

**INTER
MUN**
2024



UNITED NATIONS



SECURITY COUNCIL

BACKGROUND

“MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND SECURITY
WITHIN UKRAINE”

WELCOME

Greetings delegate,

Welcome to the United Nations Security Council of the 2024 Jesuit School System's Model United Nations (INTERMUN) presented by Instituto Cultural Tampico.

The Committee Chair expresses profound gratitude for your esteemed participation in our committee and your keen interest in the selected topic to discuss this year. With grand desire we hope this experience will be beneficial for your learning, leading and working aptitudes, as we expect it to be a pleasant experience.

The topic that the Chair chose this year is The Maintenance of Peace Within Ukraine

The Security Council's Committee Chair feels grateful for your interest in this global problematic. Peace is indispensable in Ukraine and in any place of the world. The Security Council chore will be to achieve it.

We once again extend our sincere appreciation for your invaluable contribution to this Council. Sure of the stunning work you are going to do, we give you our best regards.

Sincerely,

- The Chair of the Security Council.

President: Víctor Salazar Galván
Secretary: Ana Cecilia Roux González
Moderator: Daniel Peña Cruz

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HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

The Security Council originally consisted of 11 members—five permanent members (the Republic of China [Taiwan], France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and six nonpermanent members elected by the UN General Assembly for two-year terms. An amendment to the UN Charter in 1965 increased council membership to 15, including the original five permanent members and 10 nonpermanent members.

Among the permanent members, the People's Republic of China replaced the Republic of China in 1971, and the Russian Federation succeeded the Soviet Union in 1991. The nonpermanent members are generally chosen to achieve equitable representation among geographic regions, with five members coming from Africa or Asia, one from eastern Europe, two from Latin America, and two from western Europe or other areas.

Five of the 10 non permanent members are elected each year by the General Assembly for two-year terms, and five retire each year. The presidency is held by each member in rotation for a period of one month.

Each member has one vote. On all “procedural” matters—the definition of which is sometimes in dispute—decisions by the council are made by an affirmative vote of any nine of its members. Substantive matters, such as the investigation of a dispute or the application of sanctions, also require nine affirmative votes, including those of the five permanent members holding veto power.

In practice, however, a permanent member may abstain without impairing the validity of the decision. A vote on whether a matter is procedural or substantive is itself a substantive question. Because the Security Council is required to function continuously, each member is represented at all times at the United Nations headquarters in New York City.

The composition of the Security Council has been a contentious matter, particularly since the end of the Cold War. Critics have argued that the Security Council and its five permanent members reflect the power structure that existed at the end of World War II, when much of the world was under colonial rule.

Reform efforts have remained elusive but have centered on efforts to make the work of the Security Council more transparent and on demands by important non-permanent members, such as Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan (the so-called G-4), to obtain permanent membership—or at least have special status within the Security Council.

One proposal put forward by the G-4 countries was to increase the membership of the Security Council to 25 seats by adding six new permanent members, including one each for themselves and two for Africa.

Any state—even if it is not a member of the UN—may bring a dispute to which it is a party to the attention of the Security Council. When there is a complaint, the council first explores the possibility of a peaceful resolution. International peacekeeping forces may be authorized to keep warring parties apart pending further negotiations (see United Nations Peacekeeping Forces).

If the council finds that there is a real threat to the peace, a breach of the peace, or an act of aggression (as defined by Article 39 of the UN Charter), it may call upon UN members to apply diplomatic or economic sanctions. If these methods prove inadequate, the UN Charter allows the Security Council to take military action against the offending nation.

In addition to several standing and ad hoc committees, the work of the council is facilitated by the Military Staff Committee, Sanctions Committees for each of the states under sanctions, Peacekeeping Forces Committees, and an International Tribunals Committee.

INTRODUCTION

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.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine constitutes the biggest threat to peace and security in Europe since the end of the Cold War. On February 21, 2022, Russian president Vladimir Putin gave a bizarre and at times unhinged speech laying out a long list of grievances as justification for the "special military operation" announced the following day. While these grievances included the long-simmering dispute over the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the shape of the post-Cold War security architecture in Europe, the speech centered on a much more fundamental issue: the legitimacy of Ukrainian identity and statehood themselves. It reflected a worldview Putin had long expressed, emphasizing the deep-seated unity among the Eastern Slavs—Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians, who all trace their origins to the medieval Kyivan Rus commonwealth—and suggesting that the modern states of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus should share a political destiny both today and in the future. The corollary to that view is the claim that distinct Ukrainian and Belarusian identities are the product of foreign manipulation and that, today, the West is following in the footsteps of Russia's imperial rivals in using Ukraine (and Belarus) as part of an "anti-Russia project."

Throughout Putin's time in office, Moscow has pursued a policy toward Ukraine and Belarus predicated on the assumption that their respective national identities are artificial—and therefore fragile. Putin's arguments about foreign enemies promoting Ukrainian (and, in a more diffuse way, Belarusian) identity as part of a geopolitical struggle against Russia echo the way many of his predecessors refused to accept the agency of ordinary people seeking autonomy from tsarist or Soviet domination. The historically minded Putin often invokes the ideas of thinkers emphasizing the organic unity of the Russian Empire and its people—especially its Slavic, Orthodox core—in a form of what the historian Timothy Snyder calls the “politics of eternity,” the belief in an unchanging historical essence.

The salience that Putin and other Russian elites assign to the idea of Russian-Ukrainian-Belarusian unity helps explain the origins of the current conflict, notably why Moscow was willing to risk a large-scale war on its borders when neither Ukraine nor NATO posed any military threat. It also suggests that Moscow's ambitions extend beyond preventing Ukrainian NATO membership and encompass a more thorough aspiration to dominate Ukraine politically, militarily, and economically.

It also helps explain Russia's military strategy. Moscow appeared to calculate that enough Ukrainians, at least in the eastern part of the country, would accept some form of reintegration into a Russian sphere of influence because of shared cultural, linguistic, religious, and other ties with Russia. Despite pre-war polls showing large numbers of Ukrainians willing to take up arms to defend their country against a Russian invasion, Moscow's wager was not entirely implausible given the recentness of the shift and the persistence of family and other ties across the Russian-Ukrainian border. Nonetheless, Russia's war has become bogged down in no small part because this calculation about Ukrainian identity has proven dramatically wrong.

The past three decades—and especially the years since the 2014 “Revolution of Dignity” and ensuing Russian annexation of Crimea and intervention in Donbas—have witnessed a significant consolidation of Ukrainian civic identity. This Ukrainian civic nation encompasses not just Ukrainian speakers in the western part of the country, but much of the Russian-speaking but increasingly bilingual east as well. A generation has grown up in an independent Ukraine that, for all its flaws, has maintained a robust democracy and is becoming increasingly European in its outlook (thanks in no small part to Russia's aggressive meddling), even as Putin's Russia remains fixated on quasi-imperial great-power aspirations. If anything, the current war has further united Ukrainian citizens from all regions and linguistic and religious backgrounds while reinforcing the split between Ukrainian and Russian identities. Thus, whatever happens on the battlefield, Russia is almost certain to fail in its bid to establish lasting control over its neighbor.

Over the centuries, the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, Poland, and Lithuania have all wielded jurisdiction over Ukraine, which first asserted its modern independence in 1917, with the formation of the Ukrainian People's Republic. Russia soon gained control of Ukraine, making it part of the newly established Soviet Union and retaining power in the region until World War II, when Germany invaded.

Paying renewed attention to Ukrainian language and culture, the 2005-2010 Ukrainian President, Víktor Yúshchenko pushed for international recognition of the Stalinist famine (Holodomor) as an anti-Ukrainian genocide. He also raised the question, which his predecessors had avoided, of receiving a Membership Action Plan from NATO. Víktor Yúshchenko and his allies won substantial sympathy in the West with their portrayal of Ukrainians as a European nation who had long suffered from Russian oppression. The 2010 return of Yanukovych and his eastern-based Party of Regions in a free and fair election.

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Since the U.S.S.R. dissolved

The past three decades—and especially the years since the 2014 Revolution of Dignity and ensuing Russian annexation of Crimea and intervention in Donbas—have witnessed a significant consolidation of Ukrainian civic identity. This Ukrainian civic nation encompasses not just Ukrainian speakers in the western part of the country, but much of the Russian-speaking but increasingly bilingual east as well. A generation has grown up in an independent Ukraine that, for all its flaws, has maintained a robust democracy and is becoming increasingly European in its outlook.

The Making of Ukraine

Though the relationship between Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians remains an object of contention in all three countries, Ukraine has made enormous strides in consolidating a shared civic identity, which includes the bulk of Russian speakers in eastern and southern Ukraine.

The relative success of this project of “making Ukrainians” has accelerated Ukraine’s decoupling from Russia, feeding concern in Moscow that time is running out to restore influence over its neighbor and justify a series of increasingly risky gambles to pull Ukraine back into Moscow’s orbit.

The story of the more than three decades since the Soviet collapse centers on the gradual diffusion of “Ukrainianness” across an ever-wider swathe of the country and its people. In a pattern familiar from both interwar Europe and the postcolonial Global South, the independent Ukrainian state became instrumental in forging a shared national identity among its inhabitants through education, official memory, the media, legislation, and other tools.

Ukraine Relationship with NATO

As a result of Russia’s illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea, NATO Allies decided in 2014 to suspend all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia, while leaving political and military channels of communication open. Since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Allies have imposed unprecedented sanctions on Russia to help starve the Kremlin’s war machine of resources. Allies continue to refine these sanctions in order to increase the pressure on Moscow. These efforts will make it harder for Russia to rebuild its tanks, manufacture missiles and finance its war.

NATO Allies call on Russia to immediately stop the war and withdraw all its forces from Ukraine, to fully respect international humanitarian law, and to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access and assistance to all persons in need. They also call on Russia to stop restricting navigation in parts of the Black Sea and impeding access to the Sea of Azov.

Throughout the crisis, regular consultations have taken place in the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) in view of the direct threats faced by Ukraine to its territorial integrity, political independence and security. The NUC met for extraordinary meetings in view of Russia’s unjustified use of military force against Ukrainian ships near the Kerch Strait in November 2018 and Russia’s threatening military build-up in April 2021. Other extraordinary meetings of the NUC took place at NATO Headquarters in January and February 2022, focused on Russia’s continued military build-up and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Yet over the past 10 centuries, Ukraine has repeatedly been carved up by competing powers. Mongol warriors from the east conquered Kyivan Rus in the 13th century. In the 16th century Polish and Lithuanian armies invaded from the west. In the 17th century, war between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Tsardom of Russia brought lands to the east of the Dnieper River under Russian imperial control. The east became known as "Left Bank" Ukraine; lands to the west of the Dnieper, or "Right Bank," were ruled by Poland.

More than a century later, in 1793, the right bank (western) Ukraine was annexed by the Russian Empire. Over the years that followed, a policy known as Russification banned the use and study of the Ukrainian language, and people were pressured to convert to the Russian Orthodox faith.

Ukraine suffered some of its greatest traumas during the 20th century. After the communist revolution of 1917, Ukraine was one of the many countries to fight a brutal civil war before being fully absorbed into the Soviet Union in 1922. In the early 1930s, to force peasants to join collective farms, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin orchestrated a famine that resulted in the starvation and death of millions of Ukrainians. Afterward, Stalin imported large numbers of Russians and other Soviet citizens—many with no ability to speak Ukrainian and with few ties to the region—to help repopulate the east.

These legacies of history created lasting fault lines. Because eastern Ukraine came under Russian rule much earlier than western Ukraine, people in the east have stronger ties to Russia and have been more likely to support Russian-leaning leaders. Western Ukraine, by contrast, spent centuries under the shifting control of European powers such as Poland and the Austro-Hungarian Empire—one reason Ukrainians in the west have tended to support more Western-leaning politicians. The eastern population tends to be more Russian-speaking and Orthodox, while parts of the west are more Ukrainian-speaking and Catholic.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine became an independent nation. But uniting the country proved a difficult task. For one, "the sense of Ukrainian nationalism is not as deep in the east as it is in west," says former ambassador to Ukraine Steven Pifer. The transition to democracy and capitalism was painful and chaotic, and many Ukrainians, especially in the east, longed for the relative stability of earlier eras.

On ecological maps you can even see the divide between the southern and eastern parts of Ukraine—known as the steppes—with their fertile farming soil and the northern and western regions, which are more forested, says Serhii Plokhii, a history professor at Harvard and director of its Ukrainian Research

Institute. He says a map depicting the demarcations between the steppe and the forest, a diagonal line between east and west, bears a "striking resemblance" to political maps of Ukrainian presidential elections in 2004 and 2010.

Crimea was occupied and annexed by Russia in 2014, followed shortly after by a separatist uprising in the eastern Ukrainian region of Donbas that resulted in the declaration of the Russian-backed People's Republics of Luhansk and Donetsk. Today, the two countries find themselves in conflict yet again, fault lines that reflect the region's tumultuous history.

Putin and Russia's Imperial Identity

While his February 21 speech was particularly vitriolic, Putin has long claimed that Russians and Ukrainians comprise "one people" whose common history implies that they should also share a common political fate today. During a 2008 meeting with then-U.S. president George W. Bush, Putin reportedly remarked that "Ukraine is not even a country." He also described Russians and Ukrainians as "one people" in his March 2014 speech to the Russian parliament (Duma) announcing the annexation of Crimea and has come back to the theme in subsequent years, notably in a 6,000-word article titled "On the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians" published in July 2021. In his pre-invasion address, Putin further claimed that the current Ukrainian state was a creation of the Soviet Union and should be renamed for its supposed "author and architect," the Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin.

Putin's historical excursions tend to provoke bewilderment in the West—when they are not dismissed as outright disinformation. Yet his claim that Ukrainians and Russians (as well as Belarusians) are "one people" has a long pedigree in elite Russian circles. It continues to shape not only elite discourse but political practice as well. As Ukraine has become increasingly "Ukrainified" in recent years, Russian officials and analysts (few of whom have ever bothered to learn Ukrainian) were oblivious to the changes.

Putin accuses NATO and the European Union of manipulating Ukrainian national sentiment as part of their own geopolitical competition with Russia, employing "the old groundwork of the Polish-Austrian ideologists to create an 'anti-Moscow Russia'" in Ukraine—in other words, attempting to pry Ukraine away from its "authentic" identity and alignment with Russia. Similarly, Putin's February 21 speech emphasized how post-Soviet Ukraine's leaders have "attempted to build their statehood on the negation of everything that unites us" with the assistance of "external forces."

This rejection of Ukrainian identity and the claim that Ukraine's desire to separate itself from Russian influence was the product of "external forces" seem to be not just Russian talking points, but a claim that Putin himself (and, presumably, other high-placed Russian officials) believe. It contributed to the Kremlin's confidence that the war could be won easily and quickly—that ordinary Ukrainians would welcome Russian forces as liberators once they had removed the "fascist junta" in Kyiv, even though president Volodymyr Zelensky won 73 percent of the vote in Ukraine's April 2019 presidential runoff. Russian hubris rested on a basic failure to grasp not only the deep roots of Ukrainian identity, but also the extent to which Ukraine itself has changed in the years since the Soviet collapse.

Russia's Denial for Ukrainian Independence

With some Soviet-era variation, what the historian Zenon Kohut calls the "unity paradigm" has been the default view of Russian statesmen and intellectuals since the early modern era, when the Grand Principdom of Moscow (Muscovy) began bringing the disparate East Slavic lands and peoples under its control. During this period of imperial conquest, Russian publicists such as the cleric Innokenty Gizel redefined the Ukrainian lands and their people as part of Russia's own history. They emphasized the existence of a tripartite "all-Russian" people composed of Great, Little (Ukrainian), and White (Belarusian) Russians, a view promoted in the educational system of the nineteenth-century Russian Empire. Committed to the idea of the "all-Russian" people, imperial elites believed that rival powers were deliberately promoting Ukrainian and Belarusian nationalism as a geopolitical tool for weakening Russia—the same theme Putin has long emphasized.

While the inhabitants of modern Ukraine have maintained political and linguistic identities distinct from Russia for centuries, Ukrainian nationalism—the belief that Ukrainians constitute a distinct nation that should have its own state—emerged during the nineteenth century, when what is now Ukraine was partitioned between Russia and Austria-Hungary, which controlled the western Ukrainian regions of Galicia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia. The comparatively liberal Habsburgs tolerated the Ukrainian national movement—even providing support for Ukrainian forces who fought against Russia during World War I and helping Ukraine achieve a brief independence after the Russian Empire collapsed.

The Russian Empire, on the other hand, persecuted Ukrainian activists and organizations. Russian authorities argued that Ukrainian nationalism was an artificial creation of Vienna aimed at what a senior diplomat termed "disruption of the Russian tribe [plemeni]." The minister of internal affairs issued a decree in 1863 banning publication and instruction in the Ukrainian language that remained in force until 1905. Ukrainian writers and activists, regarded as the father of Ukrainian literature, were arrested and exiled.

With the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires at the end of World War I, Russian suspicions about Ukrainian identity transferred to other targets. During the Paris Peace Conference, former foreign minister Sergei Sazonov, a man generally sympathetic to Slavic national movements, remarked, “As for Ukraine, it does not exist. Even the word is artificial and a foreign import. There is a Little Russia, there is no Ukraine . . . The Ukrainian movement is nothing but a reaction against the abuses of the bureaucracy and of Bolshevism.”

This divide between the Austro-Hungarian and Russian territories continued to matter long after the two empires fell. Ukraine secured a brief period of independence during the Russian Civil War, with nationalist, anarchist, and other groups fighting both Polish and Russian armies—and among themselves.

By the early 1920s, the regions in the west formerly controlled by Austria-Hungary passed under Polish or Romanian rule until Stalin seized them at the start of World War II. Despite a vicious campaign of communization, western Ukraine remained a crucible for nationalist sentiment. Western Ukraine was the base of operations for Stepan Bandera’s Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), who attempted to set up a puppet state under German protection during World War II. It was the site of some of the war’s worst atrocities—including the German-led annihilation of the Jewish population, Ukrainian-led ethnic cleansing of Poles, and Polish retribution attacks on Ukrainian civilians. In the Russian narrative, Bandera became a figure of particular hate, his willingness to collaborate with the Nazi invaders held up as evidence of the link between Ukrainian nationalism, ethnic cleansing, and foreign manipulation. Putin and other officials claim that Ukraine’s post-2014 governments have pursued a “Banderite” policy of purging Russian influence under the direction of foreign sponsors.

During the late 1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev’s policy of glasnost (“openness”) provided an opportunity for the mobilization of nationalist movements pushing for the breakup of the Soviet Union, including the People’s Movement (Rukh) of Ukraine. Gorbachev sought to keep Ukraine within a Moscow-centric confederation he hoped would replace the Soviet Union.

While then-Russian president Boris Yeltsin supported Ukrainian independence in the context of his effort to overcome Gorbachev and bring down the Soviet Union, he and his advisers clung to the belief that an independent Ukraine would continue to remain closely bound to Russia.

Much of the Russian political and intellectual elite nevertheless continued to doubt the legitimacy or viability of the Ukrainian state. One of the most influential voices in the glasnost-era debate over the future shape of the Russian imperium was that of the Nobel Prize-winning novelist and philosopher

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who acknowledged being “well-nigh half Ukrainian by birth” but echoed imperial Russian officials’ claim that “talk of a separate Ukrainian people existing since something like the ninth century . . . is a recently invented falsehood.” A figure who had long criticized the Soviet system for inflicting violence upon traditional Russian culture and identity, Solzhenitsyn called for the formation of a “Russian Union” composed of the Soviet Union’s East Slavic core—Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and northern Kazakhstan—while the Baltic, South Caucasus, and Central Asian states would become independent. He regarded the standardized Ukrainian language as the “distorted” product of Austro-Hungarian intrigues, “unrelated to popular usage and chock-full of German and Polish words.” Solzhenitsyn therefore condemned the “cruel partition” of Ukraine from Russia, warning of further waves of separatism within Ukraine itself.

The Making of Ukraine and Ukrainians

Though the relationship between Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians remains an object of contention in all three countries, Ukraine has made enormous strides in consolidating a shared civic identity, which includes the bulk of Russian speakers in eastern and southern Ukraine. The relative success of this project of “making Ukrainians” has accelerated Ukraine’s decoupling from Russia, feeding concern in Moscow that time is running out to restore influence over its neighbor and justify a series of increasingly risky gambles to pull Ukraine back into Moscow’s orbit.

The story of the more than three decades since the Soviet collapse centers on the gradual diffusion of “Ukrainianness” across an ever-wider swathe of the country and its people. In a pattern familiar from both interwar Europe and the postcolonial Global South, the independent Ukrainian state became instrumental in forging a shared national identity among its inhabitants through education, official memory, the media, legislation, and other tools. Measured by language use, religious affiliation, ethnic self-identification, and political outlook, a much higher percentage of Ukrainian citizens today see themselves first and foremost as Ukrainian, including in parts of the country where Russian remains the predominant language.

A key element of the process of “making Ukrainians” underway since the late Soviet era is a blurring of the historical divide between western and eastern (and southern) Ukraine. Though Rukh and similar groups’ stronghold lay in western Ukraine, a 1991 referendum on independence from the Soviet Union was approved by 92.3 percent of voters; even in Russian-speaking regions of eastern Ukraine, large majorities supported independence.

In the last years of the Soviet Union, Russian speakers outnumbered Ukrainian speakers in most of Ukraine's eastern oblasts; by 2001, the number of Ukrainian speakers was higher everywhere except in Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk. Today, more than two-thirds of Ukrainian citizens claim Ukrainian as a native language; even in eastern regions, a plurality is bilingual in Ukrainian and Russian. The shift reflects both state policy (as in education), as well as individual decisions. A language law signed by former Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko in 2019—and frequently referenced by Putin as an element in the “genocide” perpetrated by the Ukrainian state—promises to further “Ukrainify” education, media, and administration. It designates Ukrainian as the official state language and requires all media outlets to publish in Ukrainian (they may also publish parallel versions in other languages). Some of the shift is politically driven, as individuals increasingly use Ukrainian in protest against Russian intervention—especially in the wake of the 2022 invasion. It is also the natural result of over 30 years of Ukrainian independence.

Voting patterns provide another indicator of Ukrainians' emerging sense of national unity. The first several presidential and parliamentary elections held after independence saw stark divides between western and eastern Ukraine—starker even than the divides between blue and red states in the United States. In the 1994 election, Leonid Kravchuk, one of the signatories to the Belavezha Accords dissolving the Soviet Union, won 90 percent of the vote in several western oblasts (with a high of 94.8 percent in Ternopil oblast)—while his rival, Leonid Kuchma, who favored a policy of pragmatic balancing between Russia and the West, racked up 88 percent of the vote in Luhansk oblast and 79 percent in Donetsk oblast (together, Donbas). Since the Russian annexation of Crimea and invasion of Donbas, however, pro-Western candidates Petro Poroshenko (2014) and Volodymyr Zelensky (2019) have won comfortable majorities in all oblasts.² Moreover, voting behavior in recent elections was shaped by bread and butter considerations and hopes for ending the conflict in Donbas, issues that cut across Ukraine's geographic divides.

Political outlooks in Ukraine and Russia are diverging as well. Calls for Ukraine's integration with the European Union and NATO have grown substantially—in no small part in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea and occupation of Donetsk and Luhansk. Support for NATO membership, which hovered below 50 percent prior to the 2014 Russian invasion, has greatly risen, reaching 62 percent in early 2022. Meanwhile, more than two-thirds of Ukrainians (68 percent) support membership in the European Union. Regardless of the willingness of either organization to admit Ukraine, these attitudes reflect a seismic shift that makes the idea of reintegration with Russia harder to imagine. They also have implications for Ukrainian foreign policy, insofar as leaders such as Poroshenko and Zelensky, who have come to power in the shadow of war and occupation, prioritize deepening ties with the Euro-Atlantic West as a hedge against further Russian intervention.

Ukraine as a Geopolitical Flash Point

Ukraine was a cornerstone of the Soviet Union, the archrival 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, defense industries, and military, including the Black Sea Fleet and some of the nuclear arsenal. Ukraine was so vital to the union that its decision to sever ties in 1991 proved to be a coup de grâce for the ailing superpower.

Ukraine became a battleground in 2014 when Russia annexed Crimea and began arming and abetting separatists in the Donbas region in the country's southeast. Russia's seizure of Crimea was the first time since World War II that a European state annexed the territory of another. More than fourteen thousand people died in the fighting in the Donbas between 2014 and 2021, the bloodiest conflict in Europe since the Balkan Wars of the 1990s. The hostilities marked a clear shift in the global security environment from a unipolar period of U.S. dominance to one defined by renewed competition between great powers.

In February 2022, Russia embarked on a full-scale invasion of Ukraine with the aim of toppling the Western-aligned government of Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

European Union's Reaction to the Russian-Ukrainian War

The EU and its member states strongly condemn Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. They also condemn Belarus' involvement in Russia's military aggression.

Since February 2022, the European Council and the Council of the European Union have been meeting regularly to discuss the situation in Ukraine from different perspectives.

EU leaders demanded on several occasions that Russia immediately cease its military actions, unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from Ukraine and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

They emphasized the right of Ukraine to choose its own destiny and commended the people of Ukraine for their courage in defending their country.

In response to the military aggression, the EU has massively expanded sanctions against Russia, by adding a significant number of persons and entities to the sanctions list, and by adopting unprecedented restrictive measures.

The EU has shown unity and strength and has provided Ukraine with humanitarian, political, financial and military support.

The EU has adopted a number of sanctions in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions.

The measures are designed to weaken Russia's economic base, depriving it of critical technologies and markets and significantly curtailing its ability to wage war.

EU countries have stood united in their response to increasing energy prices and threats to the EU's energy security. The emergency measures adopted by the Council to ensure a sufficient and affordable energy supply have helped calm the markets. The price of gas, which reached an unprecedented peak in August 2022, has become relatively stable.

OBJECTIVE

The Committee Chair has the goal of creating a more conscient group of diplomats, aware of the crisis arab countries are facing in these times from a humanitarian and civil perspective. The Chair seeks around for delegates with an active participation, respect for the world that englobes them and fret about it and its peacekeeping. Delegates must have the main skills needed in diplomacy. For instance critical analysis and understatement and comprehension for different cultures and ideologies, as well as respect for them.

Delegates of the Security Council's responsibility is to solve as soon as possible the bellicose conflicts occurring in Ukraine under Russian attack. Analyzing the conflict from an impartial point of view will be crucial in the discussion of a resolution for the entire world's peace and security.

Delegates are going to focus especially on the war susited between Ukraine and Russia, analyzing the roots of the conflict as well as the pertinence of the countries and what they could apport to the council.

The Security Council is always fond of Diplomats with a great perspective of the context world is facing in this era, while knowing they have the capability to make the change. Their responsibility is to always search for the equitable and safer for the nations involved in the conflict. They should not loosen the aim we have in the search of justice and peace.

With this goal in mind, we extend an upstanding invitation to the delegates to stand out for their nations values and ideologies always in the search of peace, development, and the reposefullness of the nations.

- The Chair of the Security Council.

COUNTRIES' BACKGROUND

Ukraine

The current conflict in Ukraine began on 24 February 2022 when Russian military forces entered the country from Belarus, Russia and Crimea. Prior to the invasion, there had already been eight years of conflict in eastern Ukraine between Ukrainian Government forces and Russia-backed separatists.

In the almost two years since Russia's full-scale invasion, Ukraine has recaptured 54 percent of occupied territory, while Russia still occupies 18 percent of the country. Ukraine's 2023 offensive has achieved minor territorial gains, but the frontlines have remained stable for almost a year. Both sides have dug in, making breakthroughs increasingly difficult, and the number of military casualties has climbed to an estimated half a million. Meanwhile, Russia continues to bombard Ukrainian cities and blockade its ports, and Ukraine has stepped up drone attacks on Russian ships and infrastructure.

Russian Federation

In February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine from the North, East and South in order to control the whole country through direct military occupation and/or a proxy government. Moscow assumed a rapid collapse or surrender of the Ukrainian state and planned a relatively fast war of maneuver coupled with air assaults and/or amphibious operations to take over major cities such as Kyiv, Kharkiv and Odessa. Ukraine – which had prepared to some extent for a Russian invasion since 2014 – resisted and rolled back invading forces from its major cities in 2022, including from Kherson despite its illegal annexation to the Russian Federation. In late spring 2023, Kyiv launched a counter-offensive aimed at liberating territories south of Zaporizhzhia, but unfortunately Russian forces were able to hold most of the ground previously gained. A high level of attrition has now been experienced by both sides for several months, with more than half a million troops deployed by belligerents.

Over the last six months, the war has turned into a bloody stalemate. It witnesses continuous and indiscriminate air campaigns by Russia – including the use of bombs, missiles and drones –, tailored raids by Ukraine on the occupied territories and across the Black Sea, and above all fierce land battles over a highly fortified frontline with a systematic, mutual shelling and massive use of drones. Two years after the beginning of the invasion, Russian armed forces control the land corridor that connects the Crimea peninsula to Donbas – two areas already directly or indirectly under Moscow influence since 2014 – and the whole Azov Sea: a region accounting for slightly less than 20 percent of Ukrainian territory.

Republic of Belarus

During the 2014 Ukrainian crisis, Belarus acted as a mediator and peacemaker, taking a neutral stance on Russia's annexation of Crimea and reinforcing its own image as "a donor of security and stability" in the region. However, the 2020 political crisis in Belarus increased Aliaksandr Lukashenka's dependence on the Kremlin, and he became Russia's crucial ally in the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. As the anti-Western rhetoric from the Lukashenka regime continues to escalate and the military activity on the Belarusian-Ukrainian border increases, there are mounting concerns that Belarus will become more directly involved in the Ukrainian crisis.

The West, grappling with the war itself, has lost interest in Belarus as a sideshow. Lukashenka's human rights abuses, while significant, are not regarded on a par with Putin's war crimes. As the West lacks the ability to influence Lukashenka's actions, its policy towards the country has narrowed to sanctions and financial support for civil society.

Despite the imposition of strong economic sanctions by the West, Belarus's economy grew by 3.5 per cent year-on-year in the first nine months of 2023.

United States of America

America's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine surprised many analysts, both because of its severity, and because of the speed and vigor with which it was implemented.

The United States, their allies, and their partners worldwide are united in support of Ukraine in response to Russia's premeditated, unprovoked, and unjustified war against Ukraine. We have not forgotten Russia's earlier aggression in eastern Ukraine and occupation following its unlawful seizure of Crimea in 2014. The United States reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters.

The United States, in coordination with the EU and others, has provided substantial assistance to Ukraine, imposed increasingly severe sanctions on Russia and enablers of its war in Ukraine, and sought to promote accountability for Russian war crimes.

French Republic

French President Emmanuel Macron has long emphasized the importance of European countries strengthening their security and defense capabilities, which would enable them to pursue their strategic interests autonomously. He has also pursued a dialogue with Russian President Vladimir Putin with the purpose of building 'a new architecture' of security and trust in Europe. After Putin launched a war against Ukraine in February 2022, Macron could have led the European response to the crisis in terms of military assistance. Instead, the mismatch between

some of Macron's words and actions has weakened his standing among his European allies, and it is not clear that it has raised his standing as an interlocutor in the eyes of Putin.

France's position on the war in Ukraine has garnered some often negative, and at times virulent, reactions from its partners and allies. Some statesmen in Poland and the Baltic states have condemned the French.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The most obvious concern is the widely reported provision of artillery, rockets, and missiles by North Korea to Russia in exchange for what many governments and experts suspect to be Moscow's transfer of sensitive military technologies that could further propel the North's weapons programs. The impact of their military cooperation is alarming enough. Yet, perhaps even more worrisome are the implications of the war itself for North Korea's posturing—specifically, how the war shaped and gave impetus to Kim Jong Un's shifting worldview and foreign policy. Moreover, it is worth reviewing how this, coupled with North Korean domestic factors, has emboldened Kim, further increasing the risk of armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

Russia has fired North Korean-supplied short-range ballistic missiles into Ukraine twice in the past week, an "escalation" of Pyongyang's support for Moscow that has serious implications for both the war in Europe and security on the Korean Peninsula, the White House said Thursday.

People's Republic of China

Since the invasion, China has consistently blamed NATO and the West for provoking Russia into launching the attack and not taking Russia's legitimate security interests into account, repeating verbatim Russian talking points. It has refrained from calling the conflict a war or saying that Russia invaded its neighbor. Russian President Vladimir Putin may very well not have told Chinese President Xi Jinping in advance in February 2022 that this would be a full-scale invasion, as opposed to a limited-sounding "Special Military Operation." But once it started, China may have presumed, like many in the West, that the war would be over in a few days.

In 2023, Chinese President Xi Jinping made some gestures toward Ukraine, speaking with Zelensky on April 26 and appointing diplomat Li Hui as a representative to Kyiv, Moscow, and Europe in May. Yet China's official rhetoric hasn't changed, accusing NATO and the United States of "providing weapons and triggering proxy wars." Li attended the second Ukrainian peace summit in Jeddah, but he refused to come to the third such peace summit in Malta and has been virtually invisible since.

And despite Ukrainian and Western efforts, Russia and China continued to grow ever closer in 2023. Xi's first foreign visit since the invasion was to Moscow, while China helped Russian President Vladimir Putin to break out from political and economic isolation. Last October, Putin attended the Belt and Road Summit in Beijing, receiving a high-level reception.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK and our allies condemn the Russian government's unprovoked and premeditated invasion of Ukraine. Putin has isolated Russia from the rest of the world. The UK stands with Ukraine, its democratically-elected government and its brave people at this awful time. The UK government is providing a range of economic, humanitarian and defensive military assistance to Ukraine, and is imposing additional sanctions on Russia and Belarus.

The United Kingdom has been providing both economic and humanitarian aid, including vital medical supplies, military aid to Ukraine, continuing to work with international partners to supply vital weapons to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, changing the immigration system to support British nationals and their families who usually live in Ukraine, and Ukrainians in the UK and their families, and delivering an unprecedented package of sanctions to cut off funding for Putin's war machine.

State of Palestine

Amid Russia's ongoing war on Ukraine, Hamas's terrorist attack on Israel and Israel's military response in Gaza has significant and challenging repercussions for both countries and for U.S. support for Ukraine's defense. Both Ukraine and Russia are seeking political and diplomatic support from the international community, which is watching closely to see who supports and who condemns Hamas and Israeli actions. At the same time, the war in Gaza threatens to take global attention and resources away from Ukraine's efforts to defend itself. This change in focus could lead to a diminution of economic and military assistance for that embattled country. For the United States, maintaining diplomatic, military and economic support for Ukraine will remain a strategic priority despite these challenges.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was quick to condemn Hamas's actions, and drew parallels between Israel's efforts to defend itself and Ukraine's defense against unprovoked Russian aggression. However, as the scale of Israeli assaults against Gaza intensified, Zelenskyy took a week to make a statement stressing the importance of preventing civilian casualties.

In contrast to Zelenskyy, Putin did not immediately condemn Hamas's terror attack against Israel, instead labeling it the result of a failed United States' Middle East policy. Russia has also used its seat on the UNSC to put forward resolutions condemning attacks against civilians without mentioning Hamas and to veto a U.S.-sponsored resolution that recognized all states' right to self-defense.

Kingdom of Sweden

At an annual security and defense conference in Sweden on Jan. 7, the country's civil defense minister, Carl-Oskar Bohlin, told attendees, "There could be war in Sweden." Sweden's chief of defense Micael Bydén echoed Bohlin, saying the Swedish population should mentally prepare for the possibility.

Finland and Sweden applied for NATO membership in May 2022, just months after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. The move signaled a break from a history of neutrality for both countries. Sweden's then prime minister, Magdalena Andersson, said at the time that Russia's invasion threatened Europe's security order and made Sweden's need for guaranteed security granted through NATO membership apparent.

"Should Sweden be the only country in the Baltic Sea region that was not a member of NATO, we would be in a very vulnerable position. We can't rule out that Russia would then increase pressure on Sweden," she said.

Since Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Sweden has provided military, humanitarian and civil support to support Ukraine.

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