

Forum: The Third General Assembly

Issue: Measures to ensure the safety of Eastern European residents post declaration of war by the Russian Federation

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Introduction

Political conflicts are an inevitable phenomenon in the 21st century with heightened global tensions and the onset of economic instability in the aftermath of the pandemic. However, while there have been several political conflicts in the past, very few contest the magnitude of the political divide that can be witnessed due to the declaration of war by the Russian Federation.

Rooted in a history plagued by troubles and difficulties, the declaration of war in Ukraine has sent the world into political and economical turmoil. Political tension between the nations of Russia and Ukraine was on the rise especially towards the end of 2021 and thus, eventually resulted in Russia's attack on Ukraine in February 2022. This invasion sent shockwaves all across the political landscape thus immediately triggering a global response where most nations tried to cut off ties with the Russian Federation and the west retaliated by imposing sanctions and trade bans among other restrictions to try and reduce the negative impacts of the war on the International community. Almost a year has gone by and hardly any of the crisis mitigative measures seem to be proving effective. The conflict persists to this day and the ramifications continue to increase on the daily: the number of refugees and internally displaced persons rapidly rise alongside the large number of civilian casualties causing further concern in the political landscape of the world. The damage to Ukrainian infrastructure and economy is also significant and requires immediate attention. The conflicts' continued unharnessed presence in the International community is consequently resulting in the global economy being damaged due to the large number of trade restrictions with Russia, which has had myriad consequences such as a great boom in energy prices as well as severe inflation of prices across the globe. Due to the alarming and dynamic nature of the conflict, it is the duty of the members of the International community to collaborate with each other to attempt to

devise strategies and measures that will take steps towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Russia is known to have a long, grueling history of attempting to invade Ukraine in order to gain control over its territory which must be understood in greater detail to realize the extent of the war that's currently taking place and why the relationship between Russia and Ukraine is strenuous at best. The end of the 18th century in 1783, was the first of such instances where the Russian Federation was successful in the annexation of Ukraine as a stepping stone in their desire to expand its control over territory into the Balkans and Black Sea region. Contrary to popular beliefs and expectations, this initial annexation was a bloodless event where only minimal Ukrainian resistance was faced, as the Ukrainian Cossacks were very eager to join Russia. In the start of the 19th century, the Russian Government began exploiting the powerlessness of the Ukrainian region by trying to assimilate Ukrainian citizens into the Russian culture by suppressing any form of Ukrainian culture and language, a process that was coined as Russification. A key contributor to this suppression of local culture was the government's intellectual decision to move a large number of Russians into the Ukrainian region to make it more loyal to the Russian empire and regime. This process of moving russians into ukraine continued even after the formation of the USSR and in the Soviet period. The Russian population jumped from a number of 3.5 million in 1917 to 35 million in 1989. At the same time in the start of 1917 Ukrainian Central Council issued a statement which declared Ukraines autonomy within a federal Russian state. Following the same intent, the council in Ukraine eventually issued the "Declaration of Independence of Ukraine" statement towards the end of 1917 thus finally announcing its independence and newfound recognition as a sovereign nation. The people's republic of Ukraine officially came into existence on the 6th of January 1918¹.

From 1917 till the time of the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 Ukraine experienced a plethora of major events beginning with the retaliation of the Ukrainian Bolsheviks in Kyiv, thus establishing the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic(Ukraine SSR). This republic eventually partnered up with the Russian Federation to form the Soviet Union in 1922. Due to the Ukraine SSR's invaluable contributions to the smooth functioning of the Soviet Union by helping in the food and sustainable resource provision aspect, Soviet leader Nikita Krushev handed over the Crimean territory to the Ukraine SSR in 1954. While this move was strategically taken to further strengthen and unify the

¹ 'Russia-Ukraine Relations: A Timeline of the History Between Russia and Ukraine'. The Times of India, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/data/russia-ukraine-history>.

Soviet Union, it marked the beginning of a chain of events that would eventually result in great political tension years later. While relations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation seemed to be strong, they deteriorated rapidly after the dissolution of the USSR in 1991. Because of Ukraine's key role in the Soviet Union it received a large number of nuclear weapons. However, displaying integrity, the Ukrainian government agreed to sign the Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons treaty in 1994, an action that was not forced upon Russia who thus decided not to do the same².

Another key event in the long history of Russia and Ukraine that turned out to be a significant moment was the election of Viktor Yanukovich as the president of Ukraine in 2004. He was greatly backed by Russia's president Vladimir Putin. A decade later Yanukovich made a very controversial decision due to pressure from Russia, which suspended Ukraine's signing of the European Union Association Agreement³. This decision was scrutinized by many and spurred popular protests in Ukraine against corruption, abuse of power and human rights violations that were committed by the Ukrainian Government. Because these protests were greatly backed by the US as well as other European nations, Viktor's government was eventually overthrown and replaced by a pro-western interim government. This event severely affected Russia's control over the region and thus to assert its dominance once again, the Russian Government annexed Crimea in 2014⁴. The annexation of Crimea was severely looked down upon by all the members of the International Community causing political instability throughout and thus becoming the most important event in Russia and Ukraine's strained relationship. In immediate response to this unfavorable move by the Russian Federation, Nations from all over the world started imposing sanctions on Russian companies which luckily temporarily reduced further escalation of the conflict⁵. However, the tension between the two parties remained at a high for the next 8 years until it finally culminated into Russia's declaration of war over Ukraine.

The final decision taken by Russia to declare war is said to have been inspired by their distaste towards Ukraine's recent intentions of joining the European Union as well as NATO. They considered this a threat to their territory and thus to prevent NATO gaining easier access into Russia through neighboring territories. Such actions have also been

² Ibid. Pg, 2

³ 'Ukraine Protests after Yanukovich EU Deal Rejection'. BBC News, 30 Nov. 2013. www.bbc.com, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25162563>.

⁴ Fisher, Max. 'Everything You Need to Know about the 2014 Ukraine Crisis'. Vox, 3 Sept. 2014, <https://www.vox.com/2014/9/3/18088560/ukraine-everything-you-need-to-know>.

⁵ Ukraine Crisis | Ukrainian History [2013-2014] | Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ukraine-crisis>.

taken by Russia in the past in different conflicts such as in the delimitation or division of the Caspian Sea where the Russian Government disagreed to sign a treaty which classified the Caspian Sea as a sea but rather a lake. This reason behind this action was that if the Caspian was classified as a sea instead of a lake, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea(UNCLOS) would be applicable making it open to the international community⁶ and thus allowing international organizations such as NATO to have jurisdiction over it, making Russia vulnerable from another vantage point.

Since the declaration of war in February 2022, the situation has continued to worsen without any resolution in the foreseeable future. Reports suggest that approximately more than 13 million Ukrainians have fled from their homes since the beginning of the war with about 8 million of these being internally displaced and thus being officially classified as internal displaced persons. Apart from these 8 million the remaining 5 million are said to take refuge in multiple neighboring countries such as Poland⁷ and the ones that make up the Caucasus region. The fleeing of the Ukrainian residents to countries in the Caucasus region for refuge and support has, in turn, acted as an issue for the countries in the Caucasus as they require help and aid to be able to properly accommodate these refugees and setup camps where the refugees have an opportunity to reside temporarily until the war is over or till they find a means of sustaining themselves. For example, in February 2022 almost immediately after the start of the war, Georgia allocated \$315,000 to assist the Ukrainians who were deeply affected by the war, using the money to primarily purchase medical supplies⁸. This aid acts as an economic burden and hence methods to keep supporting refugees must be undertaken in a way that does not put as much pressure on the economy of the nations as it has on the Georgian economy. All the Ukrainian residents who have been forced to move from their homes require immediate assistance in terms of being able to get life on track. To do so, the international community must come together and collaborate to provide these citizens with not only monetary aid to get their lives back on track, but also mental health assistance for the civilians who have taken a deep psychological toll from the stress and burden of the war.

⁶ “The Caspian Sea Legal Status and Regime Problems.” *Chatham House*, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Russia%20and%20Eurasia/p0805caspiian.pdf>. Accessed 12 February 2023.

⁷ ‘How Many Ukrainian Refugees Are There and Where Have They Gone?’ BBC News, 4 July 2022. [www.bbc.com, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-60555472](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-60555472).

⁸ “Georgians Come to the Aid of Ukrainian Refugees | Eurasianet.” n.d. Eurasianet.org. <https://eurasianet.org/georgians-come-to-the-aid-of-ukrainian-refugees>.

Furthermore, this issue which needs an immediate and peaceful resolution needs to take into consideration how further harm can be prevented from being inflicted upon innocent civilians. The war has already witnessed a large number of civilian casualties on both sides. According to the reports released by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) as per February 2023, the conflict has resulted in approximately 7155 deaths with 438 of them being children, and another 11662 injured out of which 851 were children⁹. What strikes further concern among nations in the international community than these devastating numbers is that they are said to be underreported indicating that the extent of the issue is very vast and thus safety measures for Eastern European residents is something that must be immediately addressed. Because Ukraine cannot focus on both national defense and protecting its sovereignty while also simultaneously trying to provide humanitarian aid to its displaced residents, all other countries should provide further assistance to Ukraine to ensure not only the safety of the East European residents but also to prevent the collapse of the Ukrainian government.

Over the course of the past year numerous countries have already tried to aid Ukraine by supplying them with military as well as humanitarian aid to help it combat Russia's invasion. While the imposition of sanctions and trade restrictions on the Russian Federation have considerably increased the pressure faced by Russia, the end and complete peaceful resolution of the conflict is nowhere in sight which continues to threaten and pose danger for all the residents in Eastern Europe. Thus, considering the detrimental impact that the conflict has had on not only Eastern Europe but even the entire world, it is necessary and integral to bring this conflict to a close as soon as possible and help Ukraine resolve any issues that it may face in the process of doing so.

Definition Of Key Terms

Crime against humanity¹⁰

⁹ "Ukraine civilian war casualties 2023." *Statista*, 6 February 2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1293492/ukraine-war-casualties/> . Accessed 12 February 2023.

¹⁰ "Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect." *United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect*, <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/crimes-against-humanity.shtml>. Accessed 12 February 2023.

A deliberate act, typically as part of a systematic campaign, that causes human suffering or death on a large scale.

Delimitation¹¹

The word delimitation refers to the division or break up of something, which, in this case, is referring to the Caspian Sea whose classification as a sea was prevented by Russia to deny it from the UNCLOS being applicable to it.

Economic Sanctions¹²

Economic sanctions can be officially defined as the withdrawal of customary trade and financial relations for foreign and security policy purposes. Such economic sanctions often assume one of two types. These types are: (1) targeted and blocking transactions by and with particular individuals, groups and companies or business, or (2) comprehensive, which means that they are with regard to an entire country. Sanctions have a variety of forms all the way from travel bans to arms embargoes, foreign aid reductions, capital restraints and even trade restrictions or asset freezes.

Internally Displaced Person (IDP)¹³

Internally displaced people (IDPs) or Internally displaced persons are residents of a warzone that have not managed to cross a border to find safety. Unlike refugees, they are avoiding the oppression caused due to war on their soil itself. IDPs tend to stay within their own country and remain under the protection of their government, even if that government is the reason for their displacement. They are often located in areas where it is difficult to deliver humanitarian assistance from a third party viewpoint and as a result, these people are among the most vulnerable in the world and require aid.

Prisoner of War¹⁴

¹¹Cambridge Dictionary. "Delimitation." @CambridgeWords, 13 July 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/delimitation>

¹² 'What Are Economic Sanctions?' Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.cfr.org/background/what-are-economic-sanctions>.

¹³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Internally Displaced People." UNHCR, www.unhcr.org/internallydisplaced-people.html.

¹⁴ "Prisoner of war | international law | Britannica." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/prisoner-of-war> . Accessed 12 February 2023

Prisoners of war are people who are held captive against their will during the course of or after the conflict. They are often tortured and punished by the power that is holding them captive, and, hence, their actions often constitute war crimes. In the Caucasus, evidence suggests that prisoners of war primarily result from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Refugees¹⁵

Refugees are persons who are outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order and, as a result, require international protection. The refugee definition can be found in the 1951 Convention and regional refugee instruments, as well as UNHCR's Statute and is as follows:

“Someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”

Russification¹⁶

The term Russification refers to a type of cultural assimilation in which non-russians, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, abandon their culture and language and adopt the ideologies dictated by Russian culture as well as its language. This process of Russification took place in the 19th Century as the Russian Federation tried to forcefully make Ukrainian citizens adopt the Russian culture by repressing the local Ukrainian culture

Key Issues

Civilian casualties and threat to national security

The safety of the civilians in the Eastern European region has been heavily compromised over the last year as Ukraine and Russia continue to engage in military

¹⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “What Is a Refugee?” UNHCR, www.unhcr.org/what-is-a-refugee.html.

¹⁶ “Russification.” *Encyclopedia.com*, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/russification>. Accessed 12 February 2023.

warfare and the civilians unfortunately keep getting caught in the crossfire. Despite the fact that countries including both Russia and Ukraine have to obey the international humanitarian law that states that civilians should not be harmed in any conflict, neither party has been successful in doing so and the severe repercussions of the war has led to innocent blood being spilled on Ukrainian soil. Data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reveals that millions of civilians have been severely impacted by the conflict, with 18,817 casualties reported by 5 February 2023, including 7,155 fatalities and 11,662 injuries¹⁷. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) believes that the actual numbers are likely higher, as information from some conflict-affected areas has been slow to arrive and is yet to be verified. Some of these areas include Mariupol (Donetsk region), Iziium (Kharkiv region), and Popasna (Luhansk region), where reports suggest that many civilians have suffered casualties¹⁸. Such incidents are in violation of the international right to life as stated in Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and have created an unjust humanitarian crisis for innocent civilians. Furthermore, the conflict also poses other security risks, such as the damage inflicted on the Chernobyl nuclear plant in Ukraine, which was the site of the worst nuclear disaster in history. Following the Russian takeover of the plant, there is heightened concern among other nations about the potential for a repeat of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster¹⁹, which would have catastrophic consequences for most of Europe and Central Asia.

In addition to the direct harm caused by the conflict, the civilian population has also been affected by the wider humanitarian crisis that has resulted. Access to food, water, and healthcare has been restricted in many areas, leading to widespread suffering and even death. The situation has been further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a disproportionate impact on vulnerable populations, such as those affected by the conflict.

Refugee, Internally displaced persons(IDP's), and Humanitarian crisis

¹⁷ "Ukraine: civilian casualty update 6 February 2023." *OHCHR*, 6 February 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2023/02/ukraine-civilian-casualty-update-6-february-2023>. Accessed 12 February 2023.

¹⁸ Ukraine: Civilian Casualties as of 24:00 13 June 2022 [EN/RU] - Ukraine | ReliefWeb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-civilian-casualties-2400-13-june-2022-enru>.

¹⁹ "Chernobyl | Chernobyl Accident | Chernobyl Disaster." *World Nuclear Association*, <https://world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/chernobyl-accident.aspx>. Accessed 12 February 2023

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has resulted in one of the most severe refugee crises on record. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that in just the first week of the conflict, about a million people fled from Ukraine to the European Union (EU) for refuge. The rate of displacement has remained high, with 5.2 million refugees throughout Europe after four months into the conflict, making it the largest mass displacement in Europe since World War II²⁰. In response to the growing refugee population, the EU activated its Temporary Protection Directive for the first time in its history on March 3rd, 2022. This emergency protocol provides certain rights to refugees fleeing Ukraine that may not be granted to other migrants, such as the right to work, access social services, and travel within the bloc for at least a year (and potentially more). The EU had granted temporary protection to 3.2 million refugees by mid-June²¹. However, it is worth noting that central and eastern European countries, such as Poland and Czech Republic, are holding a disproportionately high number of refugees compared to western European countries. As the conflict continues, the EU faces questions on how to manage the cost of supporting the incoming refugees, since resources are limited and refugees put strain on the economy and living space of a country. As Antonio Vitorino, Director-General of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), states, "It is vital that displaced women and children are able to see the warning signs and seek help." Carly Owens, a protection specialist at FHI 360, adds, "In any crisis where large numbers of people are on the move, particularly large numbers of women and unaccompanied children traveling alone, predators will try to take advantage." The EU's response to the refugee crisis has been largely positive and well-planned, but concerns remain as refugee numbers continue to rise and the Russia-Ukraine conflict shows no resolution in sight.

Along with the refugee crisis, there are also about 8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine, making up nearly 20% of the country's population²². The UN estimates that an additional 13 million Ukrainians are located in the hardest hit areas and may be unable to safely move or access aid²³. "In the case of Ukraine, we are deeply concerned because the human sex trafficking rates were high in Eastern Europe prior to the war," warns Carly Owens. "The trafficking networks are already in place." Amnesty

²⁰ Rauhala, Emily, et al. 'Where Have Ukrainian Refugees Gone?' Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2022/ukraine-refugees-european-union/>.

²¹ Ibid.

²² 'Ukraine: Millions of Displaced Traumatized and Urgently Need Help, Say Experts'. OHCHR, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/05/ukraine-millions-displaced-traumatized-and-urgently-need-help-sayexperts>.

²³ Humanitarian Crisis in Ukraine Deteriorating at Alarming Speed, Briefers Tell Security Council, Calling for Attacks on Civilians to Stop | UN Press. <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14865.doc.htm>

International, a human rights-focused non-governmental organization, is bringing attention to human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law in the conflict, such as the unlawful killing and injury of civilians, destruction of infrastructure, and blockage of aid to civilians by the Russian military. For example, in April, an advisor to the mayor of Mariupol reported that Russian armed forces were preventing aid from reaching the city and hindering the formation of a planned "humanitarian corridor" through which civilians could escape the heavy fighting. Russian military actions such as attacks on hospitals and schools, the use of "surrender or starve" sieges on civilians²⁴, the employment of banned weapons such as cluster munitions, and strikes on populated areas using inaccurate weapons, may all be considered war crimes.²⁵

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) & European Union (EU)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) have adopted similar positions with regards to the conflict, following the lead of the United States. Ukraine, being a close ally of NATO, has received support from the organization in the form of humanitarian and non-lethal aid²⁶. In addition to this, several NATO members, such as the US, UK, Germany, and Canada, have also contributed military aid and assistance to Ukraine, with the US providing over \$26 billion in military aid as of June 2022²⁷. Lastly, The EU, which shares several member countries with NATO, also supports Ukraine, having granted it an EU candidate status in June 2020.

Republic of Belarus

The Republic of Belarus shares a border with both Ukraine and Russia and is one of the few countries, alongside North Korea, Syria, and Eritrea, that are openly supporting Russia in the conflict²⁸. The Republic of Belarus has been heavily involved in

²⁴ Ukraine Says Russia Is Blocking Aid to Mariupol, Civilians Still Trapped. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 01 Apr. 2022. www.rferl.org,

<https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-russia-blocking-mariupol-aid/31781075.html>.

²⁵ 'Latest News on Russia's War on Ukraine'. Amnesty International, 30 Mar. 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/03/latest-news-on-russias-war-on-ukraine/>.

²⁶ NATO. 'NATO's Response to Russia's Invasion of Ukraine'. NATO, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_192648.htm.

²⁷ 'Infographic: Where Military Aid to Ukraine Comes From'. Statista Infographics, <https://www.statista.com/chart/27278/military-aid-to-ukraine-by-country/>

²⁸ 'Why Is Belarus Supporting Russia and How Is It Involved in Ukraine?' The Independent, 30 June 2022, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/belarus-support-russia-why-ukraine-b2070413.html>.

the conflict as it has provided Russian soldiers with direct passage into Ukraine and initially welcomed 30,000 Russian soldiers for "military exercises."²⁹ This support is largely due to Belarus' reliance on Russia for economic support and to maintain its political stability.

Republic of India

India has maintained a neutral stance towards the crisis, despite being displeased with Russia's decision to continue taking part in warfare with Ukraine. Following through on its displeasure, India has abstained from voting against Russian aggression in the UN Security Council, General Assembly, and Human Rights Council and has not publicly named Russia as the cause of the conflict. India's neutral approach stems from its interests, which have prevented it from publicly criticizing Russia. The Indian government has, however, expressed its discontent by urging for respect for sovereignty, cessation of violence and hostilities, return to diplomacy, and reiterating that dialogue is the only solution for settling disputes.

Republic of Poland

Poland, a member of both NATO and the EU, has emerged as the main transit point for weapons and aid for Ukraine from the West and has also provided refuge to over 3.5 million Ukrainians³⁰. Furthermore, it is also working towards reducing its energy dependence on Russia and has received warnings from Russia about its support for Ukraine, but remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine.

Russian Federation

Russia lies at the heart of the conflict and was triggered by Ukraine's growing relationship with the West and its desire to join NATO. In February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine, leading to the worst war seen in Europe since World War II. Initially, Russia aimed to overthrow the government to prevent Ukraine from joining the West, but after several failed attempts to capture Kyiv, its focus shifted to south and east Ukraine. The president of the Russian Federation, Putin, aims to "demilitarize and de-Nazify" Ukraine

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ 'Ukrainian Refugees Arrive in Poland "in a State of Distress and Anxiety"'. UN News, 27 May 2022, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1119172>.

and secure its neutral status³¹, requiring a neutrality agreement and constitutional changes to prevent Ukraine from joining NATO. Because of these actions, Putin now faces pressure from the Russian public, military, and governing elites who do not support the war and its consequences³².

Ukraine

Ukraine is widely viewed as the victim of the conflict and is supported by the West. Despite the ongoing war, Ukraine has held out against the Russian invasion and seeks a "fair peace" that is acceptable to both parties, demanding a ceasefire and the withdrawal of all Russian troops from Ukrainian soil. Ukraine may be willing to compromise on not joining NATO if it receives guarantees of security from NATO members, but Russia's views on this proposal remain unclear³³.

United States of America

The United States is a significant player in the conflict and serves as a global hegemon. The US has been instrumental in supporting Ukraine in the war, influencing the EU and other allies to do the same. In the beginning of the war, the US took a cautious approach due to the negative consequences of its previous interventions, such as in Afghanistan, but eventually they decided to provide Ukraine with military aid and imposed sanctions on prominent Russian figures, including Putin's family thus making its intentions of resolving this crisis by taking Ukraines side clear. The US continues to play a vital role in the Russia-Ukraine conflict even almost a year after the start of the conflict³⁴.

Development of Issue³⁵

³¹ 'Why Has Russia Invaded Ukraine and What Does Putin Want?' BBC News, 9 May 2022. [www.bbc.com, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56720589](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56720589).

³² 'What Does Russia Want?' Peacefield, 9 June 2022, <https://newsletters.theatlantic.com/peacefield/62a249a20a81280021a6dbf8/russia-ukraine-war-outcome-putin-goal/>

³³ Ellyatt, Holly. 'A Guide to What Russia and Ukraine Want from Talks — and Where the Red Lines Are'. CNBC, <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/03/15/russia-and-ukraine-talks-a-guide-to-the-demands-and-the-red-lines.html>.

³⁴ Wright, Robin. 'Ukraine Is Now America's War, Too'. The New Yorker, 1 May 2022. [www.newyorker.com, https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/ukraine-is-now-americas-war-too](https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/ukraine-is-now-americas-war-too).

³⁵ 100 Days of War in Ukraine: A Timeline. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ukraine-russia-war-timeline-100-days/>.

| Date | Description of event |
|---------------------|--|
| 21 March 2014 | Crimea is officially annexed by Russia causing great shock and pushback in the international community |
| 17 September 2018 | The Russia-Ukraine friendship treaty that was signed on 31 May 1997 was terminated by President Poroshenko |
| 14 September 2020 | Ukraines new national security strategy is approved including their desire to form a partnership with NATO |
| 10 November 2021 | The US government surveillance catches unusual movement of Russian troops near the Ukrainian border |
| 17 December 2021 | Putin sets his foot down and prohibits Ukraines decision to join NATO forever, a decision which Ukraine rejects |
| 19 January 2022 | The US government decides to aid Ukraine by providing them with \$200 million for security purposes |
| 24 January 2022 | Due to suspicions raised by the previously captured movement of troops, the NATO decides to put its troops on standby |
| 10 February 2022 | In preparation for the beginning of the war, Russia and Belarus initiate their 10 day military maneuvers to get into favorable positions to begin from. Thus beginning the escalation of the conflict |
| 21 February 2022 | Putin's televised speech elicited the first round of economic sanctions from NATO countries the following day almost unofficially starting the war |
| 24 February 2022 | Announcement by Russia to launch a "special military operation" in eastern Ukraine. Within minutes, explosions were reported in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, and the Donbas. Russian troops reported to have landed in Mariupol and Odessa, and launched cruise and ballistic missiles at airfields, military headquarters, and military depots in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Dnipro |
| 25-27 February 2022 | Ukraine retaliates and resists the forces deployed by the Russian Federation. The president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky reaches out to the member states of the United Nations for help |

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|--------------------|--|
| 25 March 2022 | Russian focus changes to “fully liberating” the Donbas region. Troops are withdrawn from other locations and repositioned. |
| 1 April 2022 | Bucha Massacre: Evidence of large-scale atrocities is found. Russian troops are being accused of killing a large number of civilians as Ukrainian officials discover several mass graves filled with corpses. The international community is distraught and Putin is called a “war criminal” by Joe Biden. |
| 13 April 2022 | The US provides even further military assistance to Ukraine specifically in order to mitigate the urgent crisis in the Donbas region |
| 1-16 May 2022 | Ukrainians retaliate by launching a counteroffensive in Kharkiv, successfully pushing back the Russian troops making them retreat slightly into their own territory |
| 23 June 2022 | EU grants Ukraine EU candidate status |
| 31 August 2022 | All gas exports into European countries are halted which results in an instantaneous price surge. |
| 10 September 2022 | President Zelensky raises the Ukrainian flag in the war-scarred city of Iziom which marks a great victory for the Ukrainians |
| 30 September 2022 | Russia officially annexes Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhya. Putin proclaims that these annexed regions will stay a part of Russia “forever”. |
| 11 November 2022 | Ukrainian troops pour into Kherson thus liberating it ³⁶ |
| 9 February 2023 | President Zelensky attends his First European Council summit since the outbreak of the war in February 2022. ³⁷ |
| 12 February 2023 - | Ukraine Zaporizhzhia reports multiple Russian missile |

³⁶ Askew, Joshua. “Ukraine war: A month-by-month timeline of the conflict.” *Euronews*, 30 January 2023, <https://www.euronews.com/2023/01/30/ukraine-war-a-month-by-month-timeline-of-the-conflict-in-2022>. Accessed 12 February 2023.

³⁷ Michel, Charles. “Special European Council, 9 February 2023.” *Consilium.europa.eu*, 10 February 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european-council/2023/02/09/>. Accessed 12 February 2023.

current attacks³⁸

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- 27 MARCH 2014 (A/RES/68/262)³⁹

The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 68/262 was adopted on 27th March 2014 with the support of over 100 United Nations member states further emphasizing upon the UN's commitment to ensuring territorial sovereignty towards Ukraine within its internationally recognised and acknowledged borders. The adoption of this resolution also helped highlight the invalidity of the 2014 Crimean Referendum regarding the political status of Crimea after its annexation by the Russian Federation. The resolution itself was titled as “Territorial Integrity of Ukraine”.
- 2 MARCH 2022 (ES-11/1)⁴⁰

United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES11/1 is a resolution that was adopted at its eleventh emergency special session on March 2, 2022. It is one that condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine and states that the Russian Federation needs to tell the Russian soldiers to withdraw completely and that it reversed its decision to recognize the self-proclaimed People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk. This resolution also acknowledged and recognized Belarus' participation in the illegal use of force against Ukraine. The resolution was sponsored by 96 nations and was approved with 141 votes in favor, 5 votes against, and 35 abstentions.
- 24 MARCH 2022 (ES-11/2)⁴¹

General Assembly of the United Nations Resolution ES11/2 is the second resolution that was passed and employed in the eleventh emergency extraordinary session. It was approved on March 24, 2022, after Resolution ES-11/1, which was

³⁸ “Russia-Ukraine war: List of key events, day 354.” *Al Jazeera*, 12 February 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/12/russia-ukraine-war-list-of-key-events-day-354>. Accessed 12 February 2023.

³⁹ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/455/17/PDF/N1345517.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴⁰ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/N22/272/27/PDF/N2227227.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴¹ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/301/67/PDF/N2230167.pdf?OpenElement>

adopted on March 2, 2022. The main purpose of the resolution was to denounce, deplore, and express deep concern about assaults on civilian populations and infrastructure.

- 7 APRIL 2022 (ES-11/3)⁴²

United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES11/3 is a resolution passed by the at its eleventh emergency extraordinary session on April 7, 2022. The resolution, which was passed with 93 votes in favor, 24 against, and 58 abstentions, suspended Russia's membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council due to "grave concern at the ongoing human rights and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine ... including gross and systematic violations and abuses of human rights" committed by Russia

- 12 OCTOBER 2022 (ES-11/4)⁴³

General Assembly of the United Nations Resolution ES-11/4 is the fourth resolution passed in the emergency extraordinary sessions. Resolution ES11/4 affirms that Russia's so-called referendums in the oblasts of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhya, as well as the following annexation attempt, are unconstitutional and unlawful under international law. Due to the classification of the act as unlawful, the resolution also urges all countries not to acknowledge these lands as part of Russia. The resolution was carried out with a landslide vote of 143 in favor, 5 opposed, and 35 abstentions. This 4th resolution that ended up passing received more votes to condemn Russia's actions than the inaugural resolution which first acknowledged and requested the Russian Government to withdraw its troops from the sovereign territory of Ukraine.

- 27 FEBRUARY 2022 (S/RES/2623)⁴⁴

The adoption of this resolution by the Security Council requested an emergency meeting to be held whose official title would be the "emergency special session" (ESS) to review and suggest collaborative action by member states in response to the newly alarming situation in Ukraine. This was the first time in four decades that the Security Council adopted a "Uniting for Peace" resolution, in which the Council approaches the General Assembly for the resolution of an issue that poses a severe threat to international peace, because its permanent members lack unanimity. With 11 votes in favor of the resolution, one against (Russia), and three

⁴² <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/312/47/PDF/N2231247.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴³ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/630/66/PDF/N2263066.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴⁴ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/271/32/PDF/N2227132.pdf?OpenElement>

abstentions (China, India, and the UAE), the case was passed on to the General Assembly

- Russian–Ukrainian Friendship Treaty⁴⁵

The Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation was signed in 1997. It established the foundations for strategic partnership between the countries and the inviolability of their existing borders. The treaty prevented either country from declaring war and invading the other. In September 2018, Ukraine announced its decision not to renew the agreement, which led to its expiration in March 2019. This permitted the Russian invasion in 2022.

Other attempts to resolve the Issue

In other attempts to resolve this issue, a number of nations have supplied Ukraine with varying amounts of military aid, with the United States being the top contributor. This has been in the form of personnel, artillery (M114 155mm howitzers), anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons (Shoulder-fired MANPAD systems, NLAWs, Harpoon anti-ship missiles), armored vehicles (Mastiff armored vehicles, mobility vehicles), attack drones, etc. These are helping Ukraine hold their ground against the Russian invasion, but the supply of military aid is also fuelling the war in the region and thus leading to more casualties⁴⁶.

Lastly, Ukraine has also received humanitarian aid from NATO, the EU, and other countries in the form of meals and basic supply packages for refugees, IDPs, and other affected citizens. This is an important short term solution, but such aid must be adequately supplied to all distressed areas.

Possible Solutions

The question of the Russia-Ukraine conflict has not yet been adequately addressed, and every passing day, the crisis worsens. The safety of the residents in Eastern Europe continues to be a question of great concern as countries across the globe try to collaborate across borders to try and alleviate this grave issue. Such a large-scale

⁴⁵ <https://treaties.un.org/Pages/showDetails.aspx?objid=08000002803e6fae&clang=en>

⁴⁶ Duggal, Hanna. What Weapons Has Ukraine Received from the US and Allies? <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/15/infographic-what-weapons-has-ukraine-received-from-the-us-and-al>.

crisis requires effective mitigation measures that countries must settle upon collectively to resolve this issue once and for all.

To start with, forming a platform for bilateral dialogue and communication between the two nations, monitored or overseen by the US, could play a vital role in mitigating the conflict and avoiding its recurrence. Additionally, the signing of a new treaty, similar to the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Ukraine and Russia, that is acceptable to all parties, is imperative to prevent future invasions. Lifting the economic sanctions by coming to a mutually agreed upon consensus between the 2 nations with the US as a mediator would help in taking significant strides towards the resolution of the conflict. Moreover, this would be beneficial for the global economy, as the trade restrictions with Russia have led to a sharp increase in energy prices. In the interim, it is crucial to implement a UN-brokered ceasefire to minimize casualties on both sides while peace negotiations take place.

Another key factor is controlling the number of troops that foreign nations can have in Ukraine, based on their strength and influence, to prevent dependence on their presence and a power vacuum upon their departure. This would align with the Russian government's request for the removal of foreign troops from its borders. If military support is required, the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces (UNPKF) could be deployed instead.

Furthermore, collaboration with organizations like Doctors without Borders⁴⁷ should be encouraged to provide the refugee camps and Internally displaced people with healthcare facilities. The refugee camps could also make use of a type of portable housing which can easily be deployed in the span of hours and are fully equipped for a person to live in. Additionally, the governments should also set up rehabilitation camps that will not only provide therapy for the people who face PTSD but also have educational facilities to educate the young and even the illiterate adults to help them get employment opportunities. Alongside these educational facilities, the government could also establish vocational training workshops for skill building.

The numerous solutions provided above must only be used as stepping stones or as foundation for ones that are even more extensive and elaborate because an agenda of such high complexity requires and forces member states to formulate unique methods of

⁴⁷ Doctors Without Borders. "Home | Doctors without Borders - USA." Doctors Without Borders.org, 17 May 2019, www.doctorswithoutborders.org/.

mitigation. However, through effective international collaboration and innovative solutions, the members of the 3rd General Assembly can definitely come up with holistic resolutions which address the agenda about the safety of East European residents and how it can be achieved in order to restore international peace and security.

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