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PRESS RELEASE

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration on Today's UN Vote to Suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council

Belmopan. April 8, 2022. 12:00 p.m.

Belize has co-sponsored and supported two United Nations resolutions, on March 2 and March 24, 2022, regarding the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Those resolutions expressed strong condemnation of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, called for immediate cessation of hostilities and urgent diplomatic efforts to seek a peaceful resolution of the conflict, and expressed grave concern about the plight of civilians in Ukraine.

The UN resolutions of March 2 and March 24 aligned with the national position of Belize expressed in public statements which the government issued on February 4 and February 24, 2022.

On April 7, 2022, Belize abstained on a resolution tabled in the UN General Assembly to suspend Russia from the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). Belize took the decision to abstain following obligatory consultations among CARICOM Member States on April 4 and April 7, which did not yield a consensus regional position.

Belize notes that the HRC has established a Commission of Inquiry mandated to investigate all alleged violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law and related crimes in the context of the aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation. Additionally, the International Criminal Court Prosecutor is currently investigating the situation in Ukraine, including any alleged war crimes and any alleged crimes against humanity in all parts of Ukraine.

Considering that these investigations are still ongoing, Belize is of the view that a determination to suspend Russia from the HRC would be best considered after the receipt of any definitive and actionable findings resulting from the investigations.

Several CARICOM Member States also abstained in the April 7 vote including Barbados, Guyana, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Belize remains resolute in its condemnation of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and supports every effort to peacefully end the war.

Ends