
AbdulQadir AL-AMEEN
Azman University, Kano, Nigeria

PERISCOPING RUSSIAN – UKRAINIAN CONFLICT THROUGH THE LENS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Abstract:	<p><i>The Russian Ukrainian conflict of 2022 has had a significant impact on the world politics. This conflict, which involves military and non-military actions, raises important questions regarding the applicability and effectiveness of public international law in resolving and mitigating it.</i></p> <p><i>This article aims to analyze the Russian – Ukrainian conflict through the lens of international law. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to a better understanding and provide insight into the possibilities for potential solutions.</i></p> <p><i>The paper explores the extent to which the Russian – Ukrainian conflict violated the principles of international law, the positions of intergovernmental bodies on the conflict and the prospects for reaching a solution consistent with the standards of international law.</i></p> <p><i>The study relied on the analytical approach by examining the basic elements of the conflict from a legal perspective.</i></p> <p><i>Findings reveal the inability of the UN to deal with and or stop the conflict. Also, again, the justifications for both parties to legitimize their actions violated international rules and are far from satisfactory. Hence, adopting a legal perspective is crucial in addressing the complex and ongoing Russian Ukrainian conflict is recommended.</i></p>
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Contact details of the authors:	E-mail: abuhanaan3@gmail.com
Institutional affiliation of the authors:	Azman University, Kano, Nigeria
Institutions address:	KM 8 Maiduguri Road, PMB 3104, Kano, tel:+2349168666156, www.azmanuniversity.edu.ng, e-mail: info@azmanuniversity.edu.ng

Introduction

Among the contemporary international events that have cast a shadow on international reality is the Russian Ukrainian conflict of 2022, because of its far-reaching implications for regional stability and global politics, this conflict, not only has serious social, political and economic consequences for both countries, but also raised complex legal questions regarding the application of public international law. This article aims to analyze the Russian Ukrainian conflict within the framework of public international law and study its regional and global repercussions. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to a better understanding and provide insight into the possibilities for potential solutions. This conflict fundamentally stems from the deep-rooted historical, cultural, and political divide between Russia and Ukraine. The roots of this division can be traced back to centuries of shared history, intertwined identities, and regional disputes¹.

In this context, the pace of the conflict escalated in 2022 when Russia launched a military war on Ukraine. This move was met with international condemnation and sparked a series of events that exacerbated tensions between Russia and Ukraine. This has resulted in thousands of casualties, the displacement of residents, and significant economic and social repercussions². Public international law has been instrumental in shaping responses to the Russian Ukrainian conflict, as it provides the legal framework through which states, international

¹ Samantha Wilson, *The Origins of the Russia-Ukraine War*, “Foreign Policy Magazine”, Vol. 29, No. 2, 2021

² Mary Robinson, *Causes and Catalysts of the Current Russia-Ukraine Crisis*, “Journal of Conflict Studies”, Vol. 24, No. 1, p. 202

organizations and individuals can address conflict and seek justice. Fundamental principles of international law, such as the prohibition of the use of force, respect for human rights, and the right to self-determination, have been invoked by various actors involved in the conflict to strengthen their positions and lend legitimacy to their actions. We begin by outlining the historical and political background Russian Ukrainian conflicts, before briefly addressing the impacts of Russian – Ukrainian conflict. The main body of the article is then separated into analysis, in turn, of the international rules being violated in the conflict, and the position of the intergovernmental bodies on them. The article concludes with some proposed solutions to the Russia/Ukraine conflict.

The Russian Ukrainian Conflict: Historical and Political Background and Reasons

The Russian Ukrainian conflict has been an ongoing No. since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. However, the conflict reached its peak in 2022 when Russia launched military operation against Ukraine. This conflict has resulted in the loss of thousands of lives and the displacement of millions of people, and it has had significant political and economic consequences for both countries and the region. The conflict is a complex and multifaceted No. that has garnered international attention and has far-reaching implications. It is essential to understand the background, motives, and roots of this conflict to gain a comprehensive perspective.

The Historical and Political Background of the Russian Ukrainian Conflict

The history of Russia and Ukraine goes back to centuries. They share a complex and intertwined history, marked by periods of cooperation, tension, and conflict. The origins of the relationship can be traced back to the medieval state of Kievan Rus, which included parts of present-day Ukraine and Russia. This early civilization laid the foundation for the cultural and linguistic ties that still exist between the two countries to this day. Over the centuries, the region has witnessed the rise and fall of several powerful entities, including the Mongol Empire and the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, which exercised influence over parts of Ukraine and Russia. These external influences have contributed to the divergent paths and identities developed by Ukraine and Russia¹.

In the late 18th century, the Russian Empire began to expand its territory, gradually annexing Ukrainian lands. This process intensified during the reign of Catherine the Great, who pursued a policy of Russification, seeking to assimilate Ukraine into the larger Russian identity. In the early twentieth century, Ukraine's struggle for independence gained momentum amid the collapse of the Russian Empire and the chaos of the Russian Revolution. However, this quest for self-determination was short-lived, as Ukraine soon found itself under Soviet rule after the creation of the Soviet Union in 1922². Under the Soviet rule, Ukraine witnessed a period of economic development and political repression, and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic became one of the republics within the Soviet Union, where Moscow exercised significant control over its affairs. Despite this, Ukraine was able to maintain its distinct cultural and national identity, throughout the Soviet era. Ukraine was an important component of the Soviet Union, serving as an agricultural and industrial stronghold, but this relationship was characterized by periods of tension. Under Soviet rule, the Ukrainian language and culture faced repression, and there were political and economic imbalances in Russia's favor.³

The relationship between Russia and Ukraine witnessed a major transformation in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed, as Ukraine declared its independence, which represented the beginning of a new chapter in their relationship. Initially, there were hopes to strengthen friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries, but this vision was challenged by a series of issues. The period since, has been characterized by tensions arising from Russia's loss of influence in its near abroad and policies centered on efforts to reclaim this in the face of indications on the part of some ex-Soviet states, principally Ukraine, that they seek a future founded on closer relationships with the EU and NATO, leaving Russia feeling 'boxed in' by the perception of the reach of these organizations extending ever closer to its borders.

¹ Ahmed Ali, *The Roots of the Russian Ukrainian Conflict: A Historical Perspective*, "Journal of International Studies", Vol.53, No. 2, 2021, p. 432

² Muhammad Jadallah, *The Development of Relations between Russia and Ukraine: A Historical Reading*, "Journal of Human Sciences - Kuwait University", Vol. 44, No. 2, 2017, p. 33

³ Mustafa Abdel Tawab, *Russia and Ukraine Throughout History, The Roots of the Current Conflict*, "Journal of International Studies - University of Baghdad", Vol. 11, No. 41, 2014, p. 71

The relations between the two countries witnessed the two most dangerous crises, the repercussions of which continued and led to the outbreak of war, and they are:

1. The Annexation of Crimea 2014

The crisis erupted in November 2013 after Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych announced his withdrawal from negotiations for a partnership agreement with the European Union and his intention to join the Eurasian Customs Union, which Russia sought to establish as a counterpart to the European Union. This sparked outrage among the Ukrainian public, particularly in Kyiv and Western Ukraine, who were eager to join the European Union, leading to a wave of massive protests in the capital. Despite the signing of the partnership agreement on February 21, 2014, between the government and the opposition, the situation deteriorated further the next day when the opposition revolted against President Yanukovych, forcing him to flee the country¹.

This situation faced opposition from the Russian-speaking residents of Eastern Ukraine, prompting them to hold counterdemonstrations. Russia responded by sending special forces to the strategically important Crimean Peninsula, where they took control of government buildings and strategic locations such as the Sevastopol port, which serves as a base for the Russian navy. On March 16, 2014, a referendum was held in Crimea, where 95% of the population chose to join Russia. Thus, Russia swiftly and decisively defended its vital interests in Ukraine and prevented the West from attempting to choke it off by sea through the seizure of the last maritime route connecting Russia to the Mediterranean, thereby imposing a new geopolitical reality in Crimea before the new Ukrainian authorities could begin to address the chaos across the country².

2. The war in Donbas and the division of Ukraine

The opposition that emerged against the new regime in eastern Ukraine is of strategic value as an effective tool for Russia in pressuring Ukraine or at least keeping its borders as far as possible from NATO's influence. Therefore, Russia hastened to support the opposition and the rebellion that began to appear on the Ukrainian scene, where pro-Russian protesters occupied government headquarters in the Donbas region. Two regions within the area declared their independence from Ukraine, namely (Donetsk) and (Luhansk), on May 12, 2014. Russia supported the establishment of self-defense forces in Donbas, where Ukrainian forces launched a large-scale attack on the Donbas regions. Russian support was not limited to providing weapons and training; it was accompanied by a wide-ranging media campaign against the Ukrainian military operation. Russia was also working covertly in Ukraine to create the appropriate conditions for a rebellion as part of the hybrid warfare strategy it launched in Ukraine³.

It is worth noting that this Russian intelligence role in Ukraine did not happen suddenly but has been ongoing since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, with Russian nationalist movements attempting to penetrate the Ukrainian arena. Therefore, we find that some Russian-speaking Ukrainians belonged to the Eurasian Movement. Additionally, activists in establishing the Donetsk People's Republic were previously introduced between 2006 and 2009 to training camps supervised by the Eurasian Youth Union Movement. This led to the spread of pro-Russian sentiments in the Donbas region as early as 2005, coinciding with the expansion of Russian nationalist activities there. This is a method of hybrid warfare that Russia has practiced within Ukraine, resulting in these nationalist sentiments in the Donbas region playing a significant role in encouraging the separation of this area from Kyiv's authority⁴. In general, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev summarized in a letter to Ukrainian President

¹ Nawar Muhammad Rabi, *The Political Crisis in Ukraine and the East-West Tug-of-War*, "The Political and International Journal", No. 27, 2015, pp. 28-29

² Imad Qaddoura, *The Centrality of Geography and Control of the Eastern Gateway to the West: Ukraine as a Focal Point of Conflict*, "Arab Policies", No. 9, July 2014, p. 49

³ Kevork Almassian, *The Conflict over Syria and Ukraine from the Perspective of "Putin's Brain"*, "Katykhon Center for Studies", 21/6/2016, <http://katehon.com/ar/article/lsr-l-swry-wwkny-mn-mnzw-dmg-bwtyn> (08.04.2025)

⁴ *Minsk Agreement*, DW German Channel website, 15/11/2016, [http://www.dw.com/ar/\(08.04.2025\)](http://www.dw.com/ar/(08.04.2025))

Viktor Yushchenko on August 11, 2009, that the crisis was preceded by problems between Russia and Ukraine as follows:

1. Ukraine supplying Georgia with weapons through secret deals before the 2008 Russo-Georgian War.
2. Ukraine's efforts to join NATO
3. Ukraine's obstruction of the Russian fleet's operations in the Black Sea and its base in Sevastopol port
4. The dispute over energy supplies and pricing, specifically the gas that Kyiv receives from Moscow.

The Ukrainian Russian crisis of 2021-2022 turned into a military confrontation and a continuous international crisis that also involved the United States, NATO, the European Union, and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Reasons for the Russian Ukrainian conflict

To understand Russia's motives the war on Ukraine, it is necessary to understand the status Ukraine holds with Russian decision – makers. Ukraine has strategic, economic and even cultural significance for Russia. Hence, the recent war had roots represented by the following motives:

Political Reasons

In December 1991, Ukraine, along with Russia and Belarus, were among the republics that hammered the final nail into the coffin of the Soviet Union, and the two separate states continued to maintain close relations. They agreed to maintain friendly relations with Ukraine agreeing in 1994 to give up its nuclear arsenal and sign the Budapest Memorandum on security guarantees, if Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States No. a guarantee against the use of force that threatens the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine. However, Moscow wanted to maintain its influence by establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States. While Russia was able to build a close alliance with Belarus, it was unable to bring Ukraine into the CIS, as Ukraine's desire was directed towards the West. This troubled Moscow, but it did not reach the stage of conflict throughout the 1990s because the West was not seeking Ukraine's inclusion in NATO. The Russian economy was also weak, and the country was preoccupied with the war in Chechnya. In 1997, Moscow, through the so-called "Grand Contract" formally recognized Ukraine's borders, including Crimea, which has a Russian-speaking majority¹.

Russia was one of the signatories to the Charter for European Security at the Istanbul Summit, 1999, where it "reaffirmed the inherent right of every state to be free to choose or change its security arrangements". The Russian leadership viewed Ukraine as part of its sphere of influence. Indeed, according to Romanian analyst Iulian Cifu, Russia dealt with Ukraine with an updated version of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" which states that Ukraine's sovereignty cannot be greater than that of the Warsaw Pact member states². This view assumes that Russia's actions to appease the West in the early 1990s should have been met with reciprocal action from the West, but without NATO expansion along Russia's borders.

The two countries experienced their first major diplomatic crisis in the fall of 2003 when Russia suddenly began building a dam in the Kerch Strait, adjacent to the Ukrainian island of Kosa Tusla. Kyiv viewed this as an attempt to redraw the border between the two countries. This tension was not resolved until a bilateral meeting between the Russian and Ukrainian presidents resulted in a halt to dam construction. However, the declared friendship between the two countries still bore signs of discord. During the 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections, Russia strongly supported its pro-Russian candidate, Viktor Yanukovich, but the "Orange Revolution" prevented his victory and replaced him with the pro-Western politician, Viktor Yushchenko. During his presidency, Russia cut off gas supplies to the country twice, in 2006 and 2009. It also cut off gas supplies to Europe passing through Ukraine³. In 2008, former President George W. Bush attempted to integrate Ukraine and Georgia into NATO and accept their membership through a preparatory program. Moscow protested and explicitly declared that it would not accept Ukraine's complete independence. During the NATO summit in Bucharest, the No. of Ukraine's membership

¹ Walter Lacobert, *Putinism: Russia and its Future with the West*, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Arabi, Lebanon, 2016, p. 58

² Alexander Dugin, *Salvation from the Eurasian West: Terrestrial Civilizations versus Maritime and Atlantic Civilizations*, Dar Al-Ka, Baghdad, 2021, p. 128

³ Walter Lacbourg, *Op. cit.*, p. 94

in NATO was raised for Georgia and Ukraine, but Germany and France blocked it. President Vladimir Putin also explicitly rejected Ukraine's membership in the alliance, considering it a threat to Russia's national security.

After weeks of protests as part of the Euromaidan movement (2013–2014), pro-Russian Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and leaders of Ukraine's parliamentary opposition signed a compromise agreement on February 21, 2014, calling for early elections. The next day, Yanukovych fled Kyiv ahead of a vote to remove him from the presidency. However, the leaders of Ukraine's Russian-speaking eastern regions declared their continued loyalty to Yanukovych, sparking what became known as the 2014 pro-Russian unrest in Ukraine. These unrests were followed by Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014, and then the outbreak of war in Donbas in April 2014, at a time when Russia was working to support or even establish “quasi-states” within Ukrainian territory, namely the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics. Russia understands that Ukraine's location constitutes the western gateway and the last geographical barrier against NATO expansion. Additionally, the location of the Crimean Peninsula as a forward naval base for Russia grants it control over the Black Sea due to its central position in the sea. Russia realizes that losing Crimea, in particular, and Ukraine, in general, would serve the strategy of NATO powers in containing Russia by reaching its land and maritime borders, especially in the case of a NATO base being established there. This would prevent Russia from navigating the Black Sea and consequently from accessing the Mediterranean Sea. Therefore, Russian actions to annex Crimea were swift and decisive.¹

Economic Reasons

Russia is considered the largest gas supplier in the world, exporting about 16 billion cubic feet per day, most of which goes to Europe. Through Ukraine, 80% of Russian gas flows towards Europe. Therefore, if Ukraine shifts its orientation towards NATO, it will disrupt Russia's gas exports to Europe, putting pressure on the Russian economy, which largely relies on energy, with Europe being one of its most important markets².

Security Reasons

Russia realized that it had an open mandate to defend its interests in regions it considers a natural extension of itself. Russia also recognized its influence in its vital area through control over Ukraine and preventing it from joining NATO. In addition to the strategic importance of the Sevastopol port, which houses the Russian military base with the largest Russian naval fleet, and the necessity of protecting it, especially since the ruling political regime in Ukraine is aligned with the West and seeks to annul the agreement signed between President Vladimir Putin and former Ukrainian President Yanukovych. This agreement included the extension of the naval base's presence in this port in the Crimean Peninsula, which was originally set to end in 2017 and was extended to 2042. Under the agreement, this extension was in exchange for \$7 billion annually and a 30% reduction in the price of Russian gas exported to Ukraine³.

Social Reasons

When the Ukrainian crisis erupted in 2013, it had roots dating back to Ukraine's separation from the former Soviet Union, where two types of political trends prevailed. The first was the Ukrainian nationalists in Western Ukraine, who sought to strengthen Ukraine's ties with Europe and the United States. The second was the Ukrainians of Slavic Russian origin in Eastern Ukraine, who sought to maintain strong relations with the Russian Federation. This means that Ukraine suffers from the same identity crisis that Russia is experiencing. Therefore, the Ukrainian political arena witnessed conflicts and tensions between these two opposing directions, which escalated during the Portuguese Revolution between 2004 and 2005, following allegations of election fraud that led to the pro-Russian candidate Viktor Yanukovych winning the presidency by defeating the Western-backed opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko. However, the political conflicts did not stop, and this time they were within the pro-Western camp between President Viktor Yushchenko and his ally, the leader of the parliamentary minority, Yulia Tymoshenko. After the old political elite loyal to Russia managed to ally with Yushchenko, exploiting their political influence and economic capabilities to regain their positions within the system, this led to the old elite reaching power, where

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 94

² Muhammad Jassim Hussein, *Russia and the Game of Energy Dominance (A Vision of Roles and Strategies)*, Amjad Publishing and Printing House, Baghdad, 2018, p. 77

³ Enaad Kazim Al-Naili, *The Russian Federation and the Future of the Global Strategic Balance*, Arab Scientific Publishers, Beirut, p. 190

Viktor Yanukovych was able to assume the position of Prime Minister, receiving wide political and economic support from Russia as part of the struggle between Russia and the West for influence in Ukraine¹.

Impact of the Russian Ukrainian Conflict

The aggravation of the Russian Ukrainian conflict, and Russia's military intervention in Ukraine, led to losses on the Russian side, which varied at all levels, from human losses resulting from combat operations to economic losses resulting from the sanctions imposed by Western countries on Russia, which affected oil and gas. The freezing of balances and the collapse of commercial banks and supply programs in general. This war imposed international isolation on Russia, which led to the severing of commercial, cultural and political exchange, and exacerbated Western sanctions on Russia by closing airspace to Russian aviation in most European countries and prohibiting the movement of Russian ships in European ports. These sanctions also reached the point of halting all Russian activities and participation in many celebrations and programs. On the Ukrainian side, the losses of the Ukrainian economy worsened, which was reflected in many economic activities, and the damage to the infrastructure, which was affected by large-scale destruction operations directed by Russian forces, as the operations targeted civilian targets, not just military ones.

The continuation of the war also led to the cessation of maritime navigation, as the Ukrainian ports overlooking the Black Sea were closed, and maritime transport movement stopped. The war also caused the destruction of Ukraine's productive capacity, the deterioration of foreign trade, and the general collapse of the financial conditions in the country, as the ability to collect revenues diminished. Taxes, high prices of food commodities, energy, minerals, and economic contraction². The Russian Ukrainian war had a negative impact on European countries in general, in terms of slowing economic growth, and because of the impact of Western sanctions on Russia on trade relations, the volume of trade exchange between Russia and the EU countries decreased, as Moscow was the fifth largest trading partner of the European Union. The effects of the war also extended to threatening European investments and assets in Russia and the risk of confiscation and nationalization as Russia's reaction to Western sanctions. Since Russia is considered the largest energy supplier in the European Union, European energy security is destabilized and exposed to partial collapse³. Food security is also considered one of the most important foundations affected by the Russian Ukrainian war, as Russia is the largest exporter of wheat in the world, and Russia and Ukraine provide more than a third of global grain exports. Because of the war, the prices of food commodities in Europe have inflated, especially commodities based on wheat and corn. The Ukrainian refugee crisis has worsened. Since the beginning of the war, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that there are currently around 6 million Ukrainian refugees in Europe⁴.

The distribution of refugees has changed significantly over the past year. While in 2022 Poland was still the country with the highest number of forcibly displaced persons, Germany is now the leading destination. According to newly revised statistics, there are now over 1.1 million Ukrainian refugees on German territory. Monthly arrivals fluctuate but remain significant. Between the end of July and the end of September 2024, for example, the authorities registered some 20,000 new arrivals. The refugee situation has changed dramatically in Poland as well. Of the more than 1.6 million refugees to whom Poland granted temporary protection, only about 970,000 remain there. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians left in 2022, traveling mainly to Germany, but also to other Western European countries, as well.

Currently, the number of temporary protection holders in Poland is stable. However, it should be noted that there is a lot of movement on the Polish Ukrainian border. Circular movements in both directions amount to tens of thousands of people per day, according to the Polish border guards. The most common reason for this being the

¹ Saleh bin Mohammed Al-Khathlan, *Religion and Russian Foreign Policy: A Study of the Role of the Orthodox Church in Russian Policy Towards the Conflict in Syria*, "Center for Strategic Thought Studies", Istanbul, 2016, p. 19.

² The economic contraction has increased by between 25 and 35%, according to statistics from the International Monetary Fund

³ Issam Abdel Shafi, *The Russian-Ukrainian War and the Future of the International Order*, "Al Jazeera Center for Studies", May 3, 2022, www.studies.aljazeera.net (28.2.2025)

⁴ The United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 12.01.2025, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine> (28.06.2025)

temporary returns to Ukrainians to visit family members¹. Regarding the impact of the Russian Ukrainian conflict on African countries, the effect of the Russia-Ukrainian conflict has been felt across Africa through trade disruptions, commodity price increases, and tighter financial conditions.

One of the important legal implications of the Russian Ukrainian conflict is that it revealed a clear weakness in the current international system, especially in the Security Council, as it became clear after this conflict that the veto in the Security Council constitutes a major obstacle to international peace and weakens the role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security. For example, in the current conflict, we see that the Russian veto in the Security Council makes the imposition of sanctions subject to the solidarity of those who wish, unless Article 27 is amended, by activating the opinion of the majority representing two-thirds of the member states to override the effect of the veto, as in our case under discussion. Western threats to strip Russia of its permanent membership in the Security Council, although achieving this faces difficulty, except by preventing Russia from voting on the Security Council resolution related to its war on Ukraine.

The International Rules Being Violated in the Russian Ukrainian Conflict

This segment addresses the most important rules that were violated in this conflict, those that were used to give legitimacy to the invasion from Russian side. Russia's violation of the principle of non-interference: The principle of non-interference is one of the most important rules of contemporary international law, as stipulated in the United Nations Charter, and the most affirmed principle in international relations, and international reality has proven that it is the most violated principle of international law. There is no doubt that one of the most important characteristics of a state in accordance with the rules of international law is non-interference in its internal affairs, which is the most important manifestation of exercising its sovereignty in its external aspect, regardless of whether this interference is from a state or an international organization.

Internationally prohibited interference is the subjection of a state or international organization to interference in its internal or external affairs, without this subjection having a legal basis, for any reason, such as by obligating the intervening state in its affairs to follow a certain approach, or to refrain from a certain behavior, or a certain ideology. That is considered a restriction of the state's freedom and an attack on its sovereignty and independence². Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter prohibits the use of force in international relations. It also calls on all UN members to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of other states. Some exceptions to Article 2(4). Self-defense, as noted in Article 5. Actions taken by the UN Security Council to ensure international peace, as noted in Article 42.

Paragraph seven of the same article also stipulates that "nothing in this Charter authorizes the United Nations to interfere in affairs that are fundamental to the internal jurisdiction of a state". As stated in the Declaration of Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on October 24, 1970 "No state or group of states has the right to interfere directly or indirectly, for any reason, in the internal or external affairs of another state." As a result, not only military intervention, but also all types of interference or threats directed against the personality of the state or against its political, economic, or cultural components, is in violation of international law....³. By examining the previous texts, reviewing the case in question, and within the framework of searching for the extent of violation of the principle of intervention as one of the fundamental principles of international law, which includes non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and this appears, for example, in not exercising any pressure or coercion from a country on persons or institutions of another state, nor to engage in any kind of interference in the relations of this state with its nationals. This is because, according to this principle, every state has complete freedom to choose its political, economic and social system, and to establish whatever laws it wishes for this purpose, if it does not resort to systems of genocide of the population or racial discrimination against some of them.

This principle also includes refraining from any encouragement, support, or harboring harmful activities in other countries, such as, for example, refraining from recruiting or supporting mercenaries, and refraining from

¹ *Ukrainian Refugee Crisis: The Current Situation*, <https://www.peopleinneed.net/the-ukrainian-refugee-crisis-current-situation-953> (28.06.2025)

² Mansour Milad, *Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, Nasser University Press, Nasser, Iraq, 1991, p.185

³ *Idem*

interfering in civil wars in another country and assisting rebels there¹. This interference, which is prohibited by international law and stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations, may be political, military, economic, cultural, ideological, or financial interference. Its form may be direct or indirect, and it may be an individual intervention carried out by one country, or it may be a collective intervention carried out by a group of countries or an international organization.

Despite its prohibition and illegality, many countries have violated it based on other principles of international law, such as the principle of legitimate defense, or to protect human rights, or protect state nationals. The practice of interfering in the Russian Ukrainian situation was not the first time and will not be the last in international reality. Other countries have practiced it to achieve their goals and interests. Violating the principle of prohibiting the use of military force: the principle of prohibiting, the use of force or the threat thereof is one of the fundamental principles affecting international relations.

The principle of prohibiting the use of force or the threat of it is one of the fundamental principles affecting international relations, as contemporary international law was founded on coordinating relations between the components of the international community in a way that ensures a minimum level of stability. This principle was introduced for the first time in the text of Article Two, paragraph three and four of the United Nations Charter, where the text came clearly in the third paragraph that: States must settle their international disputes peacefully. This must be done in a way that does not endanger international peace, security, or justice. The fourth paragraph states: states must not threaten or use force against the political independence or territorial integrity of other states. This includes any actions that are inconsistent with the United Nations' purposes. In addition, it was addressed by Resolution No. 2625 regarding the Declaration of the Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, by stipulating that:

- States should not use force or coercion against other states.
- States should settle disputes peacefully.
- States should not intervene in other states' affairs.
- States should not acquire territory through force.

From the above texts, we conclude that the use of force in international relations, or even the threat thereof, is considered an internationally criminal act in accordance with international law and international humanitarian law, which makes the Russian position controversial and criminalized, as Ukraine is a sovereign state, and it is not permissible to use force against it, attack it, or threatening it. Russia has relied on Article 51 of the Charter relating to legitimate defense. It has relied on an illegitimate justification, which makes its behavior itself illegitimate in general, as the text of Article 51 has been clear and specific in this regard. Violation of the principle of sovereign equality: This principle has witnessed a great difference in interpretation and understanding among many international legal jurisprudential trends. It is not problematic on the theoretical level, but its application in international reality raises a set of practical difficulties, and this is due to the disagreement over the dimensions and limits of sovereignty². The principle of sovereign equality is a structural principle of the international legal system. It is recognized in numerous international legal instruments, including Article 2.1 of the United Nations Charter of 1945 and General Assembly Resolution 2625 (XXV) of 1970. It is also enshrined in international custom and as a general principle of international law. This principle encompasses the right of the State to its territorial integrity as well as its political independence. Both are included in the various international legal sources that enunciate the principle of sovereign equality. A summary is as follows:

Article 2.4 of the Charter of the United Nations³:

General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970, the annex to which includes the "Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations"⁴. At the European regional level, in 1975, the Final Act of the

¹ Mansour Milad, *Op. cit.*, p. 187

² Mohamed Nasser, *Sovereignty Equality in the United Nations Charter*, "Journal of Legal Sciences", No. 15, January 2017, p. 3

³ By stating the obligation to refrain from "the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State".

⁴ "Every State has the duty to refrain in its international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State (...)" • "All States enjoy sovereign equality (...). In particular, sovereign

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) or Helsinki Conference transversally enunciated the principle of territorial integrity in various points of its Decalogue¹. In 1990, the principle of territorial integrity was reiterated in the Charter of Paris for a new Europe². In the Millennium Declaration of the General Assembly of the year 2000, the principle of territorial integrity is mentioned again in the initial list of fundamental principles set out in the Declaration³. Pondering over the previous texts, we note without a doubt that the intended equality is legal equality, which entails that any state cannot exercise a policy of pressure or coercion towards another state, and this is done by not interfering in the internal affairs of states.

That is, states, within the framework of their international relations, are subject to the provisions of international law in their obligations and their implementation in good faith and respect for the rights of others. This is the same principle that states must respect when any dispute arises between parties, given that those states enjoy full legal personality and are equal to others in sovereignty. This goes beyond the difference between large and small countries, rich and poor countries, and this principle is confirmed by countries' resort to international judiciary. All countries are equal in terms of legal status, as it is not permissible to resort to judiciary except with the consent of the parties, and it is not permissible to resort to the judiciary except with the consent of the parties. The dispute can only be settled by agreement of the parties, regardless of the type of countries involved in the dispute. This is the true image of the principle of sovereign equality, which in another way criminalizes a state's violation of other states under any circumstances.

With reference to the text of Article 27 of the Charter of the United Nations, permanent member states enjoy the exercise of the right of veto, a right that some part of international law jurisprudence sees as inconsistent with the principle of sovereign equality, and that recognizing this right for those states constitutes a waste of the rights of other states, and makes the principle of equality relatively dominant. On the other hand, it gives those

equality includes the following elements: (...) c) each State has the duty to respect the personality of other States; d) the territorial integrity and political independence of the State are inviolable"; • "No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly and for whatever reason, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. Therefore, not only armed intervention, but also any other form of interference or threat to the personality of the State, or to the political, economic and cultural elements that constitute it, are violations of international law. (...)". Territorial integrity is understood to be included within the notion of the «personality of the State» and its «political elements»; • By delimiting the principle of self-determination of peoples, the territorial integrity of States is protected (see below)

¹ At the beginning of: "Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent to sovereignty. The participating States shall respect the sovereign equality and individuality of each of them, as well as all the rights inherent to and included in their sovereignty, including the right to freedom of expression and expression of opinion, as well as ... of every State to legal equality, territorial integrity and freedom and political independence. (...). They consider that their borders may be modified, in accordance with international law, by peaceful means and by agreement". • In Principle II: "Refraining from resorting to the threat or use of force The participating States shall refrain in their mutual relations, as well as in their international relations in general, to resort to the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or any other in a manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations and with this Declaration". • In principle III: "Inviolability of borders. The participating States mutually consider all their borders to be inviolable, as well as the borders of all States in Europe and will consequently refrain now and in the future from attacking these borders. Accordingly, they shall also refrain from any demand, or any act aimed at seizing and usurping all or part of the territory of any participating State." • In principle IV: "Territorial integrity of the States. The participating States shall respect the territorial integrity of each of the participating States. They will therefore refrain from any action incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, against the territorial integrity, political independence or unity of any participating State, and from any such action which constitutes a threat or use of force. The participating States shall also refrain from making the territory of any of them the object of military occupation or other direct or indirect measures of force contrary to international law, or the object of acquisition through such measures or the threat thereof. No such occupation or acquisition shall be recognized as legal."

² To "uphold and promote democracy, peace and unity in Europe, we solemnly reaffirm our full commitment to the Ten Principles of the Helsinki Final Act. (...) We reaffirm the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant rules of international law, including those concerning the territorial integrity of States".

³ "We reaffirm our determination to support all efforts aimed at ensuring respect for the sovereign equality of all States, respect for their territorial integrity and political independence (...)" (*United Nations, General Assembly, Res. 55/2, Millennium Declaration*, 13 September 2000).

countries a right to do so, in that the major countries possess money, equipment, and weapons, which makes them capable of defending the provisions of the Charter, while other backward countries are unable even to solve their problems. In addition, the major countries were the reason for the suppression of World War II, which gives it an important place in the Charter¹. From a neutral point of view, we see that the course of events in the Russian Ukrainian war makes the principle of equality of sovereignty a violation and conflicts with the explicit text in international law. Hegemony and power, even if it is just a political event, by accepting it for a period of time and not protesting it internationally makes it stable internationally, and that the text of the Charter needs to be amended in line with the rapid development in international relations.

The Position of Intergovernmental Bodies on the Russian Ukrainian conflict

The United Nations, as the global body specialized in coordinating the interests of parties to international relations through its organs, specifically in those types of conflicts that threaten international peace and security and for which the Security Council is the body charged with settling them in terms of imposing sanctions or authorizing the use of force to maintain international peace and security or restore them². The General Assembly discussed the No. of the Security Council's inability to carry out its responsibilities, which was described as a serious challenge threatening international peace and security not only in Europe but also in the entire world, as the Secretary-General pronounced on the day of the invasion, 24 February 2022, "It is wrong. It is against the Charter. It is unacceptable". He noted that it was "not irreversible" and appealed to President Putin to "Stop the military operation. Bring the troops back to Russia". He stressed the commitment of the UN and its humanitarian partners "to staying and delivering, to support people in Ukraine in their time of need... working on both sides of the contact line, always guided by the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, humanity, and independence"³. Here it must be noted that in many cases decisive decisions cannot be taken, due to the permanent members having the right of veto, as they resort to using this right against any draft resolution that conflicts with their interests, except in the case of a permanent member abstaining from voting⁴.

The real importance of the veto appears when the state holding the veto is a party in the dispute presented for voting, as in our case under study. It is crucial to mention here that to restrict the veto, France and Mexico proposed in 2020 to regulate the use of the veto. Among the Security Council's reactions to what is happening internationally in the Russian Ukrainian arena, on February 25, 2022, the council called for a procedural vote on a draft resolution calling for an extraordinary session of the General Assembly regarding Ukraine. To pass this resolution, the council needed a positive vote from nine countries. Eleven countries supported the resolution, three abstained, and the resolution was rejected using Russia's veto right. On March 2, 2022 the General Assembly held an emergency session where the overwhelming majority (141-5) voted on a resolution condemning the invasion and calling on Moscow to withdraw its military forces. This was the first condemnation resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly since the beginning of the war, with fourteen countries voting in favor and one against.

In the context of the impact of the permanent membership of the Security Council on the Council's authority to No. resolutions, recent events have recorded the Security Council's failure to pass the resolution titled "Illegal Referendums in Ukraine" which was presented by the United States and Albania to condemn the Russian referendums in the territories occupied by Russia in Ukraine, as most UN member states voted for it. That was after seven months, on October 12, 2022, when 143 UN members voted in favor of this resolution that condemns the Russian aggression against Ukraine, expresses their deep concern over the deteriorating situation in Ukraine, emphasizes the necessity of respecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the need to adhere to the UN Charter and the principles enshrined in international law. On Monday, March 7, 2022, the first sessions of the International Court of Justice were held at Ukraine's request in light of its invasion by Russia. However, Russia boycotted the sessions from the beginning, and the Ukrainian delegation found itself facing empty seats when presenting its case.

¹ Mohamed Nasser, *Op. cit.*, p. 24

² According to the UN Charter, Article 23, "The Security Council shall consist of fifteen Members of the United Nations".

³ United Nations, *Security Council resolution S/RES/2623*, 2022, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/271/32/PDF/N2227132.pdf?OpenElement> (17.01.2025)

⁴ *International Protection of Human Rights within the Framework of the United Nations and Specialized International Agencies*, Second Edition, Dar Al Nahda Al Arabiya, Cairo, 2005, p. 100

We note here that the decisions of the International Court of Justice, which are issued in the form of binding judicial rulings, put us in a clear international violation if their rulings are not implemented, and a blatant violation of international law, which triggers international responsibility. This decision was issued based on the first paragraph of Article 41 of the Court's Statute regarding (provisional measures), which does not mean that the Court has ruled in favor of Ukraine but rather indicates that the case is still under consideration and no final judgment has been issued. The adoption of these measures is merely to preserve the rights of the parties involved in the case. Here, we should not overlook the lack of executive power or international police force behind the International Court of Justice's decision, making it unenforceable despite its binding nature, which frees Russia from complying with it. In this case, the party in whose favor the judgment was issued according to Article 94 of the United Nations Charter has no option but to submit its complaint to the Security Council to take action against the state that refrained from execution. In our case under discussion, we will return to the same deadlock represented by the Russian veto, which will confront Ukraine's approach of submitting its complaint to the Security Council.

The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announced just a few days after the invasion that he would conduct investigations into the crimes committed in the Russian Ukrainian war and that he seeks to obtain a mandate to open an investigation as soon as possible. Although Ukraine is not a member of the court, it accepted the court's jurisdiction in 2014. At the same time, Russia withdrew from the International Criminal Court, which may pose an obstacle to the court's access to Russian citizens unless they are detained on the territory of a state that recognizes the court's jurisdiction or there is a referral from the Security Council, as stated in Article 13 of the Rome Statute. This is unlikely to happen due to the control of the three major powers that have not joined the court and intervene in who is referred to the court first. Additionally, the International Criminal Court cannot prosecute Russia for the crime of aggression, which involves one state attacking another, because it is not a party to the Rome Statute.

Regarding the termination of Russia's membership in the Security Council, there have recently been threats to expel it from the Security Council, including statements from the British Prime Minister that the British government is open to expelling Russia from the United Nations Security Council. Here we refer to Articles 5 and 6 of Chapter Two of the Charter, concerning the membership of member states and its conditions, and the possibility of depriving a state of its rights as a member, including voting in the General Assembly. The case presented in the research confirms that this requires a decision from the Security Council. Here, reality shocks us again with the veto right that Russia can use. Even in the best-case scenario where Russia cannot use this right, China would be another door for its survival.

Upon reviewing the mentioned texts, we find that they include the inability of the General Assembly to suspend any member against whom the Security Council has taken precautionary or prohibitory measures regarding the exercise of their membership rights and privileges, and that this can only be done based on a recommendation from the Security Council. Here, the Security Council has the authority to restore this membership. Here we must mention the Montreux Convention of 1963 regarding the regulation of the passage of warships and commercial vessels through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits, under which Turkey enjoys the authority to regulate maritime traffic between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. This is precisely what Turkey did on March 29, 2022, when it closed its maritime straits to warships from both Black Sea and non-Black Sea countries, in a legal attempt to mitigate the intensity of the conflict and overcome the double standards with both parties to the dispute.

According to Article 2 of the United Nations Charter regarding the non-use of force or the threat thereof in international relations, and the 2001 International Responsibility Rules, considering Russia's attack on a sovereign state as an internationally criminal act, it entails international responsibility for Russia, which imposes on it the obligation to restore the situation in Ukraine to what it was and to compensate for the damage caused to Ukraine. Based on Article 3 of the International Responsibility Law, the seriousness of the situation requires that countries cooperate to put an end to this conflict and prevent any attempts to provide support to either party to prolong the duration of the conflict.

Unraveling the Russia-Ukraine conflict: Exploring Solutions Through International Law Mechanisms

Mechanisms of International Law: A Path to a Solution

International law mechanisms provide a crucial path to resolving disputes between states, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict is no exception. In such complex and volatile situations, where diplomatic negotiations often reach

an impasse, international law provides a framework for finding workable solutions that uphold justice and sustain peace.

One of the primary mechanisms for addressing such disputes is international courts. These institutions, such as the International Court of Justice or the International Criminal Court, provide a platform for states to submit their cases, present evidence, and engage in legal arguments. By referring to the dispute to an impartial judicial body, both parties can have their grievances heard and obtain a fair ruling based on the principles of international law and the treaties they have ratified.

Another important mechanism of international law is arbitration, where arbitration offers a more flexible and less formal process, where the parties agree to refer their dispute to a neutral arbitrator or panel of arbitrators. This method allows a more detailed approach to resolving the conflict, considering the specific circumstances of the Russian Ukrainian conflict.

Moreover, mediation and negotiation play vital roles in the mechanisms of international law. These processes involve two tracks of third parties who help disputing parties reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Mediators help create an atmosphere of trust and encourage open dialogue between parties, with the aim of finding common ground and developing compromises that can lead to a solution.

International law also provides a framework for states to engage in diplomatic negotiations, as provided in various treaties and conventions. These agreements establish rules and principles that guide states in their interactions and peaceful resolution of disputes. By adhering to these international legal obligations, states can build trust, enhance cooperation, and work to resolve disputes through diplomatic means. It is necessary to realize that international law mechanisms alone are unable to guarantee an immediate solution to complex conflicts such as the Russian Ukrainian conflict. However, it provides a structured and principled approach that allows for a peaceful and just solution. By engaging in these mechanisms, both parties can demonstrate their commitment to upholding international standards and their willingness to find a way forward that respects the rights and interests of all concerned¹.

The Role of Diplomacy in Solving Conflict

Diplomacy plays a crucial role in resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict, providing a platform for dialogue. Negotiation is between the parties concerned. In such complex and sensitive conflicts, where political tensions rise and interests' conflict, diplomatic efforts serve as a means of finding common ground and seeking peaceful solutions. Diplomacy allows direct communication between conflicting parties, facilitating the exchange of ideas, concerns, and grievances. Through diplomatic channels, countries can express their views, express their demands, and work to understand each other's concerns. This open dialogue creates opportunities to find common interests and identify areas of potential compromise². Furthermore, diplomacy provides a way to engage third-party mediators or facilitators. These neutral international bodies, such as the United Nations or regional organizations, can play an important role in bridging the gap between conflicting parties. They can provide expertise, suggest frameworks for negotiation, and help facilitate discussions on controversial issues. Their participation adds legitimacy and credibility to the negotiation process, enhances confidence, and increases the chances of reaching a solution acceptable to both parties³.

Diplomatic efforts also extend beyond bilateral negotiations to include multilateral forums and platforms. International conferences and summits provide opportunities for high-level discussions and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. In these environments, countries can build coalitions, mobilize support for their positions, and explore collective approaches to addressing conflict. These multilateral engagements can contribute to forming consensus and developing joint initiatives aimed at resolving the No. at hand.

In addition, diplomacy includes more than just formal negotiations and discussions. It involves building relationships, establishing communication channels, and enhancing trust between countries. Through diplomatic engagements, countries can promote mutual understanding, dispel misconceptions, and humanize the "other" in conflict. These interpersonal bonds create a basis for long-term cooperation and can help reduce the animosity and

¹ Michael Schmitt, *The Ukraine Crisis, Self-Determination, and International Law: An Opportunity for the OSCE*, "Harvard International Law Journal", Vol. 56, No. 2, 2015, p 40

² Ahmed Mahmoud, *Diplomacy and its Role in Resolving International Conflicts*, "Harvard International Law Journal", Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 32

³ *Idem*

hostility that often underlie such conflicts. Therefore, it can be said that the role of diplomacy in resolving the Russian Ukrainian conflict cannot be overestimated, as it serves as a vital tool for promoting dialogue, finding common ground, and searching for peaceful solutions. Through diplomatic efforts, countries can engage in constructive negotiations, engage neutral mediators, leverage multilateral platforms, and build relationships that pave the way for a sustainable solution. While the path to peace may be difficult, diplomacy offers hope and the possibility of a brighter future for both countries involved¹.

International Courts and Tribunals: Seeking Justice and Accountability

During the ongoing Russian Ukrainian conflict, the pursuit of justice and accountability has become paramount in finding resolution, with international courts playing an important role in addressing violations of international law committed by both parties involved. These legal mechanisms serve as a platform through which grievances can be heard, evidence can be presented, and judgments can be made.

One of these courts is the International Court of Justice, which is the main judicial organ of the United Nations. The ICJ has the power to settle legal disputes between countries and provides a forum for Ukraine to present its case against Russia. Through this avenue, Ukraine can seek justice for alleged violations of its territorial integrity and sovereignty, including the annexation of Crimea and the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Another relevant avenue for seeking justice is the International Criminal Court. The ICC focuses on prosecuting individuals responsible for the most serious crimes of international concern, such as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. If credible evidence of such crimes emerges during the conflict, the ICC will likely investigate and hold those responsible to account, regardless of their nationality.

Furthermore, other international courts, such as the European Court of Human Rights, can provide a means for individuals affected by conflict to obtain redress. The European Court of Human Rights has jurisdiction over cases in which violations of the European Convention on Human Rights are alleged, to which both Russia and Ukraine are parties. This court plays a vital role in ensuring that human rights are protected and upheld amidst unrest². However, it is important to recognize that the effectiveness of these international law mechanisms depends on the cooperation of the parties involved. Both Russia and Ukraine must be prepared to accept the jurisdiction of these courts and tribunals, abide by their rulings, engage in negotiations in good faith to find a lasting solution. In conclusion, seeking justice and accountability through international courts and tribunals is an essential step in resolving the Russian Ukrainian conflict, as these mechanisms provide an opportunity to address grievances, present evidence, and No. judgments. Through these legal means, the international community can strive to reach a peaceful solution and ensure respect for the principles of international law³.

Peace Treaties and Mediation: Facilitating Negotiations

Peace treaties and mediation play a crucial role in facilitating negotiations and conflict resolution, especially in complex geopolitical conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict. These short messages provide a structured framework for interested parties to engage in dialogue, find common ground and work towards a peaceful solution. A prominent example of this is the Minsk Agreements, which were signed in 2014 and 2015 with the aim of ending the conflict in eastern Ukraine. These agreements, facilitated by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, brought together representatives from Ukraine, Russia and breakaway regions to negotiate a ceasefire, withdraw heavy weapons, and undertake political reforms⁴. Mediation, often led by neutral third parties or international organizations, can help create an environment conducive to negotiations by providing a platform where all parties feel heard and respected. Mediators can help identify common interests, explore potential compromises, and bridge gaps between disputing parties.

¹ Mitchell A. Orentlein, *The Limits of Diplomacy: Ukraine's Experience with the West*, "Journal of Democracy", Vol. 26 o. 4, 2015, p. 11

² Muhammad Aziz, *The International Criminal Court and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict*, "Journal of International Politics", No. 204, 2018, p. 42

³ Hamad Abdel-Al Al Nuaimi, *ICC Criminal Investigations into Russia's War Crimes in Ukraine*, "Journal of Sharia and Legal Sciences", Vol.15, No. 2, 2018, p. 13

⁴ Nour Ghanem, *Peace Treaties and Mediation in Resolving the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict*, "Journal of Politics and State", 2019, p. 31

However, it is important to recognize that peace treaties and mediation alone may not guarantee a lasting solution. It is just one part of a comprehensive approach that should address the root causes of the conflict, promote reconciliation, and ensure the implementation of agreed measures. Sustainable peace requires commitment and a genuine desire on the part of all parties concerned to work towards a common goal. In general, peace treaties and mediation provide essential tools to facilitate negotiations and resolve conflicts. By creating an inclusive and orderly environment, these mechanisms can help the parties find common ground and work toward a peaceful solution. However, it is necessary to complement these efforts with a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying issues and promotes long-term peace and stability.

Economic Sanctions: Pressure on the Parties to Search for a Solution

Economic sanctions have become a widely used tool in international relations, especially in situations of conflict and political tension. In the context of the Russian Ukrainian conflict, economic sanctions were imposed by many countries and international organizations as a means of pressuring the parties concerned to reach a peaceful solution. These sanctions typically include restrictions on trade, investment, financial transactions, and other economic activities with the target country or its associated entities. The idea behind such measures is to create economic difficulties and disrupt the normal functioning of the target state's economy, thus forcing its leadership to reconsider its actions and engage in negotiations, for example, Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the US, UK and EU, along with countries including Australia, Canada and Japan, have imposed more than 16,500 sanctions on Russia. Their main target has been Russia's money. Foreign currency reserves worth \$350bn (£276bn) - about half its total reserves - were frozen. About 70% of the assets of Russian banks were also frozen, the EU says, and some were excluded from Swift, a high-speed messaging service for financial institutions. Western nations have also: banned exports of technology Russia might use for making weapons; banned imports of gold and diamonds from Russia; banned flights from Russia; sanctioned oligarchs - the wealthy businesspeople linked with the Kremlin - and impounded their yachts; Russia's oil industry has been another major target; The US and UK banned Russian oil and natural gas. The EU has banned seaborne crude imports; The G7 - an organization of the world's seven largest "advanced" economies - has imposed a maximum price of \$60 (£47) a barrel on Russian crude oil, to try to reduce its earnings¹.

However, the impact of economic sanctions is a topic of debate. Proponents believe that they can effectively deter aggressive actions and push the parties toward diplomatic solutions. They believe that economic pressures caused by sanctions could lead to internal discord and pressure the leadership to seek compromises. Critics, on the other hand, highlight the potential negative consequences of sanctions on the civilian population, as they often bear the brunt of economic hardship. They claim that sanctions could further escalate tensions and entrench the parties' positions, making a solution more difficult to reach². However, economic sanctions remain a prominent tool in the arsenal of international law mechanisms for addressing conflicts. The effectiveness of these measures ultimately depends on a range of factors, including the nature of the conflict, the resilience of the targeted state, and the willingness of the parties to engage in meaningful dialogue³. In the case of the Russian Ukrainian conflict, economic sanctions have put great pressure on Russia. They influenced the dynamics of the conflict, shaping the incentives and calculations of the parties involved. However, a comprehensive solution to the conflict will require a multifaceted approach that goes beyond economic pressures, and includes diplomatic negotiations, international mediation, and adherence to international legal principles. While the international community continues to grapple with the complexities of the Russian Ukrainian conflict, exploring and using various international law mechanisms, including economic sanctions, remains crucial in seeking a lasting and peaceful solution⁴.

¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-60125659> (17.01.2025)

² Laila Khaled, *The Role of Economic Sanctions in Resolving International Crises*, Unpublished Master's thesis, Cairo University, Department of Political Science, 2021, p. 256

³ Sarah Green, *The Role of Economic Sanctions in Resolving International Crises*, Unpublished Master thesis, Oxford University, Department of Political Science 2022, p. 380

⁴ Adam Johnson, *The Impact of Economic Sanctions on Russia following the Ukrainian Invasion*, "Journal of Economic Studies", Vol. 45, No. 2, 2022

Conclusions

In conclusion, adopting a legal perspective is crucial in addressing the complex and ongoing Russian Ukrainian conflict. While political and diplomatic efforts have been made to resolve the issues at hand, the legal framework provides a solid foundation for justice, accountability and long-term stability. Furthermore, a legal perspective helps ensure that any potential solution to a conflict is grounded in the principles of fairness, justice, and respect for human rights. It provides a framework to address grievances on both sides, protect the rights of affected populations, and promote reconciliation and healing.

However, it is important to acknowledge that legal mechanisms alone cannot resolve the complex issues that lie at the heart of the Russian Ukrainian conflict. Political will, dialogue and compromise are equally essential to finding a sustainable and peaceful solution. Nevertheless, a strong legal foundation can play an important role in shaping the path forward, and as the conflict continues to evolve, it is essential that the international community, including governments, organizations and legal experts, remain committed to applying a legal perspective to the situation. This will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the conflict, facilitate the pursuit of justice, and ultimately pave the way for a brighter future for the people of Russia and Ukraine.

The international community must also remain actively engaged in mediating the conflict and encouraging dialogue between the parties concerned. This includes supporting initiatives such as peace negotiations, diplomatic talks and international forums aimed at promoting dialogue and understanding. It is important to realize that the solution to this conflict goes beyond the borders of Russia and Ukraine. The repercussions of this conflict extend to regional stability, global security, and the principles of international law. Therefore, it is in the interest of all countries to contribute to the solution process.

Moreover, it is necessary to prioritize the well-being and rights of affected populations in both Russia and Ukraine. The conflict has led to great human suffering, displacement and human rights violations. Efforts must be made to provide humanitarian assistance, promote reconciliation and facilitate the return of displaced people.

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