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This morning I felt really moved, full of positive emotion when here, in this room I could hug Olena Skomoroshchenko, our dear Ukrainian comrade who, day after day, for 135 days has sent us daily reports on the situation in her country, Ukraine. I almost cried when, at my asking her: how are you, her answer was: I AM ALIVE.

It must be tragic to witness the invasion of your country and even more to daily report on it in order to keep the family of Socialist International informed first-hand. Thank you Olena for your courage, your determination and your commitment toward the Socialist International.

With the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we were well aware that the world is in danger of falling into a destructive spiral: President Putin has decided to shake, to break the “equilibrium” born in 1989.

The goal of President Putin, a goal reiterated several times, is to re-establish the ancient borders of 'mother Russia', within an imperial-type vision of history, which takes us back to the 1900s or even to the 1800s.

The problem, which Putin himself does not seem to be aware of, is that today's world is completely different from that of the past. The geopolitical, economic, energy, communication, environmental, financial and, not least, humanitarian ties between the different areas of the planet are infinitely closer and more extensive than in the past.

This is why Putin's initiative is so dangerous; it is dangerous for several reasons and for the several risky consequences that this initiative entails.

The first one is that in the 21st century the idea of occupying a territory and to move the borders of a country through the intervention of an army is against international law, is totally unacceptable and, quite likely, unsuccessful.

The reality is that people today have much greater cultural, social and economic resources and are not willing to be subdued so easily. We are witnessing it in this war: the Ukrainian people reacted with determination.

The heroic Ukrainian resistance nullifies Putin's plans for a quick conquest that, in his intention, would have gone almost unnoticed. This is a serious and tragic error of assessment, which unfortunately cost and still costs many human lives among Ukrainians and among the occupiers.

Beyond the attempts to hide the truth, the inhumanity of war has appeared in all its evidence. Today there are billions of people on earth who want peace. And who identify Putin with war.

A further consequence is economic, especially in the field of energy. The GDP of Russia is relatively small compared to the world (around 2%). This might suggest that the economic consequences are limited. But it is not so. Above all because Russia is the central hub of the global energy supply system, as well as, together with Ukraine, one of the main exporters of wheat. The global food security is at risk and the idea that one can use food as a tool of blackmail is inhumane.

The problem is the all economies around the world are being challenged due to the high degree of economic interdependence and inequalities and poverty will unavoidably increase.

But what is even more worrying is the nuclear risk. Putin has threatened several times the use of this type of weapons. This use would really be a leap into the void, a scaring leap in the void.

In a closely interconnected world, it is increasingly evident that peace is a must because peace is indivisible. This is why we have the duty to reject the logic of war and work to unite a world front around the superior reasons for peace: war destroys and peace builds. This has always been true but it is even more so now in the context of today's world.

During the pandemic we have repeatedly stated that no one can save oneself alone. There is no safety in solitude. Solidarity, a fundamental value for our movement, is in our common interest.

The same is valid for this war for which the only way out is to join efforts for dialogue, for mediation, for diplomacy with the conviction that peace is a universal common good in the interest of all.

Before concluding I cannot but draw your attention to a tragedy within the tragedy of the war: again rapes and sexual violence are used on women and girls across Ukraine as a weapon of war. We had hoped that the Balkan war in the nineties would be a lesson for everyone not to repeat this heinous war crime. The lesson was useless and too many Ukrainian women continue to be victims of rapes and sexual violence. We do not know how many cases of rape have been perpetrated in these nearly five months of war, but even one case would be enough for a global condemnation.