

**Closing Statement by Sir Ronald Sanders
Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda
At the Special Meeting of the Permanent Council of the OAS on the Crisis in Ukraine
on Friday, 25 March 2022**

Madam Chair

Thank you for the opportunity to once again thank the delegations that joined the delegations of Antigua and Barbuda and Guatemala in cosponsoring this resolution.

We thank all the 28 delegations that upheld the principles of the OAS Charter and the authority of the Permanent Council to raise its voice on international issues that are of such egregious proportions that they threaten the wellbeing of all states including the members of the OAS,

We also thank the permanent observers that spoke here in encouragement of our Resolution.

Madam Chair, my delegation accepts the sovereign rights of our members states to speak and vote in accordance with positions arising from their circumstances. Therefore, we accept and respect the rights of the 5 countries that abstained.

However, in the course of explanation of votes, one delegation said that the language of the resolution was infelicitous and was one of the reasons that caused that delegation not to support the Resolution.

But, with all due respect, my delegation is obliged to point out that every delegation had the opportunity and the right to contribute to the language of the resolution, and all were invited to do so.

If any delegation did not seize that opportunity and did not exercise its right to negotiate the resolution, it can hardly complain about the final language of the resolution.

More alarmingly, Madam Chair, it was said that this Organisation of American States – one of the oldest multilateral organisations - has no authority to speak on a global issue even though it is clear that the issue involving aggression against a sovereign state, materially affects all our countries.

In law, any affected party has a right to voice its concerns and to seek remedies at the very least.

It seems that for the first time in its history, the OAS is expected to be silent as world peace and security is patently affected.

But silence is not an option in face of the violations of international law and of a grave humanitarian crisis

Silence is not an option for the OAS, especially as the two countries involved enjoy observer status of our Organisation with responsibilities to uphold the principles and values of our charter.

Madam Chair, we have acted in the OAS, after wide consultation amongst each other, to uphold the values for which we collectively declare we stand.

Our collective action should be applauded and each of our countries that stood up here for international law and for peace and security deserves respect and thanks.

My delegation and the delegation of Guatemala thanks them all.