



CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RUSSIA – UKRAINE CRISIS

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Edited by

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The International Relations Program of DHA Suffa University organized the first One-Day International Conference (hybrid mode) to discuss Russia - Ukraine Crisis and changing geopolitical situations. Speakers from Pakistan, Russia and Germany participated, whereas, students and faculty from various universities in Karachi attended the session

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our cordial thanks to all who helped make this conference a success. We have much pleasure in thanking The Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS), in particular. The officials from CISSS and faculty DHA Suffa University deserve special recognition due to their role in organizing this conference: First of all, we are very grateful to Vice-Chancellor DHA Suffa University, Dr. Afzal Haq, PVC Dr. Ahmed Saeed Minhas, Registrar Dr. Brig Asif Iqbal, Prof. Dr Bashir Ahmad, Dean Management and Social Sciences And HOD Dr. Razi Sultan Siddiqui for their support and guidance. Executive Director CISS Qazi M. Khalillullah, Mr.Aftab Hussain Director Research CISSS helped with the organization of the conference from the very beginning till the very end. The efficient assistance of members of I.T department both before and during the conference contributed to the excellent level of the conference.

We are really grateful to Our speakers Dr. Markus Merkert, Dr. Yulia Nikitina , ED CISSS Qazi Khalilullah, Dr. Nausheen Wasi, Ms. Afshan Subohi and Dr. Ahmed Saeed Minhas for their valuable input.

INTRODUCTION

After WWII, the wartime coordination between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union completely broken down. As the world observed, the U.S and Russia had divided the whole political world into two main blocks. The alliances or groupings dominated by these two states played a key role in the polarization of the world. The formation of these blocks did nothing but damage the peaceful environment. It's a fact that these alliances were created to maintain and protect the security and the national interests of the respective states, and geographical integrity.

At that time, the US was concerned not just about its physical frontiers, but also about the ideological bounds of itself and its allies. The U.S took precautions to show that it would stand firm in the face of any Soviet military expansion or pressure in Europe. In 1949, the United States, Canada, and many Western European nations formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to guarantee collective protection against the Soviet Union. NATO's official stance is that "the Alliance does not want confrontation and poses no threat to Russia¹," despite the fact that it was founded to resist Russian expanding dominance. However, NATO was exploited by western allies and the United States to weaken the Soviet Union's position. West Germany joined NATO in May 1955, prompting the Soviet Union to construct the Warsaw Pact in Central and Eastern Europe the following year. It was indeed political-strategic cooperation between the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries formed on May 14, 1955. The Soviets dreaded the ramifications of a reinforced NATO and a revived West Germany when the Federal Republic of Germany joined NATO in early May 1955 and believed that the Warsaw Treaty Organization could both restrain West Germany and deal with NATO.²

¹ <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/115204.htm>

² <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/warsaw-treaty>

The international political system took a new turn after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the globe became unipolar. With previous foes no longer present, several analysts suggested that NATO was no longer necessary, and that future defense spending and military investment should be severely reduced. Military alliances have formed over time to balance opposing strength, such as NATO, or the perceived threat of opposing force, as in the case of the United States. They've fallen apart when the need for balance has faded as a result of power transitions or altering threat perceptions. It was a logical assumption for NATO after the dissolution of the USSR and the WARSAW pact.

For nearly three decades, the Alliance has avoided defining its future purpose, focusing instead on what immediate steps it should take to adapt to the post-Cold War security situation. New members of NATO have been welcomed and invited to participate in NATO's deliberations and councils. Former Warsaw Pact member countries have also benefited from its military planning, defense budgeting, and democratic control of armed forces expertise. Following Germany's unification and the establishment of the European Union, NATO's presence is now considered illogical and unnecessary. It is argued that in this interdependent and interconnected world, groupings and alliances should not be fostered or used to sow division in the cosmopolitan society. Critics believe the Alliance has been treading water, desperately striving to demonstrate that an organization that has lost its fundamental *raison d'être* since the fall of the Soviet Union is still relevant. It has only remained significant because of the incompetence of other institutions³.

In the civilized world, international relations are built without compromising each other's lines of trust. History has shown that when Germany was uniting, the United States and the Soviet Union were united and agreed that NATO would no longer be expanded, especially towards the East.

³ Daalder, I. H. (1999). NATO in the 21st century: what purpose, what missions. *Brookings Institution, April*.

Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev met in February 1990 to discuss NATO's future role in a unified Germany. "There will be no extension of NATO's authority for NATO soldiers one inch to the east," Baker presented his famous formula "not one inch eastward" and informed Gorbachev, agreeing with Gorbachev's remark that "any extension of the NATO zone is unacceptable."⁴

To this day, ties between Moscow and Washington are plagued by this exchange and its meaning. Scholars and officials continue to argue whether the West, specifically the US, guaranteed the Russians that NATO would not expand to include former Warsaw Pact countries. Western scholars have differing perspectives and are divided on what the United States promised the Soviet Union back in 1990. Some academics believe that NATO's eastward expansion in the 1990s breached what Michael Mcc Gwire referred to as "top-level commitments" against NATO growth. Mary Sarotte, writing lately, claims that "contrary to Russian accusations, [Soviet President Mikhail] Gorbachev never got the West to pledge anything that it would freeze NATO's borders."⁵ Similarly, Mark Kramer claimed that the NATO enlargement into Eastern Europe, "never came up during the negotiations."⁶ However, there are many who are vehemently opposed to NATO's expansion.

NATO has gone through five rounds of enlargement since 1990, including former Soviet Union portions and numerous former Warsaw Pact republics. The alliance has grown over time, and it now includes 30 members. Greece, Turkey, Germany, Spain, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania,

⁴ Goldgeier, J. (2016). Promises made, promises broken? What Yeltsin was told about NATO in 1993 and why it matters. *War on the Rocks*, 12.

⁵ Mary Elise Sarotte, "A Broken Promise? What the West Really Told Moscow about NATO Expansion," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 5 (September/October 2014), p. 96.

⁶ Mark Kramer, "The Myth of a No-NATO-Enlargement Pledge to Russia," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April 2009), p. 41; and Mark Kramer and Mary Elise Sarotte, "Letters to the Editor: No Such Promise," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 6 (December 2014), p. 208.

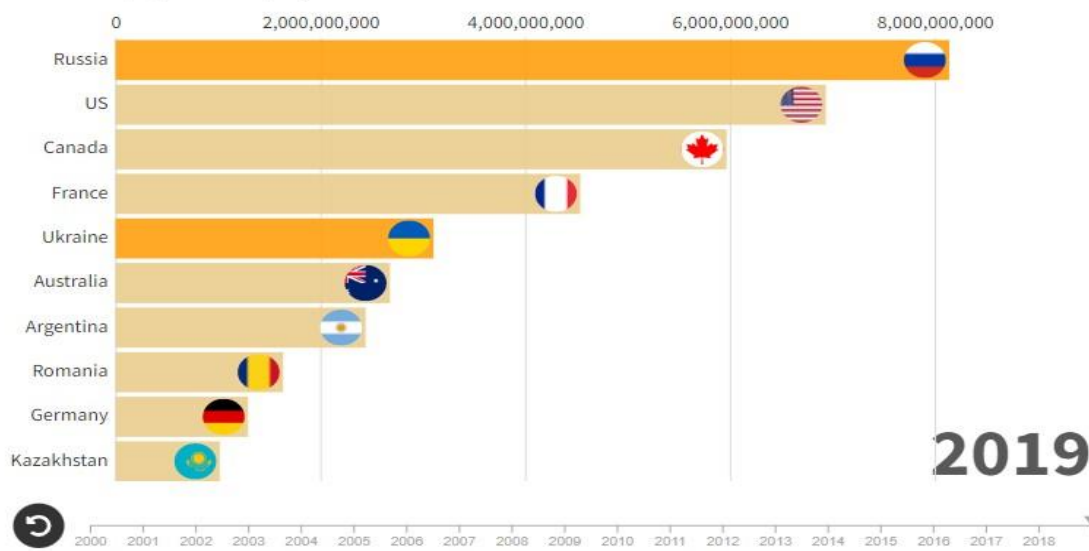
Slovakia, Slovenia, Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, and North Macedonia are the other countries.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Ukraine have all expressed interest in joining the alliance. At the 2008 Bucharest Summit, the Allies agreed that Georgia and Ukraine will join NATO in the future.

This was a geographical and defensive alarm for Russia. It was actually running out of balance of power. NATO's expansion towards Russia would be treated as a direct threat to the security of Russia, Putin said⁷. Tensions in the region are rising as a result of these factors. Russia can go to any extent to maintain its buffer zone. We have seen this in effect during the Georgia-Russia conflict. And now the bloody conflict between Russia and Ukraine has begun. This is the fact that in this overall adventure the common people are on the loser side, not the elites and the powerful officials. As a result of this war, only ordinary people have paid the price. Inflation has risen in the world. As Russia is the world's biggest wheat exporter, accounting for more than 18% of total worldwide exports and Ukraine is the fifth largest exporter.

Trade value of wheat in USD (2000-2019)

Click on the play icon to replay the animation



Source: OEC, 2019 • February 17, 2022

⁷ <https://www.dw.com/en/nato-why-russia-has-a-problem-with-its-eastward-expansion/a-60891681>

Source : <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/17/infographic-russia-ukraine-and-the-global-wheat-supply-interactive>

Not only wheat but as per the statistics given by the World Bank Russia is a key producer of oil and agricultural goods as well as a supplier of Industrial raw materials and intermediate goods.

TRADE SUMMARY FOR RUSSIAN FEDERATION 2019

Overall Exports and Imports	
Exports	Imports
Exports (in US\$ Mil)	426,720
Imports (in US\$ Mil)	247,161
No. Of products	4,385
No. Of partners	198
	4,426
	224

Trade Indicator	
HH Market concentration index	0.04
Index of export market penetration	11.59
World Growth	-1.13
Country Growth	-3.49

Service Indicators 2019	
Service imports (BoP, current US\$)	98,654,610,000.00
Service exports (BoP, current US\$)	61,910,020,000.00
Imports of goods and services (% of GDP)	20.91
Exports of goods and services (% of GDP)	28.54

Russian Federation Exports and Imports of Product Groups					
Product Categories	Exports		Imports		Weighted Average (%)
	Export(US\$ Mil)	Product share(%)	Import(US\$ Mil)	Prod share(%)	
Raw materials	164,884	38.64	19,587	7.93	3.98
Intermediate goods	88,355	20.71	42,795	17.31	3.67
Consumer goods	97,446	22.84	84,307	34.11	9.42
Capital goods	20,393	4.78	96,930	39.22	2.95

Top 5 Products exports imports at HS 6 digit level			
Exports	Imports		
Petroleum oils and o ...	122,228,578.65	Transmission apparat ...	8,165,620.07
Petroleum oils, etc, ...	66,946,539.75	Other medicaments of ...	7,614,092.30
Bituminous coal, not ...	13,616,707.63	Aircraft nes of an u ...	5,025,132.14
Natural gas, liquefi ...	7,920,048.41	Automobiles with rec ...	3,129,989.66
Spelt, common wheat ...	6,342,923.88	Parts and accessorie ...	3,110,138.34

Source: <https://wits.worldbank.org/countrysnapshot/en/RUS>

According to the facts presented above, it is not in the best interests of the world for Ukraine and Russia to continue at odds for an extended period of time. Again, it is not in the interests of the Western world to freeze economic connections with Russia for an extended period of time in this global village. The repercussions of the conflict are taking new turns stores are running out of cooking oil, consumers are paying more for gas, and farmers are scurrying to get fertilizer. Disruptions in the flow of wheat, barley, corn, and cooking oil are exacerbating other distribution networks and climatic concerns, driving up food and gas prices, producing scarcity, and dragging millions into starvation.

Other humanitarian crises are also worsening. Over 5.8 million people have fled Ukraine, producing one of the world's fastest-growing

refugee crises. The United Nations refugee agency has predicted that 8.3 million people will flee Ukraine and has appealed for increased financial assistance for both refugees and host countries since both suffer access issues to food, shelter, transportation, education, and money.⁸

Russia possesses the most nuclear weapons of any country. As a result, countries around the world have urgently increased military spending or initiated a serious reevaluation of their defenses⁹.

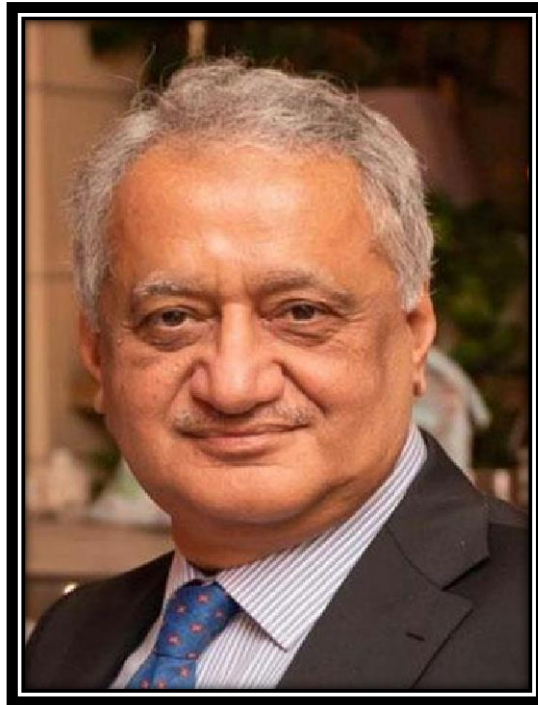
To ascertain, analyze, and discuss the conflict and its repercussions DHA Suffa University arranged a one-day international conference and invited renowned speakers to express their scholarly views. Mr. Markus Markert, an internationally acclaimed prominent political scientist, provided an insightful and interesting analysis. He discussed the issues facing the two opponents in a beautiful and balanced manner. Miss. Afshan Subohi a senior journalist emphasized that the Russia-Ukraine war reminded the world that humanity is still in danger of another World War. She spoke about the economic consequences that the world is expected to face in the next years. A renowned political scientist Dr. Nausheen Wasi said that the Ukraine Crisis is the most critical and dangerous conflict in the post-Cold war period as the Ukraine-Russia conflict would radically disrupt global geo-economics. Ms. Yulia Nikitina *Associate Professor of World Politics and Research Fellow at the Center for the Post-Soviet Studies at the Moscow State University of International Relations (MGIMO)*. *Point out that* Russia's foreign policy will inevitably shift to the east and south. In the medium and long term, Russian foreign policy will be focused on strengthening more active ties with nations that are neutral or supportive of Moscow throughout the current crisis. The Russian leadership does not seek full political support, but rather wants neutrality or abstention from sanction support. Dr. Ahmed Saeed Minhas, Pro-Vice Chancellor of DHA Suffa University,

⁸ <https://www.npr.org/2022/05/10/1093066817/ukraine-war-gas-prices-refugees>

⁹ <https://www.npr.org/2022/05/10/1093066817/ukraine-war-gas-prices-refugees>

spoke out and asserted that Russia began to speak out against NATO as the US-led alliance began to exert influence over weaker governments and maximise its strength by creating partnerships with Russia's neighbours. Their territory and resources are now accessible for use against Russia at any time.

AMBASSADOR QAZI M. KHALILULLAH (RETD)



He holds a Master's Degree in International Public Policy from the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University, USA.

He joined the Foreign Service of Pakistan in 1985 and served at the Foreign Office Headquarters in Islamabad as Section Officer (1986-88), Director (1996-1999), Director General (2005-2008 and 2014-2015) and Additional Secretary (2015-2016).

He held various diplomatic assignments in Pakistan Missions abroad: Embassy of Pakistan Moscow (1988-1993), Embassy of Pakistan Ashgabat (1993-1996), Embassy of Pakistan Kyiv (1999-2002) and Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations in Geneva (2002-2005).

He also attended United Nations Conferences and Expert Group Meetings:
(i) World Summit on the Information Society (Phase-I), held in Geneva (2003);
(ii) Member of the UN Working Group on Internet Governance (2004-2005); and
(iii) Member of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons Brokering (2006-2007).

He was the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from May 2015 to February 2016 and Served as Ambassador to Myanmar (2008-2012), Ambassador to Cuba (2012-2014) and Ambassador to the Russian Federation (2016-2019).

Executive Director of the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh from February 2021 to date.

Honorable Vice Chancellor

Dear Speakers

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you Professor Dr Ahmed Saeed Minhas for hosting this very important and timely Seminar on Ukraine crisis. Thank you for the invitation. I am delighted to be here again. Earlier I had visited DHA Suffa University as part of the Outreach Programme of our think tank Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh held on 20 January 2022. Thank you also for sharing the Concept Paper which is comprehensive and well-written.

As I have done diplomatic assignments in both Russia and Ukraine, it pains me to see that the two countries are engaged in a bloody conflict. Both are beautiful countries and their peoples are very nice and hospitable.

The present situation between Russia and Ukraine is basically a clash between NATO's "open door policy" and Russia's demand for security guarantees. NATO has declared that it stands by its open door policy where every European country will get equal opportunity to join the military alliance, and since Ukraine is a European country, it has the right to join NATO if it so wishes. Ukrainian leadership, as we know, has been insisting on entering NATO's open door.

As part of its open door policy, NATO has expanded eastward five times since the end of Cold War, despite having given assurances to Russia to the contrary. Fourteen East European and Baltic countries have joined NATO as a result.

For its part, Russia has demanded that there should be no further eastward expansion of NATO, no NATO Membership for Ukraine, no NATO troops in Central and Eastern Europe, no US missile deployments in Eastern Europe and yes to Minsk Agreements. The Minsk agreements of 2014 have 13 points including a point about autonomy to Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics of Donbass region.

At another level, the present situation represents a clash between unipolarity and multipolarity. As we all know, after the end of Cold War in December 1991, the US became the only superpower and the world became unipolar. However, China's phenomenal and peaceful rise and Russia's resurgence have transformed the unipolar world into a multipolar world. Instead of accepting this reality, the US has sought to maintain its preponderance by any means possible. As part of its toolbox to achieve its objectives, the US has adopted a domestic law called CAATSA to impose sanctions on its adversaries, established security alliances such as QUAD and AUKUS and strengthened strategic partnership with India, in order to contain China.

Having said that, let me deal with today's topic in terms of Diplomatic, Regional, Security and Economic Implications.

Diplomacy: It was given a chance by Russia prior to taking military action in Ukraine by engaging with the US in talks at the highest level. Russia-NATO meetings were held and French President and German Chancellor also visited Moscow. However, either the US and its NATO allies underestimated Russia's resolve or did not take Moscow's security concerns seriously.

Diplomacy is at work even now. French President, German Chancellor and Turkish President are in the forefront of efforts to promote a diplomatic solution to the ongoing crisis. Most importantly, both Russia and Ukraine are engaged in direct talks and have held several rounds of negotiations on Russia's demands concerning Ukraine: Stop fighting, declare neutrality, accept Crimea as part of Russia and recognize independence of Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics.

It is encouraging to note that several humanitarian corridors have been established as a result of Russia-Ukraine talks allowing people from Ukraine to go to neighboring countries. Both sides are also optimistic about a compromise or agreement on some points of Russian demands.

It is important to note President Zelensky's statement that Ukraine will not seek NATO membership now. A question arises here whether war in Ukraine could have been avoided. Well, I think yes, had President Zelensky shown flexibility on Ukraine's membership of NATO when Russia was demanding security guarantees from the US and NATO. I think that realization came to President Zelensky when he turned back to see whether NATO was there to help defend Ukraine militarily. It was missing. NATO also declined to accept President Zelensky's proposal to establish "No Fly Zone in Ukraine". It is also relevant to mention in this context that the US asked Poland to provide its fighter aircraft to Ukraine as part of a "sovereign decision" and not on behalf of NATO.

Regional and Security Implications: There is no doubt that this is the worst crisis Europe is facing since the end of Cold War. It is a crisis in which NATO is unable to do anything. Claims that NATO “will defend every inch of its territory” are meaningless in the context of situation in Ukraine.

The present refugee crisis in Europe is unprecedented. It will obviously be a drain on European resources, hit their economies and create social problems.

No one has missed the reports about Biolabs established by the US in Ukraine. According to Russia, there are 30 such labs. China has supported the contention. The US has officially denied but some US politicians have endorsed the claim. There are also concerns relating to safety of several nuclear power plants in Ukraine.

It is relevant to mention here that there are unmistakable signs of a trust deficit in the transatlantic partnership. It would be recalled that in March 2021, the incumbent US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, speaking at the NATO Headquarters in Brussels, said, “some of our allies are wondering whether our commitment to their security is a lasting one. They hear us say America is back and they ask – for how long?”. Six months later AUKUS was announced. France was so peeved at the cancellation of its multibillion dollar submarine deal with Australia as a consequence of AUKUS that it took the exceptional step of recalling its Ambassador from Washington, and Canberra.

Both France and Germany have been calling for a new European Security Architecture and dialogue with Russia in this

context. French President Macron who remains in touch with President Putin has repeatedly said that European security is not possible to imagine without engaging with Russia as it is a European country.

There is a trust deficit at the global level as well, particularly between the US and Russia, for a number of reasons. Since 2002, the US has unilaterally withdrawn from a number of bilateral and multilateral treaties. These include withdrawal from ABM Treaty in 2002, INF Treaty in 2019, Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2020 (rejoined in 2021), JCPOA or Iranian nuclear deal in 2018 and Open Skies Treaty in 2020. As a consequence, strategic stability at the global level was seriously affected and questions were raised about the ability of the US to respect agreements that took not only years to negotiate but were critical for maintaining regional and international peace and security.

Economic Implications: Impact of crippling sanctions imposed by Western countries on Russia is being felt on both sides, in Russia as well as in Western countries. Rising fuel and commodity prices in Western countries have started hurting their peoples economically.

Conclusion: It is important to note here that the US wanted to contain China, but has become bogged down with Russia over Ukraine. This shows not only the limits of its power but also that the world is no longer unipolar. It has become multipolar. When we talk of NATO and Russia, we are essentially talking of thirty countries against one. Yet NATO is helpless in the face of Moscow's determination. It would therefore be a win-win

situation if NATO were to look at Russia as a partner in resolving global issues rather than an adversary and competitor.

DR. MARKUS LEIF SÖRREN MARKERT



Markus obtained a BA (Hons) in Politics and International Relations from the University of Warwick (UK) and an MPhil in Politics from the University of Oxford. His MPhil thesis analyzed the role played by non-state entities in Western foreign policies toward the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

His DPhil in International Relations seeks to further build on his MPhil and examine the operations of non-state entities in the non-Western world - particularly Pakistan, Georgia, Russia, and Turkey.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT - COMMENTARY

A month into the Russian invasion of Ukraine, with the fog of war showing no signs of receding and ever more horrifying headlines and images flashing across our screens, it is by no means an easy task to raise sober questions about how we got here - the deep causes of the conflict. As so often in life, however, Rudyard Kipling serves as a source of intellectual inspiration, reminding us to “keep six honest serving-men (...) [the] What and Why and When/ And How and Where and Who” - and just like Kipling we must “send them east and west” to find answers. It is, we should remind ourselves even when the drums of war are feverishly beating their ghastly rhythms and war rears its ugly head again, the ability to see the world through the eyes of the other - be that friend or foe - that make compromises, including ceasefires and peace agreements, possible in the end. After all, no earthly but only divine powers hold eternal truths. As the Christian scripture poignantly reminds us in Matthew 7, 3-4: “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?”.

To be sure, pointing out planks is hardly ever enjoyable, except for the cynic, but it becomes outright unpleasant in a political climate in which even Russian cats are now barred from participating in beauty competitions. Sadly, it seems to have been forgotten, as the great Peter Hitchens has recently remarked, that warning a child not to provoke a wasp does not mean that one is in on the side of the latter. Yet, it is still imperative to try to shed light on the causes of the present cataclysm and ask what motivates the Russian response and whether we should really be surprised by it.

On the whole, the current public discourse in the Occident appears to suggest that the Russian Federation and her president, who is said to be

either irrational or insane, are determined to rebuild the Russian Empire the old fashioned way: with blood and iron. Putin: a Russian Bismarck of sorts - or, in the eyes of some commentators, quite another historic figure of Germanic descent.

Other, admittedly quieter voices, however, have over the years pointed out that it is in fact the West's aim to peel Ukraine away from the Russian orbit and economically and militarily incorporate her into the West that must be regarded as the *casus belli* and the root cause for Russia's actions. This sentiment, in one form or the other, has been expressed by a variety of personages, from John Mearsheimer, Stephen Cohen, Henry Kissinger, to Zbigniew Brzezinski, and George Kennan - men who can hardly be accused of being what Lenin had famously referred to as "useful idiots". Especially the latter three have dedicated their lives to ensuring that Wladimir Iljitsch Ulyanov's creation and legacy would end up on the "ash heap of history", to borrow yet another phrase from the Russian revolutionary, and can surely not be accused of doing the Kremlin's bidding.

Already in 1995, when the West had forsaken the Churchillian maxim of "magnanimity in victory", and completed the first out of many NATO expansions, Kennan, maybe the first Cold Warrior, warned that the expansion of NATO into Central Europe was "the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-Cold War era". Despite this, however, the West, seemingly convinced that the sweet unipolar moment would last forever as part of yet another "end of history", continued to win the war but lose the peace. According to John Mearsheimer, the transatlantic alliance employed a threefold strategy of NATO expansions, EU enlargement, and the fostering of Orange revolutions. The first two aimed to incorporate former Soviet satellite states economically and militarily into the West whilst the third, although harder to provide evidence for, toppled anti-Western governments in Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan.

In 2008, the NATO summit in Bucharest would have made Georgia and Ukraine full members of NATO had it not been for Germany's and France's veto. Still, the final declaration of the summit on April 3rd, made it clear that both countries "will become members of NATO". This, in the words of Vladimir Putin at the time, represented a "direct threat to Russia". Or as the then Russian deputy foreign minister remarked: "Georgia's and Ukraine's membership in the alliance is a huge strategic mistake which will have most serious consequences for pan-

European security”. Those consequences manifested themselves only a few months later in the form of Russian tanks stopping only a few miles outside of Georgia’s capital Tbilisi. With the occupation of the two provinces Abchasia and South Ossetia, Russia effectively vetoed any future NATO membership of Georgia.

When, a few years later, the Ukrainian government was toppled by a popular uprising on Kiev’s Maidan square, the Russian leadership again appeared to see Western fingerprints everywhere. In late 2013, the pro-Russian Ukrainian government under President Yanukovich had suspended talks with the EU about an association agreement and decided to instead negotiate with the Kremlin's embryonic rival to the EU, the Eurasian customs union. *Honi soit qui mal y pense!* Five days after President Yanukovich had fled the country, Russian units began to appear on Crimea, the seat of the Russian Black Sea fleet.

After Georgia, the Russian intervention in Eastern Ukraine and Crimea in 2014 should perhaps have been the point for Western policy-makers to heed the warnings of their grey eminences and realise that Ukraine was simply too important for Russia’s national security. Perhaps this should have been the moment to acknowledge that Russia still had her own version of America’s “Monroe Doctrine”, which, first proclaimed in 1823 by US President James Monroe, states that any intervention in the political affairs of the Americas by foreign powers was a potentially hostile act against the U.S. Ukraine, in other words, was Russia’s Cuba and she would rather wreck the country than leave it to the West.

Alas, to the horror of thousands of innocent civilians in 2022, Western policy-makers did not seek a permanent settlement of the Ukrainian question. NATO membership of Ukraine was never taken off the table. At a time when a rising equally illiberal China should perhaps have been the cause of more concern in Western capitals, the right of a country to choose her own alliances was weighted against the need for an admittedly cold strategic bargain with Russia.

And now, more than a month into a war, which does not seem to be unfolding as the Russian military leadership might have planned or

wished for, President Zelensky is willing to discuss a permanently neutral status of Ukraine. Sadly, this would represent an outcome that the world could have had years ago, sparing the lives of untold thousands.

AFSHAN SUBOHI

Assistant Editor at Dawn Group of Newspapers



Since 1985, working as an economic journalist. Was appointed Business Editor Dawn in 2001. Afshan Subohi and one of the Dawn's frequent contributors, Zofeen Ebrahim, were named to the Asian Development Bank Institute's first annual Developing Asia Journalism Awards in 2004.

Ms Subohi was named first runner-up in the area of pro-poor sustainable economic growth and second runner-up in the category of regional cooperation and integration for development. She was named Wonder Woman of the Year in 2013.

Economic Repercussions

If the pandemic exposed the lack of preparedness, even in the most advanced nations, to deal with a global health crisis the Russia Ukraine conflict reminded the world that humanity continues to be at risk of yet another World War. With collective stockpiles of nuclear arsenal enough to destroy the world and all forms of life on the planet many times over it is both illogical and highly irresponsible to tempt anything that can lead towards that horrific eventuality. The world leaders and global powers are failing people miserably by threatening not just the gains of decades of hard work for development and wellbeing but their very survival and future.

Post information communication technology revolution besides the United Nations Charter a global contract of nations to maintain world order based on principles of fairness that ensure peace and prosperity for all, it was hoped that the better-informed world public opinion will force the course correction where political leaders falter. For me a weaker, almost non-existent, voices of reason demanding immediate end to the devastating war that is destroying not just lives and cities of nations directly involved in the conflict but threaten human survival and the global economic order.

The world was already dealing with recession triggered by the health crisis in 2019 with difficulty. There is data available on sites of UNDP, World Bank, FAO and other multilateral bodies showing regression in global goals targeting sustainable development. The vulnerable population in the developing world is already paying more dearly for follies of others_ the power establishment.

Some forecasts project shrinkage of 4pc in the world during the current calendar year against the pre-war forecast of 3pc growth, as the economic shocks from the war compound the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It would be the second major contraction in as many years, and twice as large as the pandemic-induced recession in 2020.

Ukraine's economy, a major supplier of gas and wheat in the global market before war, is said to have shrunk by an estimated 45.1pc already this year, although the magnitude of the total regression will depend on the duration and intensity of the war.

Hit by unprecedented wide ranging sanctions, Russia's economy has plunged into a deep recession with output projected to contract by 11.2pc or more. There are reports of shortages of edibles in several cities and some reports of rationing in some parts of the country generating public unrest that can spill in streets if the situation is allowed to persist.

The devastating impact of the ongoing conflict, if the world somehow succeeds in dodging the worst (Third World War), will channelize through:

1. Higher prices of basic commodities like food and energy. It will propel inflation that will erode family incomes and can lead to wide scale social unrest, particularly in the developing nations.
2. The war will disrupt supply chains, retard trade and disturb the flow of remittances. Refugee movement from conflict region can aggravate fragmentation in societies where they end up landing.
3. It will hurt business confidence as uncertainty will weigh heavy on asset prices; lead to financial tightening and can spur capital outflows from emerging markets.

Maintaining neutrality is important but not sufficient. It is absolutely necessary to call for immediate ceasefire and support efforts to make parties in the conflict agree to resolve their difference through dialogue under the UN watch

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Dr. Nausheen Wasi, a dynamic researcher, well-known academician, and author, not only edited two books: *Making Sense of Post-Covid19 Politics* and *Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations: Pitfalls and the Way Forward*, but she also actively participates in conferences and seminars. Dr. Nausheen has established a recognized and well-respected name in Pakistani and International educational circles.

Power struggle

The ongoing crisis between Ukraine and Russia is the power struggle. The Cold War between the two super powers ended with certain commitments and assurances of respecting one another's strategic space. For a certain time, this order prevailed. However, the rise of China to the global power status made the US conscious of expanding and strengthening its strategic sphere of influence resulting in the NATO's expansion to the Russian sphere. That made Russia get into Ukraine. Although the Western media calls it an unprovoked invasion, political morality justifies Russia's position.

The Ukraine Crisis is the most critical and dangerous conflict in the post-Cold war period. And there are pertinent reasons for this. Foremost important is the food and energy supplies from the region. Combined Russia and Ukraine supply around 25% of the World's wheat, 20% of the World's corn, 80% of global sunflower oil, 24% of natural gas and 12% of oil. Russia feeds 40% of Europe's energy need and This brings many European states in a fix that traditionally have been in the US security sphere. At present the US-Europe alliance emerged intact but there are severe strains that would have long term implications. A new global order is evident to emerge hereafter.

Second, Ukraine-Russia conflict would radically disrupt global geoeconomics. And the most affected region in this regard would be the Middle East with far reaching political implications. There countries are fence sitting and observing future trends. Many traditional allies here appear to change their positions or at least be silent observers. Israel for example finds itself in a difficult position. It stakes in the situation are with Russia in the region. Saudi Arabia and Qatar are likely to be beneficiary of this crisis and are set to make afresh alliance with the US and Europe.

The US has come with unprecedented sanctions as its indirect tool to fight Russia while support on the ground to Kyiv is being provided

through the NATO states. But how long this can be sustainable, as it likely to hurt European economy and there would be pressure on the US to lift those sanctions soon.

In fact, a very precarious situation is developing which is of both political and economic. The world market already hurt by corona crisis is now under stress. The food and energy crisis and price hike is affecting every economy of the World whereas new political binaries are consolidating. The Ukraine-Russia crisis would be managed sooner or later, however, its implications would go a long way and countries would take years to adjust to new realities.

Yulia Nikitina



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Implications of the Russia-Ukraine crisis for Russian foreign policy in South Asia

Dr Yulia Nikitina, Associate Professor of World Politics, Leading Research Fellow, Center for Eurasian Studies at MGIMO University

For the Russian leadership, the current crisis is a crisis with the West in general and US-led NATO in particular, while Ukraine is perceived in Moscow as a proxy for NATO. Russia-NATO relations after the collapse of the Soviet Union were mixed. Russian authorities have been claiming for years that the last Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was reassured about non-enlargement of NATO to the East during the negotiations on the reunification of Germany in 1990. NATO officials claim that such promises have never been made. Since then, Russian authorities, especially after the 2004 round of NATO enlargement to the Baltic states (three former Soviet republics Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) became very suspicious about the main goal of NATO existence. The Alliance presents itself as a political bloc more than a military organization, while Russia perceives NATO as a military bloc with high offensive potential, which moves closer to the Russian borders.

In its 2010 Strategic Concept, NATO claims that it poses no threat to Russia, while nothing is said about whether Russia poses any threat to NATO. In the new 2022 Strategic Concept, most probably, Russia will be included as a major threat to NATO. But why does not NATO recognize that it also poses a threat to Russia? The answer is that the Alliance positions itself as a defensive bloc which will never attack first. From the Russian official perspective, this does not correspond to the previous experience of NATO: in 1999 NATO started an operation in former Yugoslavia without the UN Security Council mandate, the US-led operation in Afghanistan in 2003 also started without the UNSC approval. Both former Yugoslavia and Iraq were not democratic at the time, so a democratic defensive bloc or democratic countries in a format of a

coalition of the willing can start a military operation in the name of protecting human rights against a regime that they consider to be non-democratic.

Another point of controversy between the West and Russia is Western support for revolutions in Eurasia and MENA region. Russian policy-makers believe that such support of the opposition forces can be qualified as interference in domestic affairs. Since at least 2012, Russian authorities undertake legislative efforts to prevent foreign governments and NGOs from supporting Russian opposition and individuals involved in political activities.

Thus, the three interrelated factors which spoil Russia-Western relations from the Russian perspective are: 1) NATO enlargement to the East and move of NATO military infrastructure closer to the Russian borders, especially in case of potential Ukraine and Georgia accession to the Alliance; 2) potential regime-change operation against Russia without a mandate of the UNSC (where Russia has a veto power); 3) Western support of revolutions.

The first two factors were discussed during the multiple rounds of consultations between Russia and the West starting in December 2021 when Russia published two draft proposals, one addressed to the United States, the other one to NATO. From the perspective of Russian leadership, these consultations failed to provide Russia with the security guarantees it wanted to get from the West.

It is difficult to make short-term predictions about the current hot stage of the crisis, but it is possible to suggest some regional scenarios.

Russian foreign policy will inevitably be reoriented towards the East and South. In the mid-term and long-term perspective Russian foreign policy will be concentrated on the development of more active ties with countries which have neutral or supportive positions towards Moscow in

the current crisis. Russian leadership does not expect full political support but values neutrality or abstention from support of sanctions. It is, however, clear that even if their governments remain neutral, some industries will support the anti-Russian sanctions out of fear of Western secondary sanctions.

China, Pakistan and India are already important economic and political partners for Russia and they will become even more prioritized in terms of trade and investment. In their turn, Pakistan, India and China may be interested in Russia as a provider of energy and food. All three countries are full members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a regional forum, originally aimed at countering extremism, terrorism and separatism. The SCO has an economic dimension as well, in mid-2000s China wanted to develop a free trade area within this organization but Russia was skeptical about this idea and preferred cooperation mostly in the security sphere. In the new geopolitical environment, Russia may find new impetus to develop economic and financial cooperation within the SCO. This trend generally fits into the Russian idea of the so called Greater Eurasia initiative suggested in 2015. The Greater Eurasia initiative implies the creation of a network of regional organizations, forums and projects like the Eurasian Economic Union, the SCO, the Belt and Road Initiative, ASEAN and any other projects or free trade areas that would be willing to coordinate their activities within a network. The Greater Eurasia initiative is not too much developed in terms of specific formats or strategies, but Russia may initiate a new round of discussions of this initiative in the mid-term.

This future reorientation of Russia towards the East and South has a lot of potential for regional cooperation, especially in the sphere of energy security and regional trade.

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Conflict or Balance of Power

Abstract:

The recent conflict between Russia and Ukraine has attracted worldwide attention. This war started in 2022 but its roots go back to 2014. Ukraine, located next to Russia, was previously part of the USSR. It has been working tirelessly since 2014 to become a member of NATO and a permanent member of the European Union. Its chances of becoming a member were bleak from the start because Russia has long opposed Ukraine joining the treaty and warned of reprisal if the country was permitted to join. Apparently, the people of Ukraine are also willing to join NATO and the European Union. According to the Ukrainian Rating Sociological Group, a growing consensus on the question in late 2021 and early 2022 is a testament to the increased threat Ukrainians were feeling in the weeks and months leading up to the Russian invasion. As of Feb 16-17, 62 percent in the country supported membership, up from just 51 percent one year earlier¹⁰.

Russia's magnetic geographical boundaries

The Russian Federation, or Russia, is a country that is part of Eastern Europe and part of North Asia, bordering the Arctic Ocean to the north. Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Kazakhstan, North Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Norway, Poland, and Ukraine are among Russia's 14 neighbors. Japan, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States all have marine boundaries with them.

The country is more than twice the size of the contiguous United States, with a total area of 17,098,242 km². It is the world's largest country (by area), covering more than 11% of the planet's surface. However, vast regions of the country were uninhabited or uninhabitable.

¹⁰

https://ratinggroup.ua/files/ratinggroup/reg_files/rg_international_moods_022022_press.pdf?_x_tr_sl=auto&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en

Where the problem lies?

Following the end of the Cold War, the United States emerges as the world's lone and sole superpower, with no immediate and powerful rival. The entire global scenario is in the United States of America's favor. The long history of America explains how it has impacted and exerted control over small or third world countries. Whether it's the Wilsonian concept of using power to disseminate and hegemonize ideologies or the use of armaments in various parts of the world. It is true that an imbalanced, uncontrollable, absolute, and unaccountable great state can make weaker states feel uneasy and encourage them to reinforce their positions.

That is why the alarm bells for Russia have rung at a time when the US-led NATO has begun to exert influence over weaker governments and has begun to maximize its strength by forming alliances with Russia's neighbors. Their land and resources are now available to be exploited against Russia at any time. RUSSIA's ideological and physical boundaries must be safeguarded at all costs and maintaining good relations with the neighboring states was the greatest issue for Russia.

The military actions in Georgia in August 2008 and the ensuing worsening of Russian–Ukrainian relations have plainly demonstrated that Russia's most serious foreign policy challenge is its conflict-ridden relationships with its neighbors. The willingness of Ukraine to join NATO at this time was utterly unacceptable to Russia.

This was a geographical and defensive alarm for Russia. It was actually running out of balance of power. So Russia enforced war on Ukraine on its own.

Former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Tour to Russia

At a time when the shadows of war were hovering over the world, Imran Khan's visit to Russia was enough to surprise. The meeting between the two leaders took place on a day when the Russian president ordered the invasion of Ukraine. Images of Mr. Khan and Mr. Putin shaking hands

and sitting down together in Moscow were carried by Russian state media hours after the latter gave a televised address virtually declaring war on Russia's western neighbor. Mr. Khan's visit to Moscow was the first by a Pakistani Prime minister in 20 years, and it was hailed as an opportunity to discuss economic cooperation and Pakistan's energy requirements.

For the West in general and the United States in particular, this is a cause of embarrassment and, it is somewhat surprising for them that Pakistan did not pay attention to how the West viewed Imran Khan's visit. No attempt was made to please the West as Pakistan took its own decision. The 1,100 km (683 miles)-long Pakistan Stream pipeline, was initially agreed to in 2015 and was to be financed by both Moscow and Islamabad, using a Russian company to construct it. Pakistan is currently suffering from a severe gas shortage. It's a fundamental right to defend its interests at such a time.

GALLERY



