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A white-haired white man with a beard and glasses wearing a gray shirt and clerical collar an

Archbishop Paul R. Gallagher, the Vatican's foreign minister, addresses the U.N. Security Council during a meeting in New York Sept. 20, 2023. (CNS screengrab/United Nations)



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The Vatican urged members of the U.N. Security Council to be "creative and courageous artisans of peace and weavers of constructive dialogue" to find a peaceful solution to the war in Ukraine.

Addressing a meeting of the U.N. Security Council in New York Sept. 20, Archbishop Paul R. Gallagher, the Vatican's foreign minister, said today the "entire international community, more than ever, cannot surrender itself and let this issue pass in silence."

"The solution to the war in Ukraine is not only a matter for Ukraine itself," he said. "All member states of the United Nations, and especially those of the Security Council, are called upon to join efforts in the search for a just and lasting peace for Ukraine as an important element of the global peace of which the world thirsts."

The Security Council meeting included speeches from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. In his address, Zelenskyy criticized the council's structure which gives five countries -- the United States, China, France, Great Britain and Russia -- the power to veto any council resolution or decision, saying that Russia's misuse of the veto power is "to the detriment of all other U.N. members."

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Gallagher did not discuss the subject of veto power, but said it is "undeniable that the Russian attack on Ukraine has jeopardized the entire global order which arose after World War II" and cited its negative consequences in the humanitarian, agricultural, ecological, military, nuclear, religious and other spheres that are "altogether fundamental elements of the architecture of world security."

"If this war is not stopped and peace is not sought at every turn, the whole world risks plunging into even deeper crises," he said.

The archbishop noted that the Holy See "is close to Ukraine and fully upholds its territorial integrity" while it engages in humanitarian initiatives to support the Ukrainian people. "It is before the eyes of everyone that those paying the highest price are civilians, simple people and above all, children, youth and the elderly."

Gallagher told the council that while achieving peace is possible, "it will surely come when there is a common commitment to implement it not only at the international, institutional level but also in our hearts and homes."