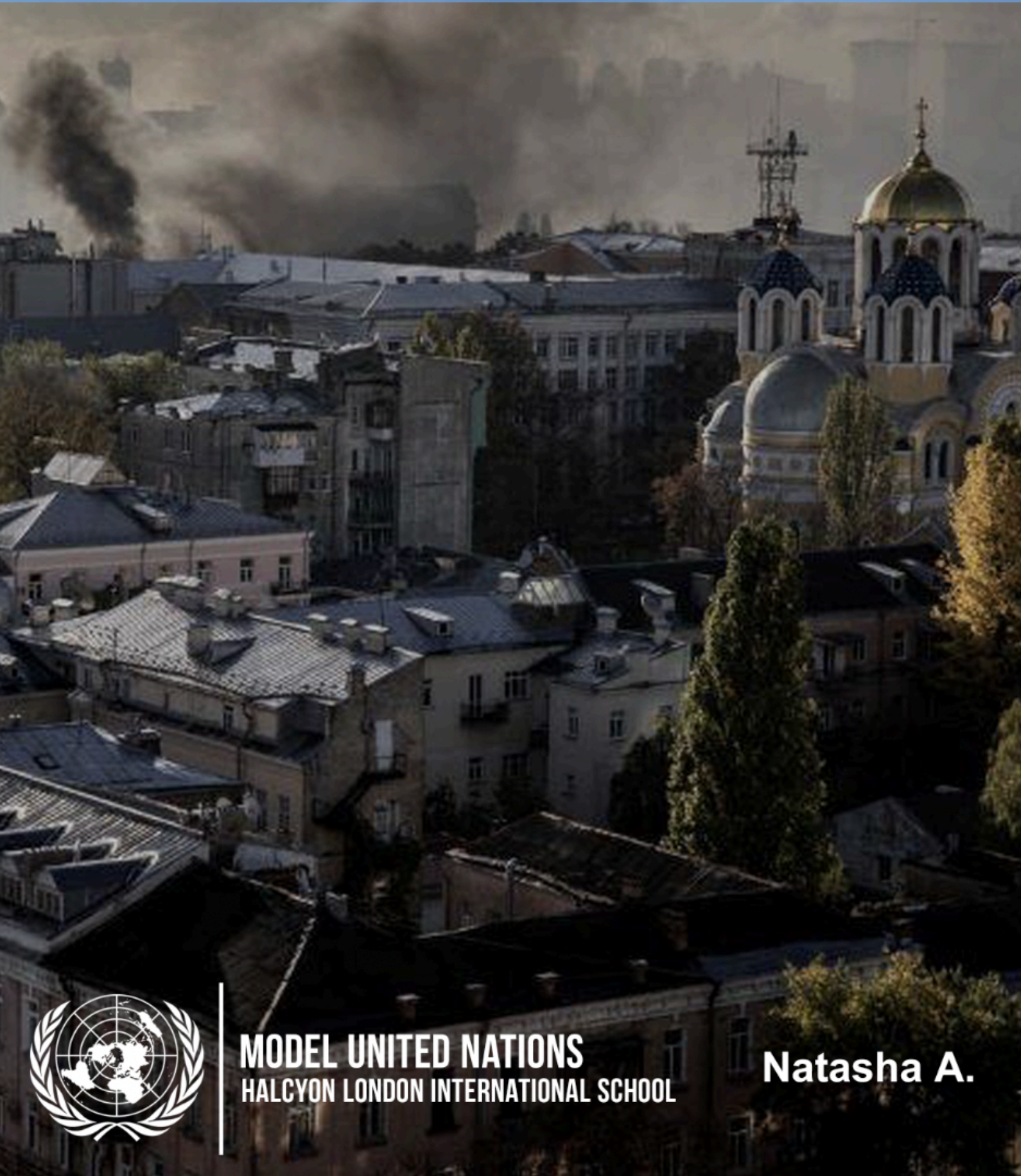


The Security Council

Assessing the Possibilities of Prohibiting Foreign Involvement in the Russo-Ukraine War



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Issue:	Assessing the Possibilities of Prohibiting Foreign Involvement in the Russo-Ukraine War
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Introduction

When addressing an issue such as a conflict with such political charges as the Russo-Ukrainian war, one must allow both the short-term and long-term perspectives to be taken into account when decisions regarding foreign involvement are made. In this conflict especially, where either side is supported by opposing global superpowers, the political effects, most importantly, must be considered before reaching any conclusions.

Tens of thousands of people have died as a direct result of this war, including both Russian and Ukrainian soldiers and civilians. Numerous essentials, including the availability of energy and food as well as the cost of living and global trade, have been impacted by this conflict. An outline of the possibilities and the further implications of foreign involvement in the Russo-Ukrainian conflict will be provided in this report.

Key Terms

Annexation

A term used in international law, annexation refers to an often forcible declaration of a state's sovereignty over a territory. In this case, Russia annexed several areas of Eastern Ukraine.

Minsk Agreements

This is the title of the series of agreements formed in response to the armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine over the Donbas area. These agreements aimed to stop this conflict, however, they were mostly ignored.

Irredentism

A movement, in this case political, which calls for a claiming or re-claiming of land which is considered (by those in the movement) as a lost territory. The Russo-Ukrainian conflict is irredentist in motives.

Denazification

Denazification refers to the process of removing Nazi influence from an area. Putin claimed that the invasion of Ukraine was to support the denazification of the area, however, this claim was unprecedented as there was not sufficient evidence on Russia's side.

Key Parties

Russia

Russia has continuously claimed that it has power over the state of Ukraine. Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, is often supported by the Chinese state. Both states define themselves as communist states. Historically, President Putin has questioned Ukraine's legitimacy as a country, claiming that it is still a part of Russia and in Russian territory.

Ukraine

Recently, Ukraine has been pushing westward (ie, leaning towards capitalist, democratic ideals) in its ideology and political practices. President Zelenskyy finds some form of Western support due to their association with Western ideology, with the USA's expansionist principles often helping the state.

China

China has backed Russia in politics for some time now, with the two states often joining forces. President Xi Jinping shares President Putin's dislike of Western expansionism.

The United States of America

The USA has shown support for the Eastern expansion of NATO and also shows some support for Ukraine's wishes to join. It however also recognises the dangers regarding international involvement violence that Russia could perceive if this were to happen and is therefore cautious. That said, the US's relations with Russia historically encourage tensions between the two states. Furthermore, its competition with China—which backs Russia—makes the USA far more willing to openly rebuke Russian and Chinese actions in this conflict.

European Union

The European Union is a coalition of some European states (and The United States of America). It was formed after World War II as an attempt to prevent future conflicts. The EU condemns Russia's actions in Ukraine. It has imposed heavy sanctions on Russia, as well as contributing large amounts of aid to affected areas. The EU has also financed armaments for the Ukrainian army. As the EU is the world's biggest trade bloc, the support (or lack thereof) that it provides to a country's economy is significantly important to said country.

NATO

NATO supports Ukraine's right to self-defence. Although Ukraine is not a full member of NATO, the two still have strong relations, and as such, NATO deems it appropriate to support the state with funding, armaments, and aid supplies. While Russia is not a member of NATO, President Putin has consistently called for Ukraine to be barred from joining, which some have argued is a rationale behind the early invasion.

The Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic

The DPR and the LPR were pro-Russia separatist states in the Donbas region of Ukraine which were active from April 2014 until September 2022. Donbas is one of the most historical regions in Ukraine with many ethnic Russian people due to it being in the easternmost part of the country. The regions are now (as of September 2023) partially occupied by Russian forces.

General Overview

The Russia-Ukraine war is the result of a longstanding conflict between the two nations, which, since 2014 has included cyberwarfare, naval incidents, sanctions, and more. In 2014, the Euromaidan protests and the Revolution of Dignity led to the ousting of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, marking the end of a pro-Russian government in Ukraine. Shortly after, pro-Russian protests erupted

throughout the East and Southern parts of Ukraine (Figure 1), leading to Russia sending unmarked troops into Crimea, occupying strategic points, and annexing the territory.



(Figure 1: Pro-Russian protests in Ukraine, 2014, via [RGloucester](#))

In April of 2014, pro-Russian separatists seized government locations in Ukraine's Donbas region, claiming two separate states, the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), and the Luhansk People's Republic (LPR). This started the Donbas war, and the DPR and LPR received considerable assistance from Russia, though Russia denied involvement. In September 2014, the Minsk II agreements were signed, supposedly marking the end of conflict between Russia and Ukraine, however, the outlined provisions were never implemented, and the agreements only resulted in occasional cease-fires.

In 2021 Russia began to build up a large force near the Russia-Ukraine border, though they insisted that there were no plans to invade. In the meantime, Russian President Vladimir Putin insisted that Ukraine be banned from joining NATO, and professed a variety of irredentist views regarding Ukraine.

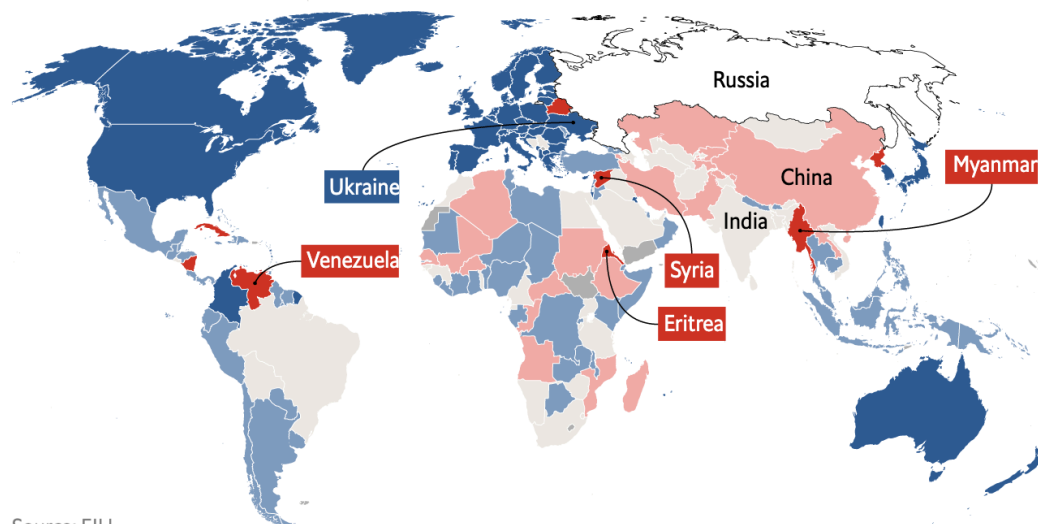
In February of 2022, Russia officially recognised the DPR and LPR as states, and announced a ‘Special Military Operation’ with the goal of the ‘Denazification of Ukraine’, and invaded Ukraine. The invasion was condemned internationally, with countries worldwide increasing and placing sanctions on Russia regarding trade, aid, and military assistance.

Russia, as a fellow communist state, is backed by China, a growing global power. Meanwhile, Ukraine, with its Western-leaning tendencies, is supported by most of Europe and the USA.

A world divided

Government responses to the war in Ukraine, March 2022

- Condemns Russia
- Neutral
- Supports Russia
- No data
- West-leaning
- Russia-leaning



Source: EIU

(Figure 2: Supporting States, 2022, The Economist)

Timeline of Events

2013– 14	Although the territorial conflict regarding Ukraine has been prevalent throughout a lot of contemporary Eastern European history, the modern conflict seen in 2023 sees the 2014 Crimean Annexe as its commonly referenced roots. In 2014, Crimea was taken over by Russian forces and in March, it declared itself as separated from Ukraine and a part of Russian territory.
2014–2015	Discussions to stop fighting over border territory resulted in a legal agreement known as the Minsk Agreements. However, this agreement is never fully enacted and thus armed conflict continues.
2017	Ukraine restores NATO membership and the country's association agreement with the European Union goes into force.
2020	President Zelenskyy takes actions which solidify and strengthen Ukraine's NATO relations to join NATO. Throughout the rest of 2020, Ukraine continues strengthening its bonds with the West.
April 2021	Russia starts mass military drills, with masses of troops surfacing on the border of Ukraine and Russia.
September 2021	Ukraine pushes to become a NATO member but is not encouraged to do so.
December 2021	Russia presents a list of security measures which include the prohibition of NATO status for Ukraine and the prohibition for NATO activities in Eastern Europe to diffuse the crisis in the area.
January 2022	The Foreign Office exposes a plot to install a pro-Russian government in Ukraine. NATO begins to militarise its eastern borders in preparation for potential threats. A massive cyber attack leaves Ukraine's government websites unavailable for some time. The UK begins supplying Ukraine with military supplies and armaments.
February 2022	Russia launches a large military exercise with Belarus, close to the border with Ukraine. President Putin orders Russian troops into the independent areas of

the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic. President Xi Jinping of China and President Putin a document condemning Western expansionism. Russian troops get closer to the Russo-Ukrainian border. Russia formally recognises the LPR and DPR, sending troops into their territories. Heavy sanctions are placed on Russia.

February 2022 Ukraine plans to enter a state of emergency while the LPR and DPR request support from Russia to dispel Ukrainian forces. Many suggest that these requests are what Russia used to invade Ukraine.

February 2022 Ukraine enters a state of emergency as Russia invades its territory.

2023+ As of now no agreements have been reached regarding the end of the Russo-Ukraine war between the two fighting parties.

Possible Impacts

Prohibiting Foreign Involvement

Prohibiting foreign involvement in this conflict could result in a lessened scale of fighting, as neither side may be able to fight to such a level as they can now. On the other hand, it allows the actions of those involved in the conflict to go somewhat unchecked, as sanctions could not be placed on any party. It also decreases aid resources to any affected areas, greatly increasing the toll of the conflict.

In any case, each party benefits differently. By prohibiting foreign involvement, the Russian state is arguably able to act more freely with their actions and politics surrounding the events, however, it relies on support from governments such as the Chinese and the Belarusian. All parties involved would still have to take into account the reactions from international organisations in the long run, though.

Effect on International Relations

When allowing for full foreign involvement, the conflict could have a serious increase in violence, considering the USA/China-backed support to either side. If either government were able to send in troops, rather than money, aid, and political support, the conflict could escalate from an almost proxy war between the US and China to a full-scale war between the two powers.

Western Europe and the US will face challenges supporting Ukraine in both instances; the same goes for China and Belarus for Russia.

The global order would also be impacted by these decisions about foreign involvement. The outcome of this conflict could hold heavy implications for the future of economic and political climates internationally, as well as hold information on the severity of other rising border conflicts such as the one in Taiwan. On one hand, with a Russian win, there could be far more potential for more and more of Eastern Europe and other formerly Russian territories to end up being Russian once more. This may also cause border difficulties to spread to countries such as Serbia and Kosovo. Alternatively, a Ukrainian victory could pose a great threat to Russia and other states which are against NATO. Both instances would result in some type of increase in tensions between the US and China.

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