

Beat: News

Russia suspended from UN Human Rights Council

93 Countries Voted In Favor

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USPA NEWS - The United Nations General Assembly voted to suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council over its atrocities in Ukraine.

In a rare move, Russia was suspended from the UN Human Rights Council over the Ukraine war. This has only happened to one other country in history, Libya. Ukraine's president has also called for Russia to be removed from the UN Security Council. Ninety-three countries voted in favor of the resolution to expel Russia from the Council, where countries are elected to serve three-year terms. Meanwhile, 24 countries voted against the resolution, and 58 abstained from voting. As a result, Russia became the first permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) to be suspended from any UN body.

"Russia's rights of membership in the UN Human Rights Council has just been suspended," Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba tweeted after the vote. He added: "War criminals have no place in UN bodies aimed at protecting human rights. Grateful to all member states which supported the relevant UNGA resolution and chose the right side of history." Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the US ambassador to the UN, said the move marked "an important and historic day." "We have collectively sent a clear message that Russia will be held accountable," she tweeted. Thomas-Greenfield called for Russia's suspension from the UN's top rights body after the recent discovery of mass civilian killings in the Kyiv suburb of Bucha.

A suspension has only happened to one other country, Libya in 2011. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also called for Russia to be removed from the UNSC over its actions in Ukraine. In an impassioned speech to the UNSC on Tuesday, Zelenskyy said the body should "dissolve" itself if revoking Russia's membership is not an option. There are open questions as to the legal path to removing Russia from the body, given it's one of five permanent members and has veto power as such. Along these lines, Zelenskyy called for the UN to be reformed "immediately," contending that the international system failed Ukraine.

Suspending Russia from the UN Human Rights Council required two-thirds of the General Assembly to vote in favor. Abstentions did not count as votes. The move marks a historic rebuke of one of the founding members of the UN, and is indicative of the myriad ways in which Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has seen Moscow isolated on the global stage.

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