**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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**758. Mr D Bergman (DA) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

Considering that during a recent United Nations (UN) General Assembly session, South Africa abstained from voting on the UN resolution demanding that Russia leave Ukraine territory and immediately stop the war, what (a) are the reasons for the Government’s decision to abstain from voting for the UN resolution and (b) is the Government’s position on the mounting cases of Ukraine civilian casualties due to bombing targeted at residential areas by the Russian army? **NW857E**

**REPLY:**

1. South Africa abstained from voting on the UN resolution demanding that Russia leave Ukraine territory and immediately stop the war, as the resolution was seen as not contributing to the creation of the necessary conditions to encourage dialogue, mediation and diplomacy, which are important foundations for a durable peace and bringing an end to the devastation and destruction. South Africa will, therefore, continue to call on the parties to choose diplomacy and negotiation over violence to resolve their differences.
2. South Africa has decried the humanitarian disaster in Ukraine that has resulted from the ongoing conflict and called for the urgent opening of humanitarian corridors and the provision of aid to the civilian population. South Africa always maintains that, in conflict zones, civilians, civilian infrastructure and other non-combatants must be protected in keeping with the Principle of Distinction and other protective measures of the Geneva Conventions.