2026

THE LAW

UN Charter art. 2(4): no threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of any state. Resolutions 68/262 and ES-11/4 apply it to Crimea and to the 2022 annexations; a "referendum" held under foreign military control cannot cure a breach of art. 2(4).

Statute of the ICJ, art. 41, and the order of 16 Mar 2022: provisional measures are binding; Russia was ordered to suspend its operations and has not complied.

European Convention on Human Rights, art. 1 (jurisdiction): the Grand Chamber has fixed Russian jurisdiction over Crimea from 27 Feb 2014 and over the "DPR/LPR" from 11 May 2014 — the facts Lavrov re-argues are res judicata.

Three layers. *Established:* invalidity of the referendum and annexations; Russian control of occupied territory (UNGA, ICJ, ECtHR). *Pattern:* recurring Russian refusal of a ceasefire (Jeddah 2025, Aug–Oct 2026). *Position:* "Johnson banned the treaty" and "total ban on Russian" — Russian assertions with no document behind them.

LINES TO TAKE

- "Mr Lavrov presented no document to this Council. If a treaty was initialled and then banned, Russia can table it here — with the proof of the ban."
- "Article 2 of Ukraine's language law exempts private life and religious rites. The Venice Commission asked for amendments, not for the lifting of a ban, because there is none."
- "On Crimea the General Assembly voted 100 to 11, the European Court has ruled, and President Putin has admitted the troops. There is nothing left to debate."
- "The Council asked for an immediate, full and unconditional ceasefire. Russia's answer, in this Chamber, was 'no pause'."
- "Ukraine accepted an unconditional ceasefire in March 2025. Russia has refused it for eighteen months and calls that 'never refusing negotiations'."
- "17,257 civilians killed, 835 of them children — read to this Council an hour before Mr Lavrov spoke. He did not mention them."

Q&A

"Wasn't a deal really close in April 2022 before the West stepped in?"

Drafts were exchanged, and they are published. Russia's April text gave itself a veto over any defence of Ukraine and capped Ukraine's army. Historians who have studied the drafts put the failure on those terms, on Bucha and on the battlefield; Johnson denies issuing any ban, and Russia has produced no evidence of one.

"The Venice Commission criticised the language law — so Lavrov has a point?"

It criticised specific provisions and asked for amendments; Ukraine should act on them. The same opinion describes a law on public use of the state language that leaves private speech and worship alone. 'Total ban in all spheres' is not a reading of the opinion.

"Crimeans voted to join Russia."

Under the control of troops Russia first denied and then admitted. The General Assembly declared the vote of no validity and the European Court has found Russia responsible for violations in Crimea since February 2014.

"Russia says it is ready to negotiate — why doesn't Ukraine?"

Ukraine accepted a full, unconditional ceasefire in March 2025 and said so again at this meeting with 46 other states. Lavrov's answer was 'no pause'. The Kremlin called the talks 'deeply on pause' on 28 August and rejected a 60-day ceasefire on 12 October.

"Isn't the ban on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church a ban on Russian believers?"

The 2024 law concerns organisations with ties to the Moscow Patriarchate, not the language of worship; UN rapporteurs have raised concerns about it and Ukraine should answer them. It is not a language law.

WHAT WE ASK

Answer the Istanbul claim with the published drafts (NYT, 15 Jun 2024) and ask Russia to table the "initialed" treaty it describes · answer "total ban" with art. 2(2) of Law 2704-VIII and the Venice Commission's opinion, and commit publicly to implementing the Commission's outstanding recommendations · decline to re-litigate Crimea and the annexations: cite 68/262, ES-11/4, the ICJ order of 16 Mar 2022 and the ECtHR judgments · keep "we are not going to have a pause" on the record as Russia's answer to the Council's ceasefire call, beside the 46-state declaration · ask the Secretariat to read the civilian toll at every Ukraine meeting.

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SOURCES		
UN Transcripts	Security Council, 10227th meeting, 23 Sep 2026 (auto-generated; Lavrov from 1:09:35, Sikorski from 2:38:01) https://transcripts.un.org/en/sc/10227	A
UN Meetings Coverage	SC/16460 — Ukraine War Entering 'Dangerous New Phase'..., 10227th meeting (AM), 23 Sep 2026 https://press.un.org/en/2026/sc16460.doc.htm	A
UN DPPA	USG DiCarlo: Ukraine war entering dangerous new phase as regional risks grow (23 Sep 2026) https://dppa.un.org/en/news/ukraine-war-entering-dangerous-new-phase-as-regional-risks-grow-under-secretary-general	A
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland	Address by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski at the UN Security Council meeting, 23 Sep 2026 https://www.gov.pl/web/diplomacy/address-by-deputy-prime-minister-and-foreign-minister-radoslaw-sikorski-at-un-security-council-meeting	A
Norway at the UN / EEAS	Joint declaration ahead of the high-level Security Council briefing on Ukraine, 23 Sep 2026 https://www.norway.no/en/missions/un/statements/sc-joint-declaration-ahead-of-the-high-level-un-security-council-briefing-on-ukraine/	A
EEAS	Press stakeout: HR/VP Kallas, EU-27 member states and Minister Sybiha, 23 Sep 2026 https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/ukraine-press-stakeout-hrvp-kaja-kallas-eu27-member-states-andrii-sybiha-ukrainian-minister-foreign_en	A
Security Council Report	What's In Blue: Ukraine high-level briefing, Sep 2026 https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2026/09/ukraine-high-level-briefing-9.php	C
The New York Times	The peace deal that could have ended the war — the 2022 draft documents (15 Jun 2024) https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/06/15/world/europe/ukraine-russia-ceasefire-deal.html	C
LB.ua	NYT publishes documents under discussion by Ukraine and Russia in spring 2022 (15 Jun 2024) https://en.lb.ua/news/2024/06/15/29960_nyt_publishes_documents_under.html	C
Foreign Affairs	S. Charap and S. Radchenko, The Talks That Could Have Ended the War in Ukraine (16 Apr 2024) https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/talks-could-have-ended-war-ukraine	C
Kyiv Post (citing The Times)	'Total Nonsense' — Boris Johnson denies accusations of sabotaging Ukraine peace deal (11 Jan 2024) https://www.kyivpost.com/post/26582	C
Venice Commission	Opinion CDL-AD(2019)032 on the Law on Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language (6 Dec 2019) https://www.coe.int/en/web/venice-commission/-/CDL-AD(2019)032-e	A
Council of Europe Office in Kyiv	State language law of Ukraine fails to strike balance... says Venice Commission (Dec 2019) https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/state-language-law-of-ukraine-fails-to-strike-balance-between-strengthening-ukrainian-and-safeguarding-minorities-linguistic-rights-says-venice-commis	A
Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine	Law 2704-VIII on supporting the functioning of the Ukrainian language as the state language, art. 2 (25 Apr 2019) https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2704-19	B
Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine	Law 3894-IX on the protection of the constitutional order in the sphere of activities of religious organisations (20 Aug 2024) https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3894-20	B
UN Special Procedures (via ecoi.net)	UN experts warn of persecution against Ukrainian Orthodox Church (1 Oct 2025) https://www.ecoi.net/de/dokument/2131224.html	A
UN General Assembly	Resolution 68/262, Territorial integrity of Ukraine (27 Mar 2014; 100–11–58) https://press.un.org/en/2014/ga11493.doc.htm	A
UN General Assembly	Resolution ES-11/4, Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter (12 Oct 2022; 143–5–35) https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12458.doc.htm	A
International Court of Justice	Allegations of Genocide (Ukraine v. Russian Federation), Order on provisional measures, 16 Mar 2022 https://www.icj-cij.org/case/182	A
European Court of Human Rights	Ukraine v. Russia (re Crimea), Grand Chamber judgment, 25 Jun 2024 https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng/?i=001-235139	A
European Court of Human Rights	Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia, Grand Chamber judgment, 9 Jul 2025 (press release mirror) https://diritti-cedu.unipg.it/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/GC-Corte-EDU-Ucrainan-e-Olanda-vs.Russia-press-release-9-luglio-2025.pdf	A
Kremlin / Moscow Times	Putin, Direct Line, 17 Apr 2014: Russian servicemen "stood behind" Crimean self-defence https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/04/17/putin-says-russian-forces-were-deployed-to-crimea	RU
OHCHR	Killings of civilians in Kyiv, Chernihiv and Sumy regions, incl. Bucha (7 Dec 2022) https://ukraine.un.org/en/node/210464	A
US Department of State	Joint statement on the United States–Ukraine meeting in Jeddah, 11 Mar 2025 https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-the-united-states-ukraine-meeting-in-jeddah	A
Hromadske (citing Interfax)	Kremlin says Ukraine peace talks are 'deeply on pause' (28 Aug 2026) https://hromadske.ua/en/war/270131-kremlin-says-ukraine-peace-talks-are-deeply-on-pause	C
Meduza (citing TASS)	Kremlin rejects 60-day ceasefire for Ukraine's elections (12 Oct 2026) https://meduza.io/en/news/2026/10/12/kremlin-rejects-60-day-ceasefire-for-ukraine-s-elections-but-says-it-might-not-strike-on-election-day-itself	C
Russian Federation	Statement by V. Nebenzia at the UNSC, 9 Oct 2026 ("never refused to engage in negotiations") https://russiaun.ru/en/news/409102026	RU
TASS	Lavrov rejects British PM's remark about Istanbul talks as lie (21 Oct 2024 — earlier iteration of the claim) https://tass.com/politics/1858831	RU

METHOD

Lavrov's words are taken from the UN's auto-generated English transcript of the 10227th meeting (interpretation from Russian; wording may differ slightly from the original and from the verbatim record S/PV.10227; the transcript's "Brussels" is evidently "Belarus" and is shown as [Belarus]). Sikorski's reply is checked against the text published by the Polish MFA. Words in square brackets are the Hub's.

Each claim is checked against adjudicated or UN-mandated records first (General Assembly, ICJ, ECtHR, Venice Commission, OHCHR); published primary documents and historians' analysis (Tier C) are used only for the Istanbul drafts, where no Tier A finding exists. Ukrainian law is cited as text (Tier B) with the Venice Commission's reading alongside. Russian statements are Tier RU.

Positions of other speakers are summarised from SC/16460 and the transcript, not quoted in full. Statements that could not be traced to a primary source were removed before publication.

Tiers: **A** — UN-mandated bodies, international courts and organisations (OHCHR/HRMMU, Commission of Inquiry, ICC, ECtHR, IAEA, OSCE, OPCW, Security Council record); **B** — Ukrainian official bodies, marked "according to Ukraine"; **C** — independent investigators and media; **RU** — Russian official statements, the position under review. Tiers are never combined in one figure.