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The Russian-Ukraine Crises: Issues and Futuristic Attention

Oluchi Sussan Obukoadata

Abstract

The contentious relationship between Russia and is a major risk to worldwide security, with 14,000 fatalities and several million refugees. Putin's annexation of Ukraine is concerning. A solution is necessary to prevent further harm to people and global security. The Ukraine-Russia conflict has divided opinions. This paper discusses the reasons for Russia's invasion and solutions to prevent future conflicts. The purpose of this seminar is to examine the motives behind Russia's incursion into Ukraine and propose tactics to avoid comparable incidents. We analyzed historical documents using an unbiased approach, focusing on personal accounts and non-numerical data. We verified all documents online and considered feedback from other scholars. The crisis in Ukraine is fuelled by Putin's desire to reunite the former Soviet Union, leading to Russia's annexation of Crimea and conflict in the Donbas region. Putin opposes Ukraine's pro-European views and closer ties with NATO. In 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine to regain control and weaken Kyiv's influence. Ukraine seeks protection from NATO and international support to maintain its sovereignty. In order to effectively address the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia, it is imperative that a non-aligned buffer zone is established, with the involvement of unbiased arbitrators who can create a legally binding agreement. The leadership of both nations must undergo a transformation, with a clear prioritization of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is critical to provide Ukraine with additional weapons, and supporting them is essential for the best interests of the United States.

Key Words: Russian, Ukraine, Crises, Issues, Futuristic Attention

Historical Introduction

The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine is a violent geopolitical clash with deep historical roots and profound implications for international relations. The

recent active conflict between Russia and Ukraine dates to the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, and it has intensified over the years, leading to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022 .

According to David , the two countries that border each other on the eastern fringes of Europe have had a very difficult relationship for centuries, which spans back 1,300 years of history. Both countries are from the same medieval kingdom of Kyivan Rus, founded in the 800s by a group of Vikings, the Varangians, who came from Northern Europe to rule over the local people. The Slavs who led these Varangian expeditions are recorded to be the ancestors of today's Russians and Ukrainians. And Kyiv was the capital then, and the capital of Ukraine today .

Unfortunately, Kyivan Rus was conquered by Mongol armies from Asia in 1240. This conquest split up the kingdom with Kyiv becoming part of a new commonwealth that spanned today's Poland and Ukraine. Moscow became the local capital of the Mongol Empire and adopted Muslim traditions. Both Moscow and Kyiv were at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, but with different cultures based on their geography. This was to replay itself between 1500 and 1654 when descendants of the Kyivan Rus' princes in Moscow formed imperial Russia to include Ukrainian people, claiming they were all brothers as they share the same ancestry, culture, governments, and trajectory. This claim has been at the heart of

the current invasion of Ukraine and the other wars in Crimea and Belarus. Ukrainians have persistently rejected this version of the historical play of her people, arguing that despite the commonalities in their earlier trajectories, events, contacts, and preoccupations have pulled them away from each other and, therefore, cannot in all reasonable terms be said to share the same affinity. Their logic was that they are different and should tow their different paths, as well as align with whom they want. Russia was more aligned with Asia, while Ukraine was pro-Europe. This stretched their fragile relationships to breaking point, and earlier war ensued between them.

This has been one of the concerns of documenting the histories of people, especially as versions and events may have altered the original belief system that oftentimes forced a group of people to rewrite their history.

The February 1917 revolution forced Russia's leader, Czar Nicholas II, from the throne and created a new empire called the Soviet Union. This was also not acceptable to most Ukrainians who attempted to form their empire which was roundly defeated by the Russians. Instead, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was formed as a

compromise to allow the Ukrainian a measure of self-local governance, while keeping them within the grasp of the Union . At first, it allowed Ukrainians to keep their culture and run their local government. But when the Soviets began to fear that Ukrainians wanted independence, they took their power away until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Both countries regained their independent statuses in 2013 when the Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovich, wanted Ukraine to be loyal to Russia. So, he decided not to sign a trade agreement to bring Ukraine closer to Europe which led to a protest that ousted him from office in favour of an elected government that favoured Europe rather than Russia.

Underneath these issues, Russian President Vladimir Putin was hell-bent on keeping Ukraine with the Russian Federation and feared any potential alliances with Europe, worst off the United States. These, are perceived as eternal threats to the overall interest of Russia. In 2014, Russia took over an area in southern Ukraine called Crimea. It also sent soldiers and weapons to eastern Ukraine, claiming to be helping people who wanted to be part of Russia. In the eight years since then, about 14,000 people have died, and one million people have fled to escape the fighting.

Most Ukrainians keep on voicing their disagreement with these claims and are further inspired by the words of their president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy. He told Putin that Ukrainians want peace, but that if they need to, they will defend their country's independence. Earlier Russian invasions have been to take small portions or sponsor insurrections, but on February 24, 2022, the Russian president opted for the complete takeover of the country and annexed it for Big Brother Russia .

Beyond all these we have forgotten that Ukraine has long played an important, yet sometimes overlooked, role in the global security order. Today, the country is on the front lines of a renewed great-power rivalry that many analysts say will dominate international relations in the decades ahead. Many observers see little prospect for a diplomatic resolution in the months ahead and instead acknowledge the potential for a dangerous escalation, which could include Russia's use of a nuclear weapon. The war has hastened Ukraine's push to join Western political blocs, including the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Ukraine was a cornerstone of the Soviet Union, the arch-rival of the United States during the Cold War. Behind only Russia, it was the second-

most-populous and -powerful of the fifteen Soviet republics, home to much of the union's agricultural production, defence industries, and military, including the Black Sea Fleet and some of the nuclear arsenal. Ukraine has been so vital to the Union, and this is not oblivious to Putin and his backers.

In its three decades of independence, Ukraine has sought to forge its path as a sovereign state while looking to align more closely with Western institutions, including the EU and NATO. However, Kyiv struggled to balance its foreign relations and bridge deep internal divisions. A more nationalist, Ukrainian-speaking population in western parts of the country generally supported greater integration with Europe, while a mostly Russian-speaking community in the east favoured closer ties with Russia. This is her dilemma that must be resolved internally and externally. What are the potential implications for international relations as a result of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

Problem Statement

There are people on both sides of the Ukraine-Russia divide who either support or oppose Ukraine or Russia. Some believe that things should remain as they are, while others feel that people have the right to defend their

sovereignty and continue to exist within other groups. The United States and many European countries support Ukraine and believe that it should have the power to determine its future. Some families have members who are both Russian and Ukrainian and do not want to see them fight each other. This conflict has been a long time coming, especially for historians.

Although historical events suggest that conflict between these countries was inevitable, it's important to understand that there may have been other factors that contributed to the invasion besides historical perspectives. While history shows that Russia wanted to play a big brother role and Ukraine wanted to forge its path, this may not be the only cause of the conflict. This paper aims to critically discuss the major reasons behind Russia's invasion of Ukraine and offer solutions to help prevent similar conflicts in other areas.

Objectives

The major objectives of this seminar presentation are:

- a. To critically identify the immediate and remote major causes of the invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces on the order of President Putin despite public outcry.

b. To proffer futuristic solutions that will not only help mitigate this scenario but also help avert future outcomes in other areas, especially those that share the same historical antecedents as the Russian-Ukrainian experiences.

Methodology

The methodology adopted was document analysis. This was so because scholars have alluded to its objective approach in reviewing already accepted documents as factual representations of past accounts. This does not exclude the researcher's biases using them as the basis for analysis. Document analysis involves reviewing facts in existing documents in a manner that helps provide insight into the current situation. It is a qualitative secondary research design that involves examining non-numerical data such as personal accounts, letters, published texts, or diaries. It can provide insights into the experiences and perspectives of individuals during a particular historical period. It involves evaluating electronic and physical documents to interpret them, gain an understanding of their meaning and develop upon the information they provide. It should be stated here that the documents analyzed are authentic as they could be verified online; the level of bias is not proven in that none of

the documents are claimed to have been authored by either Ukraine or Russia or their agents. The concerns raised by other scholars were also noted.

The results are discussed under various subheads in subsequent modules.

Major Reasons for the Invasion

Scholars have categorized the reasons for the invasion into remote and immediate causes, falling under different categories. It is important to note that some of the remote reasons were also a part of the immediate causes, as they were never addressed and led to an increase in hostility. It's worth noting that Russia and Ukraine have a history of engaging in such hostilities for several centuries, and many defining issues remain unresolved.

Remote Reasons

One of the remote causes is the insistence that Independent Ukraine is still a critical part of Mother Russia, hence everything must be done to ensure the complete conquest of Ukraine to fulfil this mandate. Nonetheless, when viewed against the history of the people as recorded, we see that both countries are from the same medieval kingdom of Kyivan Rus, but the conquest by the Mongol armies ensured that they went their separate ways,

and should have been allowed to remain as such .

It is a well-known fact that Russian President Vladimir Putin has been promoting a false historical narrative that Ukrainians and Russians are a single nation. Putin's goal is to reunite the countries of the former Soviet Union and undo what he considers the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century." His recent speeches and articles on this subject have even been mandatory reading for the Russian military. Unfortunately, this has played a significant role in the ongoing war not only against Ukraine but also against other former breakaway countries of the Soviet Union. Russia is disappointed by the pace of change and the lack of Soviet heritage in some countries. Belarus, for example, is trying to hold on to its Soviet heritage and has slowed down its pro-Western ideologies, while the Baltic states and former Warsaw Pact countries have moved on from their Soviet past and integrated with NATO and the EU in the early 1990s, finishing the process by 2004 (the year when Russian imperialism resurfaced). However, Ukraine and Georgia had not completed this path by that time. They were left out of the Euro-Atlantic community and later became targets of

Russian military aggression, resulting in the loss of lives and territory.

Historically, Ukrainians are core valued as lovers of freedom, democracy, free-thinking, and European values. These on their own are anathema to Putin; he can neither comprehend, nor tolerate, these values, and therefore, must be destroyed. For him, these are Western ideals not synonymous with the conservative Czar and Mongolian and Kyivan Rus ideals.

One factor that contributed to the crisis in Ukraine was the actions of Viktor Yanukovich, who struggled to address the economic challenges facing the country and turned to Russia for assistance. However, this decision sparked a wave of protests. It's important to note that Russian President Putin did offer Ukraine \$15 billion in loans and reduced gas prices on December 16, 2013, to help address the country's financial shortfall caused by depleted hard currency reserves. However, many Ukrainians, particularly young people seeking freedom, were not willing to accept this "carrot and stick" approach. The resulting protests were devastating. Despite Putin accepting the terms of the settlement negotiated by EU Foreign Ministers, the country did not return to normal, and Yanukovich was ultimately

removed from power by parliament. In February 2014, Putin attacked Crimea in retaliation for what he saw as interference by the United States and Europe.

Crimea's covert invasion and illegal annexation were masked with a questionable referendum on March 16, where over 95% of voters reportedly favoured joining the Russian Federation. The 2010 Kharkiv Accords, which allowed Ukraine to receive discounted Russian natural gas in exchange for basing rights in Crimea, were subsequently revoked. Moreover, the celebration of Victory Day included a visit to Sevastopol on May 9, 2010.

The conflict in the Donbas region of Ukraine, including Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv, was instigated by separatist-backed Russia. This resulted in the tragic downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 by individuals trained by Russia and equipped with a Russian-made Buk surface-to-air missile system. Subsequent elections revealed that Ukrainians tended to hold pro-European political views, which were in opposition to the Kremlin. The election of Volodymyr Zelensky was particularly significant, as he was widely praised for his anti-corruption stance and his pledge to bring the Donbas conflict to a peaceful resolution.

In September 2020, President Zelensky approved a new national security strategy that clearly identified Russia as an aggressor and prioritized NATO membership as a key defence and foreign policy objective for Ukraine. This decision was widely supported by the Ukrainian people. However, it also exacerbated tensions between the two countries, making a full-scale war seem inevitable. Then, on February 21, 2022, Putin recognized the independence of the self-proclaimed People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk and sent Russian troops into Ukrainian territory as supposed "peacekeepers." This move confirmed what had been obvious since 2014 - that Russia had been engaged in aggressive actions toward Ukraine.

There are several other reasons why Russia has a strong resentment toward Ukraine. One is the deep cultural, economic, and political ties between the two countries. Ukraine holds a significant place in Russia's identity and global aspirations. The two nations share a long history of familial bonds that date back centuries. Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, is often regarded as "the mother of Russian cities," with similar cultural influence as Moscow and St. Petersburg. In Kyiv, during the eighth and ninth centuries, Christianity spread from Byzantium to the Slavic peoples. Christianity

served as the foundation for Kievan Rus, the early Slavic state that shaped the lineage of modern Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarussians.

Also, approximately eight million ethnic Russians were living in Ukraine as of 2001, according to a census taken that year, mostly in the south and east. Moscow claimed a duty to protect these people as a pretext for its actions in Crimea and the Donbas in 2014.

It is believed by some Russian politicians that the decision to separate from Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union was a historical error and a danger to Russia's status as a powerful nation. Losing control of Ukraine and allowing it to align with the West could be viewed as a significant blow to Russia's reputation on the world stage. In 2022, Putin framed the escalating conflict with Ukraine as part of a larger battle against Western powers that he claims are seeking to undermine Russia. This is further complicated by Russia's desire to regain control of Sevastopol, which serves as the home base for their Black Sea Fleet, the primary naval force in the area. The city was originally given to Ukraine in 1954 as a symbol of cultural and diplomatic unity.

Other subtle forces were the need to create the Eurasian Economic Union to create a

single market for the region, at least to mitigate the growing dominance of China, and its trading values with Ukraine; the need to cut down on the charges it paid to Ukraine on the reliance on Ukrainian pipelines to pump its gas to customers in Central and Eastern Europe for decades .

Immediate Reasons

The shift of Ukraine towards the West, away from Russian influence, was the primary cause of the escalation of tension and military conflict between Russia and Ukraine in 2014. This political trajectory change resulted in the ousting of pro-Russian Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich during the Ukrainian revolution. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea was its response to potentially losing influence over Ukraine. However, this move created more animosity towards Russia from Ukraine, as they perceived Russia as a meddling outsider rather than a brotherly figure. Despite widespread condemnation, Russia stubbornly maintained its grip on Crimea to spite Kyiv.

Not done, Russia continues to fund separatist movements around the border cities of Ukraine to spite the Kyiv regime. There has been sponsored violence in Donetsk and Luhansk since 2014. They even declared their own self-proclaimed Donetsk People's

Republic and Luhansk People's Republic with active recognition from Russia. These moves were to weaken Kyiv's control in these regions and increase Russian incursion preparatory to invading Ukraine.

The decision to consider Ukraine as a potential member of NATO was one of the factors that led to the conflict. Ukraine had been informally working with NATO since 1991, but after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, their cooperation increased. While Ukraine did not officially apply for membership, the fear of a potential Russian invasion encouraged them to seek closer ties with the organization. However, for Russian President Putin, this was seen as a threat to the region's stability and an expansion of Western influence. As a former member of the KGB, Putin has always been wary of US involvement in dismantling the Soviet Union and has sought to maintain Russia's influence in the region. Russia's concern about the potential for biological weapons to infiltrate their borders further fuelled their opposition to Ukraine's cooperation with NATO. Despite knowing that their actions had pushed Ukraine to seek outside help, Russia was uncomfortable with their turn towards NATO. As the situation in Ukraine continued to deteriorate, Putin saw an opportunity to take control of a weakened state rather than

simply replace the regime. However, it remains to be seen whether this strategy will ultimately succeed or backfire.

Some Western analysts see Russia's 2022 invasion as the culmination of the Kremlin's growing resentment toward NATO's post-Cold War expansion into the former Soviet sphere of influence. Russian leaders, including Putin, have alleged that the United States and NATO repeatedly violated pledges they made in the early 1990s to not expand the alliance into the former Soviet bloc. They view NATO's enlargement during this tumultuous period for Russia as a humiliating imposition about which they could do little but watch. For them, it is a reenactment of the post-Cold War humiliation. In the weeks leading up to its invasion, Russia made several major security demands of the United States and NATO, including that they cease expanding the alliance, seek Russian consent for certain NATO deployments, and remove U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe. Alliance leaders responded that they were open to new diplomacy but were unwilling to discuss shutting NATO's doors to new members. This for Putin was unacceptable and a mark of hostility .

Experts suggest that Putin was primarily motivated by his fear of Ukraine's

development into a modern democracy, which could potentially threaten his autocratic regime and prevent him from rebuilding Russia's influence in Eastern Europe. Putin's Russia is known for its desire to regain its former power and prestige, and is often described as a revanchist power. Gerard Toal, an international affairs professor at Virginia Tech, explains in his book "Near Abroad" that Putin's goal was to restore Russia's status as a dominant power in northern Eurasia, rather than recreate the Soviet Union. He aimed to make Russia great again.

Thus, we can argue that the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine by Russia was basically for territorial expansion and full control of the region away from foreign and meddling interests. The assault targeted major cities and strategic infrastructure, deepening the humanitarian crisis in the region, and even strangulating Europe and the rest of Africa.

In summarising all the arguments put forward so far, Ukraine's chargé d'affaires in Nigeria, Bohdan Soltys said that Ukraine's desire to join NATO is for protection against aggression such as it is facing from Russia, and that Russia's main reasons for the invasion were because Russia wants to

restore the evil empire of the Soviet Union as part of his imperial ambitions, and it sees Ukraine as an integral part of the empire. He alluded to Vladimir Putin equating himself to the Russian King Peter the Great whose primary responsibility was to grab sovereign territories. He also debunked insinuations around the joining of NATO, and the clamour that such will likely provide ample opportunity for the US to spy on Russia. The envoy Mr. Soltys reminded the world that Russia shares a border in the east with the United States and that Russia also borders a lot of other NATO countries. In his words, "all this Russian propaganda that they are fighting NATO is ridiculous, Russia attacked Ukraine only because it wants to occupy its territory".

Proffered Futuristic Solution

But what role did Ukraine play in fanning this ember of hostility? Couldn't they have avoided these hostilities considering that the peace between them and Russia had been on a knife-edge? Experts have blamed the upsurge in hostilities to the presence of the fifth and even tenth columnists who seek their ends and means, rather than the overall good of the region. Rather than Ukraine trying to be pro-West or pro-Russia, the argument was that they could have leveraged

the lessons from the Cold War between Russia and Europe and the United States, and provided a buffer zone like what Switzerland and Norway are currently doing. With their huge resource base especially as the single greatest exporter of wheat and Uranium, they would have maximised the potential and sought a non-aligned Ukraine devoid of any form of block attachments, but focusing only on her own economic and political ideologies markedly different from others, especially as shaped by her historical trajectory.

Ukraine should be allowed to continue to share its cultural affiliations and mutual respect while maintaining its different political orientations. The earlier this is allowed, the better for all parties. This view is sacrosanct to the United Nations Declaration that nations have a right to their declarations and sovereignty and should not be clawed together endlessly because they share the same cultural and historical affinity.

One suggested solution, although deemed unrealistic, was put forward by Mr. Soltys, the Ukrainian envoy to Nigeria. He believes that the only way to end the war is for Russia to withdraw their soldiers and return home to live peacefully. Russia needs to recognize when it's no longer worth continuing a futile fight that only drains resources without

achieving a meaningful victory. The destruction of the Russian warship, Maska, and other facilities in Ukraine or Russian-held territories is a waste. The cost of rebuilding Ukraine alone has been estimated to exceed \$350 billion as of September 2022. Additionally, what would be the cost of rebuilding Russia's morale and psychological well-being if they were to lose to Ukraine?

It is important to acknowledge the ongoing push for Ukraine to join various international organizations, while also recognizing Russia's right to safeguard its territorial interests against outside threats. However, it is crucial to approach these issues with sensitivity to the needs and preferences of other nations. To achieve this, we propose a group of impartial international arbitrators, jointly recommended by Presidents Putin and Zelensky, to create a legally binding agreement that addresses the concerns of each conflicting country. This agreement should be incorporated into both countries' constitutions to ensure its effectiveness.

We also recommend that in the event of failure to achieve peace through peaceful means, then the replica of the Warsaw Pacts should be relieved. Here, the other should come together and annihilate the aggressor, while her territories are distributed among

other countries. This will serve as a deterrent to other countries wishing to veer into such recklessness.

The Ukrainian government has made it clear that they want to pursue their own political and ideological beliefs that prioritize freedom over dictatorship. This is a concern for Putin, who views these ideals as a sign of weakness and against traditional Russian values. However, Russia should embrace the global trend towards political freedom and allow Ukraine to pursue their own path, even if it goes against Russian interests. The recent election of Zelensky, a non-establishment candidate, over Poroshenko, a pro-European billionaire, is a clear indication that the Ukrainian people are dissatisfied with corruption and oligarchy. They desire more freedom and autonomy, something that Putin cannot offer. Even if Russia were to take over Ukraine, it is unlikely that the Ukrainian people would abandon their deeply rooted ideals. The pull towards the West has only grown stronger, from 25% in 2022 to over 50% after the invasion.

Nonetheless, negotiation at the table is still a veritable tool to end the wars, and such negotiations must not be a product of the current regime, nor must it be composed of the current leadership. Its members must be

drawn from a referendum from the contending parties as well as representatives from the United Nations. This will ensure a measure of transparency and muting of all parochial voices. This suggestion is because previous negotiations had been shaped and fuelled by parochial interests from major players which have resulted in suspicion. Putin for instance never trusted the negotiation from the EU Council of Foreign Ministers because he felt they represented the interest of America and NATO.

One potential solution for resolving the crisis between Ukraine and Russia is to create a new country that serves as a buffer zone, similar to the situation between North and South Korea. Both countries would need to give up some territory to establish this zone, but it would help to de-escalate the conflict and ease concerns about aggression. The buffer zone could be monitored by a mix of military and civilian personnel from non-aligned and non-NATO countries, as this has been a key point of contention. These personnel could rotate regularly until a lasting peace is achieved and mutual understanding is fostered.

The leadership of both countries must change, given their self-serving focus on national interests at the expense of the

people's desires. The absence of a United Nations-supervised referendum on involvement in the wars by either Ukraine or Russia is unacceptable. Putin and Zelenskyy must not make unilateral decisions based solely on their Commander-in-Chief positions. The people must be empowered to make the final decision in such situations, given their shared history, culture, and intermarriage, which have resulted in a common language. The only distinguishing factor between the two nations is their chosen lifestyle, with one preferring freedom while the other favours a more regulated style.

Acknowledging and addressing Russia's security concerns is imperative, regardless of our agreement on the matter. It's evident from past occurrences, such as America's actions towards Cuba and Haiti during the communist regime, that no intervention in a country's affairs will be tolerated. Countries can develop a better relationship when they adopt analogous democratic and capitalist values, as seen in the cases of Cuba and Haiti. However, strained relationships between America and communist countries such as China and North Korea largely stem from ideological differences and a lack of trust. To maintain the status quo, it's critical that Ukraine, NATO, America, and Europe respect agreements such as the 1994

nonaligned agreement. Furthermore, the US must adhere to previous agreements that restrict their involvement in military activities in former Soviet countries. By honouring these agreements, we can establish a foundation of trust between nations.

This paper argued that Russia should bear a significant part of the cost of reconstructing and rebuilding Ukraine since they initiated the offensive and destruction. Also, Russia should bear this cost based on her brazen target of non-military facilities as against international conventions on wars. Her attacks on civilian buildings and schools and churches were more of a genocide than a war. This should be roundly condemned.

It is essential to consider the potential consequences of a Russian defeat in the current global situation. If Russia were to be defeated, the United States may become the sole dominant force in global affairs, with no other nation capable of challenging its power. This could lead to other nations ignoring international agreements meant to promote peace, potentially resulting in a return to the pre-World War era. Additionally, a Russian defeat may cause destabilization within their own country, with the possibility of mutiny and the emergence of dangerous leaders. As demonstrated in past situations with smaller

nations like Kuwait, Iran, and Ukraine, they may not have the resources to manage the fallout from such a conflict. Therefore, it is crucial to consider all possible outcomes before taking any action.

It is crucial to restore a sense of normalcy and minimize disruptions to civilian life, rather than solely seeking justice. The global interconnectedness of activities means that any disturbance in one area can have significant impacts on other functioning parts. For instance, the shortage of gas and oil in Europe has led to higher living and production costs, affecting other regions worldwide. Similarly, the cessation of Ukrainian grain exports to Africa has increased the cost of wheat-related products, like bread and beverages, thereby impacting the economies of these countries. The cost of war is exorbitant for all parties involved, with Russia bearing the brunt of numerous global sanctions, and its citizens suffering the effects. Continuing conflicts only breed resentment towards the world and fuel desires for revenge against those who offer no support. The memory of Osama Bin Laden serves as a powerful reminder of the consequences of such actions.

To achieve lasting peace in Ukraine, any peace plan must prioritize upholding the

principle of sovereign independence and respecting the country's pre-2014 territorial borders. It must clearly outline the necessary conditions and steps, as per Ukraine's terms. Future security and political guarantees should also be included in the plan. Success is more likely if the plan supports Ukraine's aspirations for NATO and EU membership while ensuring that Russia is not negatively impacted through collaboration with NATO and other international allies. However, it's crucial to consider the potential influence of these actions on other former Soviet Union countries likely to seek independence from Russia.

Conclusion

The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine persists, despite the sanctions and embargo imposed on Russia and her oligarchs. President Vladimir Putin has launched a brutal offensive against Kyiv, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands and the displacement of millions. He has also made a terrifying threat to unleash biological weapons if Ukraine receives support from foreign superpowers. This crisis has led to over 8 million refugees from Ukraine, with many still living in danger within the country. The global consequences of this conflict are significant,

including increased prices for grain and gas, which are essential components of the global economy. Russia provides over 50% of the gas needed in Europe, while Ukraine provides over 40% of global wheat supplies and is considered the breadbasket of Europe.

A protracted or frozen conflict benefits Russia and hurts Ukraine, as does a ceasefire, or negotiated settlement on Russia's terms. Ukraine will need more than the volume of support it currently gets to avoid any defeat and turn the tide against Russia which is very unlikely now because the concerns for her are overhyped and not matched by the same energies. Beyond that, not accommodating any of Moscow's demands is likely to infuriate Russia the more to want to send a clear message of her real intentions. This will not be good for all involved because the outcome can spin either way.

The urgency of the situation in Ukraine cannot be overstated. With the upcoming election cycle in the United States, the primary provider of financial and military support to Kyiv, there is a real risk of decreased foreign policy engagement and a shift toward domestic concerns. We must provide Ukraine with additional weapons to aid in their ongoing military efforts against Russian forces and to offer protection in the

event of weakened US solidarity in the future. It should be noted that a strengthened alliance with Ukraine not only serves altruistic purposes but is also in the best interest of the US to counteract the growing influence of China, North Korea, and Russia in Europe and Asia. However, it must be acknowledged that the current approach to international diplomacy has resulted in more conflicts than resolutions.

It is crucial to stress that Russian aggression goes beyond Ukraine and undermines the peace arrangements that have been in place for more than 70 years. A resounding and decisive triumph over Russia on the battlefield would create a safer world, rather than a result that accepts Ukraine's territorial losses. Thus, supporting Ukraine's unequivocal victory is imperative on both ethical and pragmatic grounds. While recent augmentations in Western military supplies are appreciated, the only ultimate solution to the issues highlighted in this report is an enormous influx of weaponry for Ukraine. Without it, Ukraine will forfeit its sovereignty, and Russia will be emboldened to pursue its campaign of expansionism against its neighbours and aggression against perceived adversaries worldwide, disregarding democratic principles. In the long run, supporting Ukraine will discourage

other aggressors and potentially bring about positive political changes in Russia. The quest for peace and solutions is intricate and may lead to more crises. As religious fanatics often proclaim, only time will tell, the end is near.

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