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Ukraine Demands Russia's Removal from UN Security Council

By AFP

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Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba. **Mfa.gov.ua**

Ukraine called for Russia to be removed as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council on Monday.

"Ukraine calls on the member states of the UN ... to deprive the Russian Federation of its status as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and to exclude it from the UN as a whole," the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Monday.

The statement said that Russia had illegally occupied "the seat of the U.S.S.R. in the UN Security Council" since the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991.

"From a legal and political point of view, there can be only one conclusion: Russia is a usurper of the Soviet Union's seat on the UN Security Council," the ministry added.

"Three decades of its illegal presence in the UN have been marked by wars and seizures of

other countries' territories," the statement said.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said that the question of Russia's veto-wielding permanent seat in the UN Security Council — also held by the United States, Britain, France, and China — was already being discussed in diplomatic circles.

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"These issues are not yet discussed at press conferences and in public statements by the leaders of states and governments, but at a lower level, people are already asking the question — what Russia should become like in order not to pose a threat to peace and security," he said.

The powerful Security Council consists of 15 members tasked with tackling global crises by enacting sanctions, authorizing military action, and approving changes to the UN charter.

But the permanent five — who all carry veto power that can block any resolution — reflect the power dynamics at the end of World War II.

Countries have long pleaded for reform of the Security Council, with some criticizing the lack of representation when it comes to permanent seats for African and Latin American countries.

The body can also be rendered impotent by a single veto-wielding member — as was shown in February when diplomats carried on reading pre-written statements just as Russia started bombarding Ukraine.

U.S. President Joe Biden in September said he supported an expansion of the Security Council and for it to "become more inclusive" — a rare call for action from Washington, given that it famously bypassed the Council to invade Iraq during George W. Bush's administration.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Western powers have pored through UN procedural rules to ensure Russia is unable to block Security Council meetings.

They have turned to another UN body — the 193-member General Assembly — to seek condemnation of the Kremlin's actions.

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