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## **Council of Europe: anniversary of Russian aggression against Ukraine. Mgr. Ganci (Holy See), diplomacy as an instrument to rebuild peace**

“The Holy See reaffirms its proximity to the martyred land of Ukraine and its people”, said Mgr. Marco Ganci, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the Council of Europe, at an extraordinary meeting in Strasbourg marking the second anniversary of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. “In his traditional address to the diplomatic corps at the beginning of the year, the Holy Father expressed regret by noting that ‘after nearly two years of large-scale war waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the greatly desired peace has not yet managed to take root in minds and hearts, despite the great numbers of victims and the massive destruction. One cannot allow the persistence of a conflict that continues to metastasize, to the detriment of millions of persons; it is necessary to put an end to the present tragedy through negotiations, in respect for international law’”. Mgr. Ganci stressed that the Holy See “constantly recalls that war only brings destruction, suffering, and resentment, and is never a way to resolve conflicts. It is in this context that diplomacy can demonstrate all its weight and ability to serve as an effective instrument for the cause of peace”. In our globalised context, where a “third world war in pieces” is underway, as Pope Francis repeatedly pointed out, “conflicts directly affect only some regions of the world; but in essence they affect everyone, and therefore collective commitment is essential to restoring peace while respecting each nation”. “The Holy See, for its part – Mgr. Ganci concluded –, will continue its commitment to facilitating the return of Ukrainian children to their country and to promoting various humanitarian actions in favour of the suffering population, thanks also to the constant and unwavering support of the various local Churches”.

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