



21 March 2014 – United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today urged “real dialogue” between Kyiv and Moscow to peacefully resolve the current crisis, during a visit to the Ukrainian capital.

“These are some of the most dramatic and difficult times in the history of Ukraine,” Mr. Ban said during a press encounter in Kyiv. “Tensions are high. Lives have been lost.”

The Secretary-General said he is seriously concerned at both the tense situation within parts of Ukraine as well as between it and Russia, where he met yesterday with President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

“This current crisis can only be resolved through peaceful diplomatic solutions based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, including respect for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and a determined statesmanlike pursuit of peace and security,” he stated. “There has to be a real dialogue between Kyiv and Moscow.”

Months of political unrest in Ukraine led to the removal by Parliament of President Viktor Yanukovich in February, followed by increased tensions in the country’s autonomous region of Crimea, where additional Russian military were recently deployed and a secession referendum was held this past Sunday.

“Inflammatory rhetoric can lead to further tensions and possible miscalculations, as well as

dangerous counter-reactions. Intimidation by radical elements has to be firmly prevented. I count on all parties in Ukraine to ensure that this is the case.”

While he conveyed his concerns to Acting President Oleksandr Turchynov, Mr. Ban also said how encouraged he was to see signs of greater inclusion, especially the desire to re-introduce Russian as one of Ukraine’s official languages. “Inclusiveness is critical to the restoration of stability to your country,” he noted.

While in Kyiv, the Secretary-General also met with the head of the UN human rights monitoring mission that has been deployed in the country, including in the eastern and southern regions. Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Simonovic arrived today in Crimea for a two-day visit to lay the groundwork for the monitoring mission to set up a presence in that region.