



ODUMUNC 2025 Issue Brief Security Council



The Situation in Ukraine

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Introduction: The Unending War

On 24 February 2022 the Russian Federation launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The Russia-Ukraine war started eight years before, in 2014, when Russian-sponsored troops invaded eastern Ukrainian territory and formally *annexed* (permanently claimed as part of Russia) the Ukrainian province of Crimea.

The full-scale attack on all of Ukraine in 2022 elevated the war to a new level of intensity. The attack, justified by Russian leaders on historical and spiritual motives, challenges the role of the United Nations opposing attacks on its Member

States, and the doctrine of the sanctity of borders, as well as humanitarian priorities.

The worst conflict in Europe since the wars of the former Yugoslavia in 1990-99, the invasion of Ukraine threatens the stability of the entire region. As the war continues to rage, millions have become refugees, millions more are homeless. According to U.S. assessments, Russian casualties in the war so far are roughly 615,000. Roughly 115,000 Russians have been killed and 500,000 wounded. Ukrainian officials have zealously guarded their casualty figures, even from the Americans, but a U.S. official estimated that Ukraine had suffered roughly one-half of Russia's casualties, more than 57,500 killed and 250,000 wounded.¹

The war is a major test for the credibility of the United Nations system. Can the UN respond effectively to the war, helping to bring it to an end? Or can only help at the margins, managing the humanitarian effects of the war with assistance to its victims?

The problem is especially serious for the UN Security Council. Russia is one of five Permanent Members of the Security Council (the P5), each with veto power over any resolution it finds objectionable. Russia can prevent the Security Council from taking any strong or even strongly worded resolution. Russia also can rely on Security Council members like China, which tends to abstain when Russia is criticized, and sometimes Russia

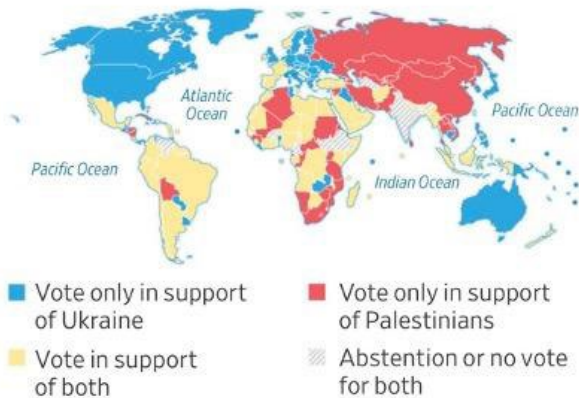
¹ Eric Schmitt, 'September Was Deadly Month for Russian Troops in Ukraine, U.S. Says', *New York Times*, 10 October 2024,

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/10/us/politics/russia-casualties-ukraine-war.html>

is supported by Security Council member states from the Non- Aligned Movement.

Ukraine and Gaza: Wars that Divide the World

Geopolitical tensions are evident in the votes on two U.N. resolutions, the first on the territorial integrity of Ukraine against Russia, the second on Israel's humanitarian obligations while fighting in Gaza.



Source: Yaroslav Trofimov, 'Does the West have a double standard for Ukraine and Gaza?' *Wall Street Journal*, 1 December 2023

So far UN action has focused on the General Assembly, where there is no veto. The Assembly has been active throughout the war, taking positions and urging peaceful end of the conflict. But past action does equal effectiveness. General Assembly resolutions make clear the feelings of majorities of UN Member States. But the General Assembly only can request action of the Member States, including Russia. General Assembly resolutions do not create binding international law. Only Security Council resolutions can do that.

The resolutions passed in the General Assembly have been sharply critical of the war. But the

General Assembly only can request the sovereign Member States to act. It cannot force them. The visible action has come instead from UN specialized agencies like the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Food Program (WFP) dealing with some of the humanitarian consequences of the war.

Can the UN push the fighting parties toward an enduring peace? Or is its most effective role on the periphery, providing humanitarian assistance to the injured and displaced?

The task before the Security Council at ODUMUNC 48 will require imagination and maybe difficult compromises with important principles. Should the Security Council urge peaceful resolution of the conflict based on existing borders, the front-line separating Russia and Ukraine? Should it support Ukrainian demands for restitution of all its territory? Or should the United Nations stay out of the conflict, and allow Russia and Ukraine to fight, probably leading to a victory for the Russian Federation?

Background

The conflict between Ukraine and Russia can be traced back before the Soviet era. From March 1917 through November of 1921 the Ukrainian War of Independence, also known as the Ukrainian-Soviet War, waged on between the Ukrainian People's Army and the Soviet Red Army. By 1921 most of Ukraine was under control of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, making it one of several countries to become part of the Soviet Union.² Ukraine would eventually gain independence on 24 August 1991 following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The time period saw Ukraine undergo many reforms including changes to their constitution and a new government in 2014

² 'Russo-Ukrainian War,' Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russo-Ukrainian_War



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following a series of mass demonstrations, the Revolution of Dignity.³

Annexation of Crimea and War in Donbas: In February of 2014 Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine. This move came shortly after former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was ousted by the mass demonstrations that had been occurring in Ukraine. Yanukovich, who was a Russian-leaning president, had many supporters and following his removal from office many pro-Russian protests broke out in territories such as Crimea, Donetsk, Luhans, Kharkiv, and Odessa.⁴ The Russian Federation saw this as the perfect opportunity to Annex Crimea.

By March 2014 Russian backed separatists (many of which were Russian Veterans) stormed the Government buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk, declaring them as the Donetsk Republic (DPR) and Luhansk Republic (LPR).⁵ In April 2014 Ukraine launched a counter offensive into these territories called the “Anti-Terrorist Operation” (ATO). That same month Igor Girkin, a Russian Citizen, led a Commando Unit into Donetsk Oblast and seized Sloviansk, sparking the War in Donbas.

By August 2014 Ukraine had successfully reclaimed much of the territory taken by the separatist and was close to regaining control of the Russian-Ukrainian Border. Fearing defeat, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered troops, tanks, and artillery to be covertly brought into Donbas. In September 2014 the Minsk Protocol (a ceasefire agreement) was signed by Ukraine, Russia, the DPR, and the LPR.⁶ Within a couple of months firefights had broken out, but the ceasefire generally held.

Heavy fighting resumed in the region in January of 2015 which resulted in Russian backed separatists taking control of the Donetsk airport. Although a new ceasefire agreement was made on 12 February 2015, the separatists continued to launch their offensive against the city of Debaltseve and eventually forced Ukrainian forces to withdraw. By mid 2015 the war had come to a standstill. Both sides had fortified their position and although a few skirmishes occurred the frontline did not change, leading to static trench warfare.

In 2017 an estimated 30,000 people (in combat gear) and numerous military convoys from Russia were documented crossing the border.⁷ By 2019 all parties involved had agreed to make a roadmap to end the War, however it remained unresolved. The Ukrainian Military saw a surge in casualties in 2021 as Russian Forces began to mass around the Russian-Ukrainian Border. On 21 February 2022 Russia Formally Recognized the DPR and LPR as independent states and began sending troops to those territories. Three days later on 24 February 2024 Russian forces surged across the border and began a full scale invasion of Ukraine. It is estimated that 4,647 Ukrainian forces and 6,500 Russian backed forces were killed during the War in Donbas and prior to the full scale invasion of Ukraine.⁸

Full Scale Invasion of Ukraine: On 24 February 2022 Russian forces began a full scale invasion of Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that this was a “special military operation” with the intent to “demilitarize and denazify” Ukraine, not to occupy the country.⁹ The Russian Invasion has been condemned internationally and led to a series of new sanctions against Russia as well as an increase in existing sanctions. On paper it appeared that

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.



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Russian forces would sweep through the country in a matter of days, instead the Ukrainians continued to fight, leading to fierce resistance.

Russian Setbacks- Northern Ukraine

Campaign: On the same day as their initial invasion the Russian Military began to launch strikes against Kyiv in hopes to quickly capture the capital and the country. Russian Airborne forces launched an assault on Antonov Airport and Vasylykiv (close to Vasylykiv airbase) in order to capture the two strategic airfields.¹⁰ These attacks quickly failed due to poor logistics, morale, and better fighting ability of the Ukrainian Military. As Russian forces continued to advance on Kyiv, the Ukrainian military set up an ambush of Russian Convoys and successfully destroyed three lead vehicles and all the bridges. This stalled the advance of an estimated 70,000 troops and 7,000 vehicles advancing from Belarus.¹¹

By 7 April 2022, the Russians forward forces (known as a probative spearhead) that had taken position along the Dnieper River was forced to pull back. It is believed that these forces were supposed to surround Kyiv from the Northeast and East.¹² The continued delay of convey forces heading through Belarus led to the Russian Offensive to stall. By mid-April of 2022 Russian Military forces abandon their plan to Capture Kyiv.

2022 Kherson Counteroffensive: Despite their setbacks with the Northern Offensive, the Russian Southern Offensive was a large success. In the first few days of the full invasion of Ukraine, Russian forces successfully captured the cities of Multipool and Kherson, forcing Ukrainian forces back to the city of Mykoliav. Russian forces continued to advance, taking the

port city of Odessa and the city of Enerhodar along with the adjacent Nuclear Power plant-Zaporizhzhya. By 2 March 2022 Russian Forces began to occupy much of the Kherson Oblast.¹³

By 11 March the Russian advance had begun to stall. On 29 August 2022 the Ukrainian Military launched the Kherson counteroffensive (simultaneously with the eastern counteroffensive). By 9 October Ukrainian forces had reclaimed 1,170 square kilometers of land pushing the Russian Offensive back.¹⁴ With mounting losses the Russian Military ordered the withdrawal of forces from Kherson on November 9th. The city of Kherson was then liberated on 11 November 2022 ending the Kherson Counteroffensive.

2022 Kharkiv Counteroffensive (eastern counteroffensive): On 6 September 2022 the Ukrainian Military launched the Kharkiv Counteroffensive, which is also called the eastern counteroffensive, with hopes to break through Russian lines.¹⁵ The Russian forces expected the counteroffensive to come from the south and were surprised when the attack came from the east. By 9 September Ukrainian forces had broken through the Russian lines and had advanced within 44 kilometers of the Russians main logistics base located in Izium. Military analysts say that Ukrainian forces were able to reclaim 2,500 square kilometers in a single attack, making it one of the most “stunning routes” in modern day history.¹⁶

By 11 September 2022 Russian forces withdrew from almost all of the Kharkiv Oblast allowing for Ukrainian forces to reclaim most of the territory. While Russian forces were pulling out, Russia launched a missile strike on Ukrainian infrastructure in the Kharkiv Oblast leaving the

¹⁰ “Northern Ukraine Campaign,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Ukraine_campaign

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ “Russo-Ukrainian War,” Wikipedia, op.cit.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.



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cities of Poltava, Sumy, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, and some of Odessa without electricity.¹⁷ By 13 September, Ukrainian forces had claimed all of the Kharkiv Oblast west of the Oskil River.

The second phase of the offensive began on 13 September when Ukrainian forces began to cross the Oskil River.¹⁸ The target of this second phase was to reclaim the city of Lyman. Many firefights broke out in the neighboring areas but finally on 1 October 2022 Ukrainian forces were seen at the entrance to Lymun. By the end of the day Ukrainian forces had killed around 1,500 Russian soldiers and captured another 5,000. The Kharkiv counteroffensive ended following the liberation of Lyman. In total Ukrainian forces had recaptured 12,000 square kilometers of territory in just a month.¹⁹

2023 Ukrainian counteroffensive: During June 2023 the Ukrainian Military launched another counteroffensive campaign against the Russians. The Ukrainian counteroffensive consisted of three fronts: the southern front, the eastern front, and the Dnieper Front. The Southern front was led by Ukrainian General Oleksandr Tarnavskiy and was launched in the Southern Part of Zaporizhzhya.²⁰ The front consisted of two targets; west towards the city of Melitopol and east towards Berdyansk which is located on the coast of the Azov Sea. On 8 June 2023 Ukraine launched an offensive against the city of Orikhiv but suffered heavy losses due to defensive action taken by the Russians.

Ukraine continued to push their offensive and by 27 July 2023 Ukraine had managed to breach some of the Russian defense located around Robotyne.²¹ On September 23rd the ISW

determined that Ukraine had managed to push out all Russian troops that were located between Robotyne and Novoprokopivka, allowing the Ukrainian forces to dig deeper into the Russian lines. By 19 October it was being reported that Ukrainian forces had managed to push around 1.5 km into the Russian lines that were defending Robotyne.²²

On 7 June 2023 the eastern attack of the Southern Front began to take form. Ukrainian forces began to storm the Russian outpost located at Neskuchny, and were able to capture the village on 11 June, as well as the Village of Makarivka. Ukraine continued to push east and fighting began around the village of Staromairoske commenced on 16 July 2023. Ukraine successfully captured the village on 26 July 2023, which allowed their forces to attack the Russian stronghold located at the village of Urozhaine. Ukrainian and Russian forces began to battle it out, but by 15 August Russian forces lost control of the Village and began to retreat.²³

The village of Urozhaine was officially liberated on 16 August 2023. Russian forces continued to fall back as Ukraine pushed the offensive and broke through Russian lines some 11km from Urozhaine and pushed towards the city of Novodonesteke. Ukrainian forces began crossing the Shaitanka river on September 9th and continued to push towards Mykliske and Novofedorivka.

Fighting on the eastern front primarily took place in the Donetsk oblast. Ukrainian forces had slowly begun to advance on the city of Klischiivka and were engaged in heavy fighting with Russian forces throughout the months of July and August. In September of 2023

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ "2023 Ukrainian Counteroffensive," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2023_Ukrainian_counteroffensive

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

Ukrainian forces launched strikes against neighboring villages and recaptured the village of Andriivka on 14 September. Three days later Ukrainian forces entered the city of Klischiivka and cleared the city of Russian Forces. Ukraine continued its offensive well into October, however the advance began to stall due to Ukraine struggling to get supplies to the front.²⁴

On the Dnieper front Ukrainian forces struggled to advance on Russian forces due to the destruction of the Kakhova Dam on 6 June.

Ukraine began to use small boats to move their forces upstream and launched several strikes against Russian forces along the river as well as strikes to clear Russian artillery. Russian forces were able to hold back the advance, limiting the advance to somewhere between 3-8 km in total.²⁵ By November of 2023 all three fronts on the Ukrainian offensive had stalled leading to only 370 kilometers squared to be recaptured. Despite their best efforts many experts have called this counteroffensive yet another failed campaign for Ukraine.²⁶

Current Situation

Missile and air strikes against infrastructure have become the dominant strategy leading into July of 2024. Both Russia and Ukraine have launched a series of strikes against targets of key value. Most recently the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has permitted Ukraine to use NATO weapons in strikes against targets located in Russia in June of 2024.²⁷ This decision has led to an increase in tension and Russian President Vladimir Putin claiming that

these strikes constitute a potential nuclear response from Russia.

Since the summer of 2024, though, the war entered a new phase. Russia lowered its tactical goals, no longer trying to take the entire country. Instead, it concentrated on small gains in the Eastern Donbas, a World War One style campaign for a few yards at a time. Over the course of 2024, this campaign had results. At great human cost, Russia has advanced into Ukraine, and Ukraine has lost territory. In this battle of trench warfare, Ukraine's smaller military resources, especially its scarce manpower, take a gradual toll, making it harder for Ukraine to hold territory.²⁸

Russian territorial conquests in Ukraine since 31 May 2024



²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ "Russo-Ukrainian War," Wikipedia, op.cit.

²⁸ Constant Méheut and Josh Holder, 'Russia's Swift March Forward in Ukraine's East', *New York Times*, 31 October 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/10/31/world/europe/russia-gains-ukraine-maps.html>



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Source: Constant Méheut and Josh Holder, 'Russia's Swift March Forward in Ukraine's East', *New York Times*, 31 October 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/10/31/world/europe/russia-gains-ukraine-maps.html>

Russia's advances are a striking change from the situation a year before, when the front lines were mostly static, with both sides launching ambitious offensives that largely failed. But the stalemate of 2023 changed as Russia's summer and autumn 2024 attacks gradually weakened the Ukrainian army to the point where its troops are so stretched that they can no longer hold some of their positions.

In addition to the continuation of missile strikes in cities such as Kyiv, Russia still holds parts of the four territories that they have claimed to annex in September of 2022. These four territories are the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts, which have all become the sites of major campaigns during the Ukrainian counter offensives of 2022 and 2023.²⁹ While the Ukrainian Military still appears to be holding its own, many NATO nations are concerned with how much longer they can hold out in the face of failing infrastructure and rising casualties.

Ukraine continues to suffer from a large-scale refugee crisis due to the evacuation of many key cities following the Russian invasion in February of 2022. As of 15 July 2024, the United Nations Refugee agency has recorded that a record 6,579,700 refugees have fled from Ukraine since February of 2022.³⁰ This crisis is called the Ukrainian Refugee Crisis and is the largest refugee crisis in the 21st Century. With the war still raging on, little has been done in order to rebuild parts of Ukraine, supply large

scale humanitarian aid, and effectively bring the war to a ceasefire.

Role of the United Nations

Even before the Russian invasion in 2022, Western governments raised the dangers of war in the UN Security Council. The Ukraine invasion has been debated in the Security on a near-daily basis ever since. But the Security Council has been paralyzed by the P5 veto, unable to act, leading to painful debates over its role and relevance.³¹

The P5 veto guarantees that the Security Council cannot be effective on this issue. With the veto designed to protect great power interests, the Security Council is reduced to a literal talk shop. There is a good reason for this. The *UN Charter* was drafted in 1945 to ensure great powers would not quit the UN when votes went against them. This was exactly what happened in the 1930s, when Germany, Italy and Japan quit the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations, and the United States refused to join, leaving the League unable to prevent World War Two.

The veto means great powers have no institutional reason to quit; they can protect themselves. But it also limits the usefulness of the Security Council. Unable to act there, Ukraine's supporters repeatedly took their demand to the UN General Assembly. With no veto there, resolutions critical of Russia pass, but the General Assembly is divided, and its resolutions have much less weight. Restoring the effectiveness of the Security Council would be a major accomplishment for ODUMUNC 48.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation," UNHCR Data Portal, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

³¹ 'Security Council inaction on Ukraine prompts reform questions', ABC, 26 April 2022, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/security-councils-inaction-ukraine-prompts-questions-reform/story?id=84222703>



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Is it possible? Since the start of the Russian invasion in February of 2022, many countries throughout the world have condemned Russia's actions and called for a ceasefire. Following the annexation of multiple territories in Ukraine, the United Nations called an emergency meeting and passed resolution ES-11/4 which ruled that the Russian annexation of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts is illegal and is invalid under law.³² In addition the United Nations passed resolution ES-11/3 on 7 April 2022 which banned Russia from the Human Rights Council following concerns that Russia had violated numerous Human Rights during their invasion of Ukraine.³³

More recently the United Nation has focused on creating a ceasefire agreement to end the war in Ukraine. On 23 February 2023 the United Nations Eleventh Emergency Special Session passed another resolution demanding that Russia immediately withdraws from Ukraine and ceases hostilities.³⁴ Although the resolution passed with an overwhelming majority (141 for, 7 against, 32 abstaining) Russia has continued to wage its war in Ukraine.³⁵ The United Nations has yet to pass another ceasefire legislation in 2024, however it continues to supply humanitarian aid to those who have suffered due to the war.

The most recent General Assembly Resolution came on 11 July 2024, demanding Russian return control over territory to Ukraine. The resolution was adopted by a recorded vote of 99 in favor to 9 against, with 60 abstentions. The vote might seem overwhelming, but the UN likes to work on consensus, the large number of

abstentions is revealing. Countries voting against were Belarus, Burundi, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Mali, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syria.³⁶ The resolution, 'Safety and security of nuclear facilities of Ukraine, including the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant' (document A/78/L.90) also demanded that the Russian Federation withdraw its military and other unauthorized personnel from the civilian nuclear power plant.³⁷

Issues to Consider

Annexed Territories: Shortly after the start of the invasion Russia annexed four territories, Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhya. While the UN has passed resolution ES-11/4 stating that the Russian annexation of those territories was illegal and invalid, Russia still has control of parts of those oblasts and has not rescinded their annexation. A major thing to consider is what should happen to these territories if a ceasefire is agreed upon between Russia and Ukraine. Ukraine will want all of the territory to be returned to them, while Russia will want to hold onto the territory they have captured. Is there middle ground on this issue, or is it all black and white?

Ceasefire: Since the start of the war, two resolutions have been passed which demanded that Russia withdraw all forces immediately from Ukraine. Despite these demands Russia has continued to press its advance in Ukraine and

³² "International Sanctions during the Russian Invasion of Ukraine," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_sanctions_during_the_Russian_invasion_of_Ukraine

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ "The United Nations in Ukraine in Ukraine," United Nations, <https://ukraine.un.org/en/about/about-the-un>

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ 'UN approves resolution calling for Russia to leave Ukraine', *Associated Press*, 23 February 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-politics-china-united-nations-6965d19c953c2f6e45f483c1dfe04a7f>

³⁷ 'General Assembly Adopts Resolution Demanding Russian Federation Immediately Return Full Control of Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant to Ukrainian Authorities', *UN News*, 11 July 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/ga12614.doc.htm>

still maintains a strong foothold in parts of the country. When it comes to passing a ceasefire in order to end the war in Ukraine, it is important to consider how the ceasefire will be enforced. Remember that UN Peacekeeping troops cannot be deployed without all of the P5 agreeing, making it unlikely that peacekeepers may be used to enforce a ceasefire.

Economic Sanctions: Following the invasion of Ukraine, as well as the annexation of several territories, many economic sanctions were brought against Russia during the first year of the war. Many of these sanctions were posed by individual countries (like the United States), and regional unions such as the European Union.

Major Russian banks were cut off from SWIFT, making it almost impossible for them to make quick online transactions. In addition, many countries froze the assets of Russian central banks, which amounted to 1 trillion dollars in assets frozen by March 2022.³⁸ On top of all of this, boycotts against Russian oil were instituted, causing major losses to the Russian economy, as well as a sharp increase in the cost of oil across Europe and the United States.

When looking at economic sanctions, a potential option would be to increase the severity of the sanctions, however the sanctions already in place have done little to slow the Russian invasion. Perhaps sanctions that are posed against both Ukraine and Russia if either side refuses to negotiate in a ceasefire talk would be more effective.

Humanitarian Crisis: While an exact number is hard to come by based on the lack of accurate information coming out of the warzone, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians face a growing humanitarian crisis.³⁹ With much of

Ukraine's infrastructure around the front lines being completely devastated by fighting; lack of freshwater, electricity, and availability of food is a normal way of life for thousands who haven't been displaced by the war.⁴⁰

The United Nations has continued to try and mitigate the humanitarian crisis by supplying aid to those in need, however a plan for rebuilding much of Ukraine infrastructure after the war has not been set in stone. On top of all this Russia has been accused of violating human rights during the war, using weapons that violate the Geneva convention, raping and killing unarmed civilians, and failing to treat civilians who remain in territory they captured properly.

Refugee Crisis: While thousands of Ukrainians still live in these war-torn areas, 6,579,700 Ukrainians have fled the nation, creating the largest refugee crisis the 21st century has seen.⁴¹ With the focus being primarily on a ceasefire, the United Nations has done little in the way of figuring out how to fully deal with this crisis. While many Nations have helped take in these refugees, there appears to be no plan on how to bring all these refugees back to Ukraine once the war is over.

Rebuilding Ukraine's infrastructure is key to being able to bring all these refugees back home, however no major plan has been formulated to accomplish this. Many of these refugees left everything they had behind; it is crucial that aid is given to them as they try and make new lives for themselves as they wait for the war to end.

NATO Weapons: Russian President Vladimir Putin cited that his concern of Ukraine joining NATO is what prompted the Russian Invasion of Ukraine. While Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has pleaded with NATO to allow

³⁸ "International Sanctions during the Russian Invasion of Ukraine," Wikipedia, op.cit.

³⁹ "Ukrainian Refugee Crisis," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukrainian_refugee_crisis

⁴⁰ "Russo-Ukrainian War," Wikipedia, op.cit

⁴¹ "Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation," UNHCR Data Portal, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

Ukraine to join, many NATO countries continue to vote against, fearing that if Ukraine gets accepted into NATO it will result in Nuclear War. In order to find middle ground many NATO countries have been giving NATO weapons and funds to Ukraine. These weapons have been a key factor in Ukraine's ability to mount a successful defense.⁴²

President Zelenskyy has said that without NATO weapons and support that Ukraine will fall. In June 2024 NATO agreed that Ukraine could use NATO weapons to launch strikes against targets located in Russia.⁴³ In response Russian President Vladimir Putin threatened to use nuclear weapons in retaliation. In order to bring this conflict to an end it is very probable that a decision regarding Ukraine's usage/possession of NATO weapons will need to be made.

Country and Bloc Positions

China: 'China's continuing and vehement insistence on respect for other nations' sovereignty is not only a cornerstone of its foreign policy but a foundational ethos for the government of a nation that has traditionally struggled to maintain control at its edges — from Xinjiang and Tibet in the far west to Hong Kong and Taiwan off its east coast.'⁴⁴

When it comes to the war in Ukraine, China has tried to take a neutral diplomatic stance. China

has expressed similar concerns as Russia in regard to the enlargement of NATO across Europe. It has stressed that Russia should respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine, but also criticized Western nations for not reassuring Russia.⁴⁵

China says it is neutral in the conflict and an advocate of peace talks but has not criticized the invasion or described it as such. Beijing has condemned the U.S. and its allies over sanctions on Moscow and military assistance to Ukraine. China and Russia have increasingly aligned their foreign policies to oppose the U.S.-led international order. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi reaffirmed the strength of those ties when he met Russian leader Vladimir Putin during a visit to Moscow. Chinese President Xi Jinping has met with Russian President Vladimir Putin eighteen times since the invasion.

European Union: Unlike China, the European Union has fully condemned the Russian Invasion of Ukraine and has enacted large scale sanctions against Russia. These sanctions have included a harsher import-export control of goods going in and out of Russia, a boycott of Russian oil, a wide ban of air travel coming from Russia, and a complete ban of any vessel contributing to the Russian war effort to any EU port.⁴⁶

All these sanctions are included in the EU's 14th package of sanctions against Russia. This has been the go-to response for the EU since the invasion began in February of 2022.⁴⁷ While all these sanctions have impacted the Russian economy, there is no apparent evidence to claim

⁴² "Russo-Ukrainian War," Wikipedia, op.cit

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ted Anthony, 'China, at UN, warns against 'expansion of the battlefield' in the Ukraine war', *Associated Press*, 28 September 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/china-united-nations-general-assembly-51ea58a6cd821656382f06ad0b3b93bc>

⁴⁵ "China and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine," Wikipedia,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China_and_the_Russian_invasion_of_Ukraine.

⁴⁶ EU response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine - consilium, accessed August 2, 2024, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.



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that it has done significant damage to the Russian war effort.

When it comes to UN resolutions, one can expect most EU member states to vote in favor of resolutions that are in favor of Ukraine. The EU is also likely to push for the UN to enact more sanctions against Russia.

Iran and allies: Iran and its allies have supported Russia both militarily and diplomatically since the Invasion of Ukraine began. Iran has been a longtime ally of Russia, and like Russia also has a bone to pick with NATO. Iran has also been accused of violating UN Security Resolution 2231, which is a plan to monitor Iran's nuclear program.⁴⁸

Iran and its allies are extremely likely to vote against any resolution that sanctions or condemns the Russian Invasion. In addition, diplomatic relationships between Iran and Ukraine have been stretched thin, and Iran's support of Russia has renewed hostilities between Iran and the United States.

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM): Consisting of 120 non-aligned states members and twelve more observers, the NAM has been under immense pressure since the start of the war in Ukraine. Unlike organizations such as the EU and NATO, NAM avoided taking a clear position on the war. Many NAM nations have been concerned about showing support for Ukraine believing it would draw disproportionate international attention.⁴⁹

Others rely on Russia or the Russian mercenary company *Wagner Group* for government security and refuse to criticize Russia's actions

in Ukraine. And some support Russia out of solidarity with its opposition to the West and Western authority. In General Assembly votes, many NAM member states voted in support of Russia, or votes to abstain on Ukraine resolutions.

The NAM is motivated by a belief that Ukraine is a Western-oriented side show, a distraction from the issues the NAM cares about more, global issues involving security and humanitarian concerns that would be neglected by all the attention brought on by the Invasion. In addition, many NAM states also have suffered fuel, food, and economic crises as harsher sanctions are placed upon Russia by many countries with a better ability to recover.

You can expect to see most NAM states to abstain from resolutions that seek to condemn the Russian invasion and bring about harsher sanctions. NAM states however would seek resolutions that supply more humanitarian aid as well as resolutions that seek to lessen the UN focus on the war in Ukraine.

Russia: Throughout the war in Ukraine the Russian Federation has continued to express a growing concern of NATO involvement, including the usage of NATO weapons by Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin has stated that NATO weapons in Ukraine constitute a justification for nuclear retaliation from Russia.⁵⁰

In addition, Russia is against UN involvement in the war, and will continue to vote against UN resolutions that impose sanctions on Russia and favor Ukraine. In order for Russia to come to the table for peace talks, resolutions that remove

⁴⁸ "Iran and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran_and_the_Russian_invasion_of_Ukraine.

⁴⁹ "The New Nonaligned Movement Is Having a Moment," *United States Institute of Peace*, 4 May

2023, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/05/new-nonaligned-movement-having-moment>

⁵⁰ Steven Pifer, 'How credible is Russia's evolving nuclear doctrine?' *Brookings Institution*, 14 November 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-credible-is-russias-evolving-nuclear-doctrine/>



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NATO weapons from Ukraine would be a necessity..⁵¹

Russia is also under the belief that the DPR and LPR are now sovereign states and argue that those territories should not be given back to Ukraine. Russia will continue to use the threat of nuclear retaliation as a way to keep NATO forces out of Ukraine.

United States: Unlike Russia, the United States has been on the side of Ukraine since the very beginning. President Joseph Biden has become one of Ukraine's biggest supporters and continues to support legislation that sends aid to Ukraine. As ODUMUNC 48 approaches, the position of the Trump Administration is unclear. During the campaign, Trump promised to end the war in Ukraine by Inauguration Day. Whether or not he achieves this, American policy is certain to become less predictable.

In total the United States has sent approximately USD 55.3 billion in the form of military support (weapons and weapon systems) to Ukraine since February of 2022..⁵² The United States and other NATO countries recently agreed that Ukraine could use the weapons that were given to them to launch strikes against targets in Russia.

Under President Biden, the United States supported Security Council draft resolutions and successful General Assembly resolutions supporting Ukraine, condemning Russia, bringing about more sanctions, and supplying aid to Ukraine.

While the United States consistently voted in favor of a ceasefire in Ukraine, the United States believes strongly that all of the territory captured by Russia should be returned. Under President Biden it is unimaginable that the United States would agree to terms that allow Russia to keep

Ukrainian soil. Under President Trump that seems more likely.

Some Possible Proposals for Action

For the Member States of the UN Security Council, the Ukraine war poses an enormous problem of relevance and effectiveness. Many of the obvious approaches the Security Council might take are non-starters, certain to be vetoed by the Russian Federation or the Council's NATO Members. Any measure requiring a return to pre-war borders, holding Russia uniquely responsible, or demanding it pay reparations to Ukraine, is unlikely to pass. What can a major of Security Council members agree on, knowing they require either Russian support, or at least Russian vote to abstain?

Similarly, any proposal favored by Russia, such as permanent Ukrainian capitulation to Russian conquests, or a permanent prohibition preventing Ukraine from joining the European Union (EU) or the North Atlantic Treaty Security Organization (NATO) is almost certain to be rejected by Western members, including three with vetoes, France, the United Kingdom and possibly the United States.

With nuclear threats coming from Moscow and rising dangers of a wider European war, the pressure on the Security Council is great, as is the need for innovative formulas that allow all sides to emerge feeling their goals have been achieved. Imagination is essential, but so is pragmatism. Only vision will win over the warring sides, but they will not surrender to wishful thinking.

Some of the issues to be resolved include:

⁵¹ "Russo-Ukrainian War," Wikipedia, op.cit.

⁵² U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-ukraine/>



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Peacekeeping will be difficult. The UN's preferred solution seems appropriate here. The peacekeeping force must be large enough to patrol forcefully a Russian-Ukraine border of some 1,500 km. It will require unprecedented financing and troop commitments from countries that have not taken sides in the conflict.

NATO expansion will be a major issue for Russia, which justified its invasion partially on the suspicion that NATO would accept Ukraine as a member, with all the security guarantees of any other member. But Ukraine will demand some kind of assurance. Russia also is likely to demand that other former Soviet republics, like Georgia and Moldova, also be denied any possibility of NATO membership, and that NATO promise never to deploy nuclear weapons in its Eastern European Member States.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation. Ukraine agreed in 1994 to give up all the nuclear weapons it

inherited from the Soviet Union. It joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), promising never to acquire nuclear weapons. After the 2022 invasion though, domestic pressure to acquire nuclear weapons is strong. And Russia may demand extra inspections to be certain Ukraine does not drift from its NPT promise. Russia is likely to demand extra assurances that other neighboring states like Lithuania and Poland do not develop nuclear weapons of their own. Such measures are sure to be opposed by Ukraine and viewed suspiciously by its supporters.

Reconstruction aid will be essential to restoring the Ukrainian economy after the great destruction of the war. Russia can be relied on to refuse to pay any restitution, and aid from Ukrainian backers will be viewed by Russia with considerable antagonism. Helping Ukraine recover will have to be part of any peace formula, and will require careful balancing, if not juggling between the sides.

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