

**SRMUN'23**

15 - 17 April



# **UN SECURITY COUNCIL**

**Addressing the Situation  
in Ukraine**

## **BACKGROUND GUIDE**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**  
**AADYOT PRAKASH**  
**RICHIK CHAKRABORTY**  
**ANNIKA SAIGAL**

# Introduction

Beginning with its first session on January 17, 1946, the United Nations Security Council has been home to some of the most vehement arguments on international issues. Upon establishment as one of the six organs under the UN Charter, the Security Council's purpose has been to create harmony in times of threat to international peace and security.

Under Article 25 of the Charter, the Member State agreed to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the United Nations can pass recommendations on various topics, only the Security Council can itself create binding international agreements.

Members of the Security Council include five permanent member states – the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic China along with ten non-permanent member states that are elected by the General Assembly to hold two-year terms. While any nation not part of the Security Council – member or non-member – of the United Nations can take part in committee discussions, on the invitation of the Council, only the fifteen members can vote on the resolution.

As per Article 27 of the UN charter, the voting procedure of the Security Council demands a nine-vote majority to pass any decision, and each member has one vote. However, the five permanent member states hold a special power, “the veto power.” If any of these five powers vote no to a resolution, it automatically fails regardless of other votes. This power has been especially controversial in certain international crisis discussions but has been a power used by every single permanent member at one time or another since 1945. The 15 members of the Security Council have the authority to invoke many international laws and, under the purview, form the main body responsible for upholding peace and dialogue in times of heightened threats to international security. The means by which the Security Council is able to exercise and authorise security procedure has been thoroughly outlined by the Charter of the United Nations. Under the Charter, the Security Council contains the capacity to adopt certain measures to lessen tensions in times of conflicts. These measures can include agreements between parties, investigations or missions, and even ceasefires or deploying peacekeepers in scenarios when tensions turn into hostilities. Outside these measures, the Security Council can opt for enforcement such as financial sanctions, blockades or embargoes, escalated military force, or the removal of diplomatic ties. Beyond these authorities of the Security Council, Article 29 of the UN Charter stipulates that the Council can form subsidiary organs to fulfil procedural and substantive matters. The functions of these organs can range from peacekeeping operations to international courts and even to advisory bodies. The UN Charter has established an abundance of stipulations that enable the Security Council to operate productively and efficiently in hostile political situations.



# History

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The roots of the crisis lie in the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, which ended the prospect of enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for both Georgia and Ukraine, and in the beginning of the global financial crisis, which seemed to give more credence to regional economic arrangements. In response to the recession, the EU launched the “Eastern Partnership Program” in 2009 which planned economic associations with East European Countries like Ukraine. Russia, on the other hand interpreted the EU’s actions as an attempt to expand its sphere of influence, possibly setting precedent for other Western leaning Regional Arrangements like NATO. The Russian elite also reportedly believed that an international deal between a former soviet state and a western force like the EU would reflect Russia’s waning influence over its regional neighbours.

Ukraine, for its part, has been torn between East and West since the collapse of the Soviet Union. As the West has looked to strengthen its ties with Ukraine, Russia has been doing the same. Russian President Vladimir Putin would like to see Ukraine to join the Moscow-driven economic group, the Eurasian Customs Union. It consists of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan and is part of a larger plan to create an association of former Soviet countries, a “Eurasia” of sorts. Furthermore, Ukraine plays an important role in Russia’s energy trade; its pipelines provide transit to 80 percent of the natural gas Russia sends to European markets, and Ukraine itself is a major market for Russian gas. Militarily, Ukraine is also important to Russia as a buffer state, and was home to Russia’s Black Sea fleet, based in the Crimean port city of Sevastopol under a bilateral agreement between the two states.

The Ukrainian people’s opinions are split: according to a 2015 poll, 46% of Ukrainians supported Ukraine’s integration with the EU, and 36% opposed it. When a popular EU economic partnership was being considered in 2012, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich began to indicate doubts about the deal. For Ukrainians, their president’s waffling was a clear signal that he was caving to pressure from President Vladimir Putin of Russia to reject the EU’s proposed deal. A few days later, President Yanukovich outright rejected the EU proposal, accepting a new deal from Russia in the form of \$15 billion in aid and other economic benefits. This would invite backlash from across the country: for years, Ukrainians have sought economic reform that would bring the country’s economy in line with the economies of Western countries. President Yanukovich’s rejection of the EU proposal not only ignored the views of a majority of Ukrainians but a stronger alignment with Russia.



Within hours of the EU proposal's rejection, thousands of protesters stormed the streets of Kiev (the capital of Ukraine) to renew their cry for economic reform and voice their opposition to the president's decision, calling for his immediate resignation. In response to the protesters (opposition), the Ukrainian government began to carry out aggressive action. Riot police, armed guards, and military personnel quickly descended on protest sites throughout Ukraine in order to shut down the opposition. Tensions between the two groups quickly escalated, with YouTube videos showing protesters throwing Molotov cocktails at riot police and armed guards tormenting opposition prisoners. Throughout, the United States and the European Union offered new deals for the Ukrainian government to enter into, providing its government with several "last chances" to come around and respect the decisions of its mobilised public. In mid-February 2014, the death toll from the protests in Kiev rose sharply into the hundreds.

Talks of a resolution between opposition leaders and President Viktor Yanukovich appeared less and less likely. On Feb. 21, protesters overtook the capital and the President's residence. President Viktor Yanukovich quickly fled to Russia, fearing for his life, while also facing charges from the opposition for the killing of protesters. In response, Russian President Vladimir Putin also called for a military drill involving over 100,000 troops, many of whom were situated by the Ukrainian border. President Putin's deliberate show of force sent the message that Russia was prepared to go to war with Ukraine. Following the initial movements of Russian aggression, the unmarked soldiers quickly began to enter the Ukrainian province of Crimea.





Crimea is a peninsula situated on the eastern side of Ukraine near the Black sea; it is connected to the mainland via a strip of land. Until 1917 it was a sovereign state known as the “Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic”; it became a part of the Soviet Union in 1921. In 1954, Nikita Khrushchev, the Premier of Russia, handed over Crimea as a gesture of goodwill to Ukraine to mark the 300th anniversary of Ukraine’s inclusion in the Russian Empire. On the eve of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, during the negotiations with Ukraine it was expected that President Boris Yeltsin would bring up the ‘Crimea for Russia’ issue but it did not happen. Crimea’s Russian roots reinforce a widely held belief that it has always rightfully belonged to Russia. Furthermore, almost 50% of Crimea’s population reportedly identifies itself with Russia. Crimea also holds great strategic value for Russia as well: being the location of several strong naval bases for Russia.

Yanukovich’s ouster also fundamentally divided Ukrainians: clashes broke out in the Eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk between pro Russian separatists and west leaning protestors. The separatists then proceeded to declare two republics bearing the names of the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk, the “Donetsk People’s Republic” and the “Luhansk People’s Republic”. These proto-states haven’t been recognised internationally but continue to function till date and are at war with Ukraine.

Additionally, Ukraine has repeatedly asserted claims that Russia has been supplying these separatists with financial aid and armaments. It even took these claims to the ICJ but was rejected by the court for not providing enough evidence. Separatist fighting reached its peak on 17th July 2014, when a Malaysian Airlines flight carrying more than 200 people was shot down as it was flying over east Ukraine. The Ukrainian government was quick to blame the separatists, who denied all allegations claiming that they lacked the sophisticated weaponry to shoot down a plane. A joint investigation team has since then reported “irrefutable” proof that the plane was shot down from rebel held areas by a Russian made Buk Missile. Russia has refused to acknowledge these findings, calling the investigation “biased” and “politically motivated”.

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Though fighting continued throughout the last half of 2014, it seemed that the peak of the crisis had passed. In September 2014, Ukraine and rebels signed the Minsk Protocol, which agreed to a ceasefire between forces and was successful until it ended in January 2015. President Putin ordered Russian troops that were on the Ukrainian border to return to their Ukrainian army preparing to fight against pro-Russian rebels.

In October, Russia began trading gas supplies to Ukraine again with the help of the EU. Though the Minsk Protocol was diplomatically successful, many pro-Russian rebels still violated the agreement and continued fighting in the town of Debaltseve. By January 2015, full-scale fighting had broken out again. In February, Germany's Angela Merkel and France's François Hollande stepped in to revive the ceasefire, brokering a "Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements", known as Minsk II. Minsk II offers a detailed roadmap for resolving the conflict. The 13 point-plan begins with a ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the front lines, to be monitored by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). An "all for all" prisoner exchange, local elections and amnesty for fighters are to follow; both sides are to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian aid and work toward the socio-economic reintegration of the separatist-held territories. Ukraine promises to implement constitutional changes to provide for "decentralisation"; in exchange, all "foreign armed formations" will be withdrawn and Ukraine will regain control of its state borders.

Despite Minsk II, the civil war in Ukraine, between the government and the republics of Luhansk and Donetsk continued. There were several continuing reports about the Russian Federation's backing of the separatists in the Donbas. An intermittent conflict and international tensions continued until 2022.

## DATE

## EVENTS

**1991**

Ukraine declares independence from Moscow after the fall of the Soviet Union.

NATO assures Ukraine that it will be allowed to join someday.

**2008**

In response to Georgia's close associations with the West, Russia invades and takes control of 20 percent of the country.

**February  
2014**

After months of protests, Ukrainians drive their pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich out of office. Soon after, armed groups seize Parliament in Crimea and then Russia annexes it.

**May  
2014**

UkAfter seizing government buildings, separatists in Donbas region declare independence for Donetsk and Luhansk provinces.



**August  
2014**

By this time, Russia has control of the entire Ukrainian–Russian border.

**September  
2014**

Minsk Protocol is signed, and Russia and Ukraine agree to a ceasefire. Fighting eases but doesn't completely stop. Two weeks later a memorandum is signed that further details the terms of the ceasefire.

**September  
28, 2014**

The second battle of Donetsk Airport begins, culminating with a complete takeover by the DPR in January 2015.

**November  
2014**

National rather than local elections take place in the self-proclaimed republics, violating a provision of the Minsk Protocol

**January  
2015**

The ceasefire agreement collapses, and battles take place around Donetsk International Airport.

**February  
12-15, 2015**

Minsk II, an updated ceasefire agreement for the Donbas is signed. Ukrainian soldiers are surrounded by separatists in the town of Debaltseve.



**2015-  
Present**

Russia launches cyberattacks against Ukraine, disrupting the electric grid and financial institutions.

**April  
2019**

Volodymyr Zelensky is elected president of Ukraine. Russia begins moving troops closer to Ukrainian borders.

**July  
2019**

US President Donald Trump pressures Zelensky to investigate Joe Biden's son Hunter over possible business dealings in Ukraine. The incident leads to Trump's first impeachment.

**December  
2021**

Putin demands that NATO pull back troops from eastern Europe and bar Ukraine from joining NATO.

**January  
2022**

NATO reinforces eastern European members with military support.

**February  
2022**

The US warns of Russia's impending attack on Ukraine and sends thousands of US troops to NATO countries in eastern Europe. It threatens sanctions if Russia invades, but will not send troops to Ukraine.

**February 21,  
2022**

On television, Putin calls Ukraine an integral part of Russia, recognizes the breakaway provinces as independent states and sends forces into Donbas.

**February 24,  
2022**

Russia begins strikes inside of Ukraine targeting major cities.

**February 26,  
2022**

Western allies begin to impose a series of major sanctions against Russia, crippling its financial system.

**February 28,  
2022**

Ceasefire talks begin at the Ukraine–Belarus border and later move to Istanbul as the military strikes continue.

## **The Minsk Agreement**

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The period between 2014-2015 saw extensive talks between stakeholders in the conflict which gave rise to a series of international agreements that came to be known as the Minsk agreements. The first of these, known as the Minsk Protocol (Minsk I), was drafted in 2014 by the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine, consisting of Ukraine, Russia, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with mediation from the French Republic and Germany in the so called Normandy Format. After extensive talks in Minsk, Belarus, the agreement was signed on 5 September 2014 by representatives of the Trilateral Contact Group and, without recognition of their status, by the then-leaders of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and Luhansk People's Republic (LPR). This agreement followed multiple previous attempts to stop the fighting in the region and aimed to implement an immediate ceasefire.

Minsk I was a 12-point ceasefire agreement whose provisions included prisoner exchanges, deliveries of humanitarian aid and the withdrawal of heavy weapons, five months into a conflict that had by then killed more than 2,600 people - a toll that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy says has since risen to around 15,000.



The terms of the Minsk I agreement, in brief, were:

1. To ensure an immediate bilateral ceasefire.
2. To ensure the monitoring and verification of the ceasefire by the OSCE.
3. Decentralisation of power, including through the adoption of the Ukrainian law "On temporary Order of Local Self-Governance in Particular Districts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts".
4. To ensure the permanent monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian border and verification by the OSCE with the creation of security zones in the border regions of Ukraine and the Russian Federation.
5. Immediate release of all hostages and illegally detained persons.
6. A law preventing the prosecution and punishment of people in connection with the events that have taken place in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts.
7. To continue the inclusive national dialogue.
8. To take measures to improve the humanitarian situation in Donbas.
9. To ensure early local elections in accordance with the Ukrainian law "On temporary Order of Local Self-Governance in Particular Districts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts".
10. To withdraw illegal armed groups and military equipment as well as fighters and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine.
11. To adopt a programme of economic recovery and reconstruction for the Donbas region.
12. To provide personal security for participants in the consultations.

Several violations of the ceasefire were perpetrated by both sides within two weeks of the protocol being signed. Talks continued in Minsk, and a follow-up to the Minsk Protocol was agreed to on 19 September 2014. This memorandum clarified the implementation of the Protocol. The resultant document reads as follows.

Source: OSCE (Ru.). Translation source: United Nations (Ukraine).

Memorandum on the implementation of the provisions of the Protocol on the outcome of consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group on joint steps aimed at the implementation of the Peace Plan of the President of Ukraine, P. Poroshenko, and the initiatives of the President of the Russian Federation, V. Putin

1. The ceasefire shall be considered mutual.
2. Both sides' units and armed formations shall halt at their line of contact as at 19 September 2014.
3. The use of all types of weapons and offensive action shall be banned.
4. Within 24 hours after the approval of this Memorandum, all lethal weapons of more than 100 millimetre calibre shall be moved back from the line of contact on each side by at least 15 kilometres (with the exception of those indicated below), including from residential areas, to allow the establishment of a ceasefire zone of no less than 30 kilometres in width (the security zone).

At the same time, artillery systems of more than 100 millimetre calibre shall be moved back from the line of contact to a distance equal to the length of their maximum range, specifically:

- 100 mm canons MT12, by 9 kilometres; 120 mm mortars, by 8 kilometres; 122 mm howitzers D30 (2C1 Gvozdika), by 16 kilometres; 152 mm 2C5 Giatsynt-S (2C3 Akatsia, 2C19 Msta-S, 2A65 Msta-B), by 33 kilometres; multiple-launch rocket system (MLRS) 9K51 Grad, by 21 kilometres; 9K57 Uragan, by 36 kilometres; 9K58 Smerch, by 70 kilometres; MLRS Tornado-G, by 40 kilometres; MLRS Tornado-U, by 70 kilometres; MLRS Tornado-C, by 120 kilometres.
- Tactical rocket systems, by 120 kilometres.

5. Deployment of heavy weapons and military equipment shall be banned in the district delimited by the towns of Komsomolsk, Kumacheve, Novoazovsk and Sakhanka, with OSCE monitoring.

6. Installation of new mines and explosive barriers within the limits of the security zone shall be banned.

Mines and explosive engineering barriers installed previously within the security zone shall be dismantled.



7. As soon as this Memorandum is approved, flights by military aircraft and foreign unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), with the exception of UAV used by the OSCE monitoring mission, shall be banned along the line of contact in the ceasefire zone no less than 30 kilometres in width.

8. An OSCE monitoring mission consisting of OSCE observers shall be deployed in the ceasefire zone within 24 hours of the approval of this Memorandum. The above-mentioned zone should be divided into sectors, the number and limits of which shall be agreed upon as part of the preparations for the work of the OSCE monitoring mission.

9. All foreign military formations and military equipment, as well as militants and mercenaries, are to exit the territory of Ukraine under OSCE monitoring.

### **Participants of the Trilateral Contact Group :**

(Signed) Heidi Tagliavini,  
Ambassador

(Signed) L. D. Kuchma,  
Second President of Ukraine

(Signed) M. Y. Zurabov,  
Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Ukraine

(Signed) A. W. Zakharchenko

(Signed) I. W. Plotnitski

Minsk, 19 September 2014

The protocol was not implemented as intended, and was, after much deliberation and dialogue, followed up with the Minsk II agreement on 12 February 2015. Representatives of Russia, Ukraine, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the leaders of two pro-Russian separatist regions signed a 13-point agreement in February 2015

The leaders of France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine, gathered in Minsk at the same time, issued a declaration of support for the deal. The provisions of the 13-point deal, in brief, are:

1. An immediate and comprehensive ceasefire
2. Withdrawal of all heavy weapons by both sides
3. Monitoring and verification by the OSCE
4. To start a dialogue on interim self-government for the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, in accordance with Ukrainian law, and acknowledge their special status by parliamentary resolution.
5. A pardon and amnesty for people involved in the fighting
6. An exchange of hostages and prisoners.
7. Provision of humanitarian assistance.
8. Resumption of socio-economic ties, including pensions.
9. Restoration of full control of the state border by the government of Ukraine.
10. Withdrawal of all foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries.
11. Constitutional reform in Ukraine including decentralisation, with specific mention of Donetsk and Luhansk.
12. Elections in Donetsk and Luhansk on terms to be agreed with their representatives.
13. Intensifying the work of a Trilateral Contact Group comprising representatives of Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE.

**The entire agreement can be accessed via the following link :**

[https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/UA\\_150212\\_MinskAgreement\\_en.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/UA_150212_MinskAgreement_en.pdf)



## European Union and the Minsk Agreements

The following is an At a Glance document issued by the European Union on 4 March, 2020. It reviews the advancements of the conflict and the position of the European Union regarding the same.

AT A GLANCE Plenary – March 2020: EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service Author: Naja Bentzen, Members' Research Service PE 646.203 – March 2020

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(internet) <http://epthinktank.eu> (blog)

### EN Ukraine: The Minsk agreements five years on

Six years after the beginning of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine and Russia's illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula, the Minsk peace agreements to end the fighting have yielded limited results. Despite some progress in late 2019 – including prisoner swaps and new peace talks – fighting in eastern Ukraine continues.

#### Background :

How the crisis started In 2013, Ukraine's then-President, Viktor Yanukovich, decided against signing an association agreement (AA) with the European Union (EU), sparking major pro-European protests in Ukraine. In February 2014, the Ukrainian parliament voted to impeach Yanukovich, who fled Kyiv. Russia responded by annexing Crimea in March 2014, in violation of international law, and launched a hybrid war against Ukraine, including aggression in eastern Ukraine and targeted disinformation campaigns. The EU, the United States and other countries imposed sanctions on Russia. The EU-Ukraine AA entered into force in September 2017. The Minsk agreements: New impetus for the peace plans?



In 2014, a peace plan for eastern Ukraine (the Minsk Protocol) was signed. As fighting continued, in 2015, leaders from France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia (the 'Normandy Four') agreed to a new ceasefire and a package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements (the 'Minsk II' agreement). Since then progress has been limited. Violations of the ceasefire continue to flare up along the line of contact. As the death toll has risen to some 13 000, up to 30 000 have been wounded, 1.4 million people have been displaced, and 3.4 million people need humanitarian aid, in January 2020 the United Nations (UN) appealed for US\$158 million for humanitarian assistance and protection of vulnerable people in eastern Ukraine. In 2019, however, some progress was made. Two prisoner swaps – including the release of Ukrainian filmmaker and 2018 Sakharov laureate Oleg Sentsov – took place, in September and December 2019. Moreover, the first Normandy Four summit since 2016 was held in Paris on 9 December 2019. Among other steps, the parties agreed to implement the ceasefire in full and disengage military forces in three additional (unspecified) regions by the end of March 2020.

They noted that the Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation (OSCE) in Europe needed secure access throughout Ukraine to implement its mandate in full. Other issues, such as the withdrawal of Russian-backed troops, elections in separatist-held regions and a special status for the Donbass region (advocated by Russia) remain unresolved. New talks are due in spring. Since the summit, ceasefire violations have resumed and deadly clashes continue.

On 18 February 2020, five EU members of the UN Security Council – Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany and Poland – deplored recent fatalities and reminded Russia in particular of its Minsk agreement commitments. However, some see the recent dismissal of Vladislav Surkov – long-term, hawkish Ukraine adviser to Russian President Vladimir Putin – as a sign of change in Russia's approach to Ukraine.

The role of the European Union and the European Parliament The EU has consistently supported Ukraine's territorial integrity, and backs the work of the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group (a group of representatives from Ukraine, Russia and the OSCE) to help end the war in the Donbass. The duration of the EU's economic sanctions against Russia is explicitly linked to complete implementation of the Minsk agreements. The EU is one of the largest humanitarian donors in the eastern Ukraine crisis and has provided €141.8 million in emergency financial assistance; €23 million in 2019 alone. Parliament has pointed repeatedly to the Kremlin's particular responsibility for the implementation of the Minsk accords.

Statement by the VP/HR: 2020/2570(RSP).



## Recent Developments and the War

In July 2021, President Putin published a statement titled “On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians”. In the tenor of a chronicler, Mr. Putin explained in great detail the ways in which the peoples of the two countries were similar and reiterated the Russians’ respect for Ukraine. In the same piece he also expressed regret about the “wall that has emerged in recent years between Russia and Ukraine”. One of the reasons for such a wall, he said, were a result of deliberate efforts by forces to undermine Russo-Ukrainian unity. He accused these forces of using the divide and rule formula to further their own interests. Accusing the Western countries of using the public protests of 2014 to their advantage, he construed the narratives as being singularly Anti-Russia or Russophobic.

In hindsight, this article, in many ways, reflects the rationale for the full-scale war that broke out in 2022, as well as how Mr. Putin prepared his own public as well as those sympathetic in Ukraine to a prospect of a ‘Russian Ukraine’.

Later in the year 2021, the United States’ intelligence services reported a massive Russian military build up on the borders of Ukraine. Many observers, both military and non-military, concluded that this could only mean that the Russian Federation was gearing up for an invasion of Ukraine to attempt an annexation of the country like that of Crimea in 2014. However, at the time, unity among the traditional ‘Allies’ was fraught with distrust and doubt. The United States was reeling from the diplomatic disasters caused by the Trump administration which had put the USA’s commitment to NATO as well as its continued cooperation with the European Union, in doubt. The shadows of past mistakes with respect to intelligence in Iraq as well as the Afghan crisis after the US withdrawal, which can only be called a gross miscalculation, weighed heavily on the policy decisions of countries like France and Germany - countries key to the mobilisation of the European Union and NATO.

Succinctly, members of NATO and the EU tried collectively and individually to engage in diplomatic talks with Russia. These were aimed at alleviating the Russian concerns about NATO’s eastward expansion as well as to address the more immediate military mobilisation. Some countries like France, felt like they made progress while speaking to the Russian leadership, while others like the United States, were continually frustrated in their efforts.

President Putin delivered a speech on February 21, 2022 which detailed Russia’s outlook on Ukraine. He began by asserting the points made in his earlier article: “...Ukraine is not just a neighbouring country for us. It is an inalienable part of our own history, culture and spiritual space.” Again with the tenor of a chronicler, he set out how Russia viewed the history of the last century. He accused the Ukrainian leadership of dealing with Russia in a manner in which “they enjoy all the rights and privileges while remaining free from any obligations”, while referring to bilateral trade and aid transactions between Russia and Ukraine.



The same leadership tried to build the Ukrainian nation while trying to dismantle the historical links between Russia and Ukraine, which according to Mr. Putin, gave way to “Russophobia and neo-Nazism [which further] resulted in the participation of Ukrainian nationalists and neo-Nazis in the terrorist groups in the North Caucasus and the increasingly loud territorial claims to Russia.” What follows in the speech is a scathing attack on the domestic politics and economic situation of Ukraine while asserting the United States controlled a series of corruption prevention offices. Therefore, he concluded that Ukraine had become a colony or a puppet state of sorts.

He discusses the New Military Strategy that Ukraine adopted in 2021 which sought to ensure that Ukraine could deal with the “geopolitical confrontation with the Russian Federation” with foreign support. He expresses a fear of Ukraine’s possible nuclear capability too: “...acquiring tactical nuclear weapons will be much easier for Ukraine than for some other states...”.

He then moves on to discuss the USA’s and NATO’s involvement in the conflict:

Since 2014, the United States alone has spent billions of dollars for this purpose, including supplies of arms and equipment and training of specialists. In the last few months, there has been a constant flow of Western weapons to Ukraine, ostentatiously, with the entire world watching. Foreign advisors supervise the activities of Ukraine’s armed forces and special services and we are well aware of this.

Over the past few years, military contingents of NATO countries have been almost constantly present on Ukrainian territory under the pretext of exercises. The Ukrainian troop control system has already been integrated into NATO. This means that NATO headquarters can issue direct commands to the Ukrainian armed forces, even to their separate units and squads.

The United States and NATO have started an impudent development of Ukrainian territory as a theatre of potential military operations. Their regular joint exercises are obviously anti-Russian. Last year alone, over 23,000 troops and more than a thousand units of hardware were involved.

A law has already been adopted that allows foreign troops to come to Ukraine in 2022 to take part in multinational drills. Understandably, these are primarily NATO troops. This year, at least ten of these joint drills are planned



In terms of direct Western involvement, he said that the US-built Ochakov naval base is a direct threat to the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The United States' leadership role in the expansion of NATO to countries like Poland and Ukraine is viewed as a direct threat presumably to Russian sovereignty. He has accused NATO of reneging on its commitments of the 1990s made during the negotiations for the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany, especially U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's famous "not one inch eastward" assurance about future NATO expansion.

We also know the main adversary of the United States and NATO. It is Russia. NATO documents officially declare our country to be the main threat to Euro-Atlantic security. Ukraine will serve as an advanced bridgehead for such a strike.

Many Ukrainian airfields are located not far from our borders...The deployment of reconnaissance radars on Ukrainian territory will allow NATO to tightly control Russia's airspace up to the Urals.

Finally, after the US destroyed the INF Treaty, the Pentagon has been openly developing many land-based attack weapons, including ballistic missiles that are capable of hitting targets at a distance of up to 5,500 km. If deployed in Ukraine, such systems will be able to hit targets in Russia's entire European part...I have no doubt that they hope to carry out these plans, as they did many times in the past, expanding NATO eastward, moving their military infrastructure to Russian borders and fully ignoring our concerns, protests and warnings.

Having completed his barrage on the West, Mr. Putin addresses the situation in the Donbas. With this speech, he confirmed that the Russian Federation recognised the independence and sovereignty of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, on the basis of what he sees as Kyiv's genocidal actions in the Donbas.

Russia signed identical treaties of friendship and mutual assistance with the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic. With respect to borders and security, the treaty entails the following provision:

"For the purpose of maintaining the security of the contracting parties and also peace and stability either contracting party shall grant the other contracting party the right to build, use and improve its military infrastructures (facilities) on its territory."

According to TASS, the Russian news agency, the two republics will be guarded jointly "proceeding from the contracting parties' interests of security and also peace and stability."



In execution of these treaties, the Russian Federation launched a full scale invasion of Ukraine officially on February 24, 2022, with a speech by President Putin. The stated purpose of the “special military operation” is to protect the people who have been facing genocide at the hands of the Kyiv regime. To this end Mr. Putin aims to “demilitarise and denazify Ukraine”. He has stated that the Russian military action is in line with Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Ukraine requested a special meeting of the United Nations Security Council, which took place one day before the President's address. According to the Ukrainian delegate's statement at the meeting, the invasion was already in progress during the early stages of the meeting.

In the early stages of the invasion, Russia attempted to occupy Kyiv and end the war quickly. However, they were repelled after their landing at the Antonov Airfield, north of Kyiv. After this defeat, Russian policy changed to the complete liberation of the DPR and LPR. A notable victory for the Ukrainians came when the warship Moskva was destroyed - something the Russians claim was an accident rather than because of Ukrainian missiles. A Russian victory came in May 2022, when they successfully concluded their siege of Mariupol.

In August, Ukraine managed to destroy the Kherson land bridge from Crimea to mainland Ukraine in a major strategic victory. Another similar event was the gains Ukraine made in Kharkiv in early September, cutting off Russian access to the rail hub supplying the Russian frontline. On 30th September, President Putin announced the annexation of four Ukrainian regions: Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia; the people in these regions becoming Russian citizens forever. These regions were incorporated into Russia and an attack on them would now be seen as an attack on the Russian Federation.

However, soon after, on November 9, Russian forces were forced to abandon Kherson. Russia has employed the services of the Wagner Mercenaries with them responsible for their progress at Soledar and Bakhmut in late 2022 as well as in 2023. It is likely that Wagner is using people convicted by the Russian legal system as expendable soldiers - something that raises a host of humanitarian, legal and political questions. Some have argued that the Russians sudden push forward at Bakhmut is an attempt to make gains before more aid arrives from the West.



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# More than a year since Russia's invasion

How military control of Ukraine has changed during the war

Feb 2022: Before the invasion



Mar 2022: Russia's rapid advance



Oct 2022: Ukraine regains ground



Mar 2023: Current situation



- Russian military control
- ▨ Limited Russian military control
- Russian-backed separatist-held areas

- Held or regained by Ukraine
- Russia annexed Crimea in 2014

Source: Institute for the Study of War

BBC

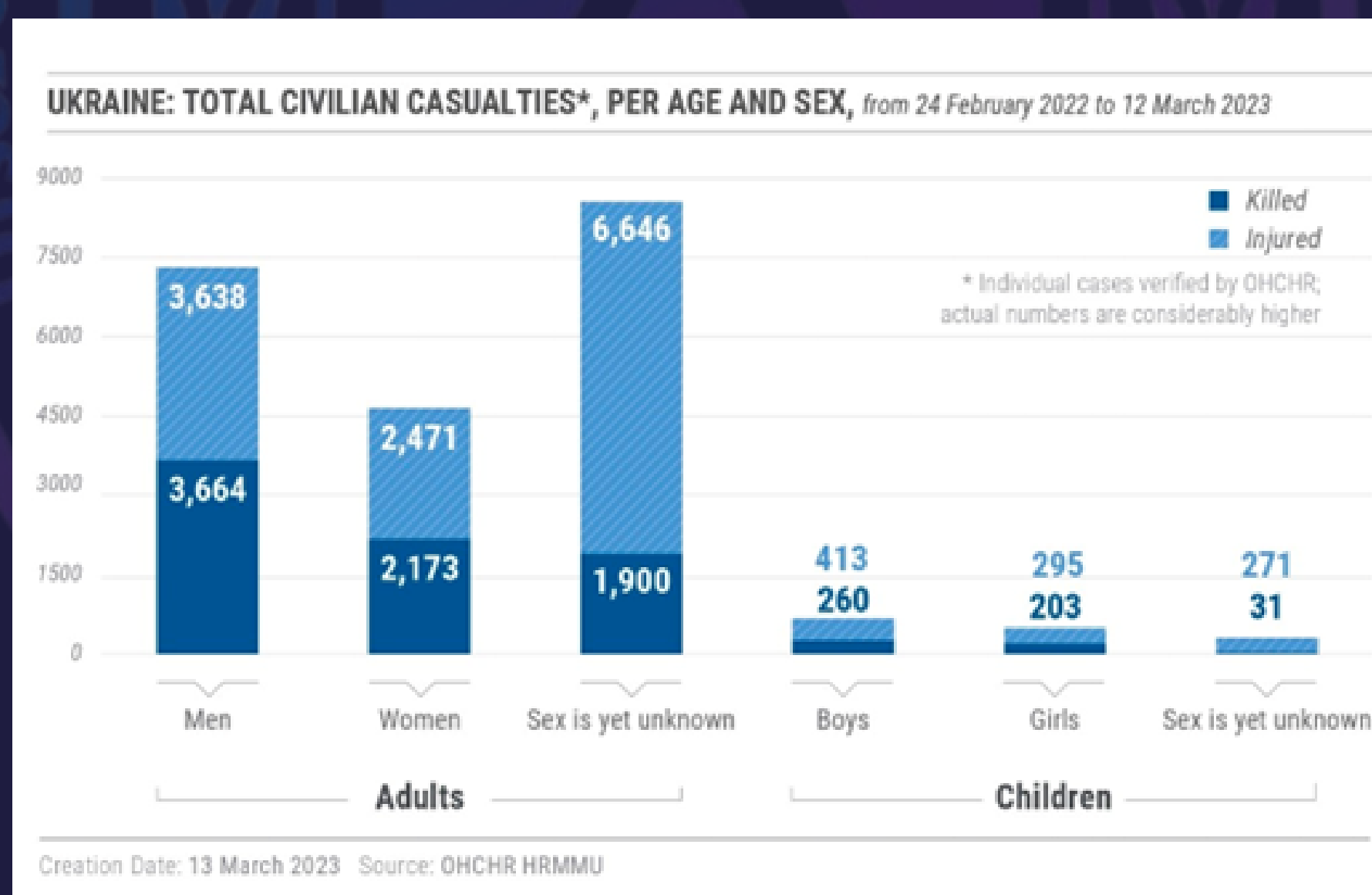
President Biden visited Ukraine on February 20, 2023 demonstrating American support for the war on its anniversary. In response, President Putin suspended the last active nuclear arms control treaty with the United States.



As the war has gone on for almost a year now, some things have become clear. The United States' and NATO are refusing to take part directly in the war, for fear of escalating the conflict into what would be World War III. Instead, the US administration has made provisions for extensive intelligence dissemination to Ukraine to help with the war effort. Besides this, several billions of dollars worth of aid have also been pumped into Ukraine by the West in the form of supplies, armament and other equipment. In January 2023, the USA and Germany agreed to send their M1 Abrams and Leopold 2 tanks respectively to Ukraine. The Washington Post reports that since the war began, the USA has sent over \$3.9 billion. The U.S. Congress also approved a \$20 billion package as aid to Ukraine. The European Union has sent 67 billion Euros calculated as a cumulative total of collective and individual donations. Keeping with their soft power policies, this has focussed on economic aid and support for refugees as compared to military aid.

## Humanitarian Situation

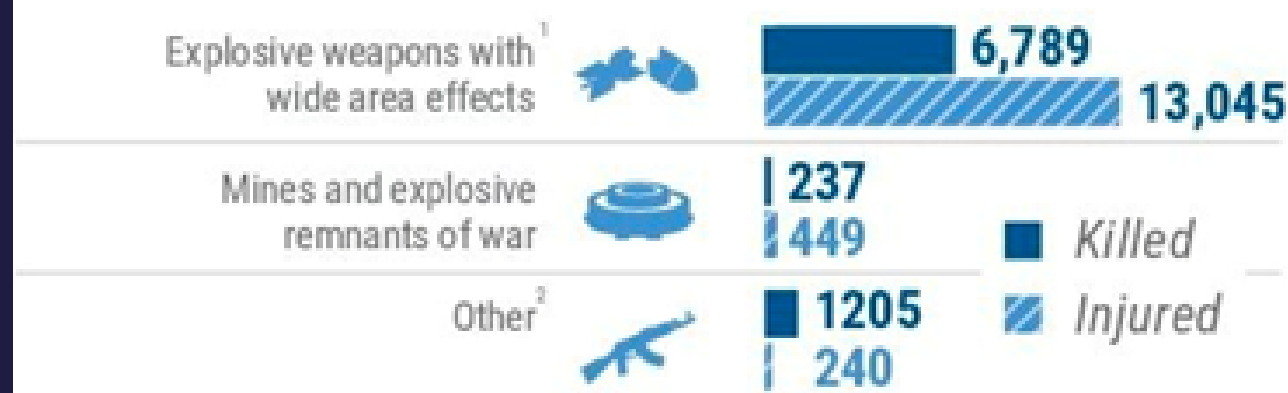
The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) was deployed in March 2014 at the invitation of the Government of Ukraine to monitor and publicly report on the human rights situation in the country. Since the 2022 war began, their focus has naturally shifted to documenting the violations during the war.



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In a war of such scale, it would be absurd to expect no civilian casualties - especially not with the deployment of longer range missiles and bombs. As of March 13, 2023, the number of dead and injured civilians went over 20,000

### UKRAINE: TOTAL CIVILIAN CASUALTIES\*, PER TYPE OF WEAPON/INCIDENT, from 24 February 2022 to 12 March 2023



\* Individual cases verified by OHCHR, actual numbers are considerably higher

<sup>1</sup> Incidents in which civilians were killed or injured by shelling from artillery, tanks and multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS), by cruise and ballistic missiles (air, sea and land-based), and by air strikes, including loitering munitions and other unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

<sup>2</sup> Incidents in which civilians were killed or injured by fire from small arms and light weapons, including as a result of crossfire, sniper fire, escalation of force incidents (cases in which military opened fire on civilians whom they perceived as a threat), and wilful killings, as well as road accidents involving either military vehicles or civilian vehicles driven by military in the area of hostilities.

Creation Date: 13 March 2023 Source: OHCHR HRMMU

The Red Cross has also been incredibly active in the region and described the Siege of Mariupol (see above) as hell. During the siege, Ukraine has accused Russia of destroying a theatre in which families were taking shelter

The refugee crisis is another issue, which the European Union has tackled admirably. Around 4 million people have been given protection in the EU since the start of the invasion

### KEY FIGURES

**17.7M**

People in need

**11.5M**

People targeted

**15.8M**

People reached as of 31 December 2022

**5.4M**

Internally displaced people

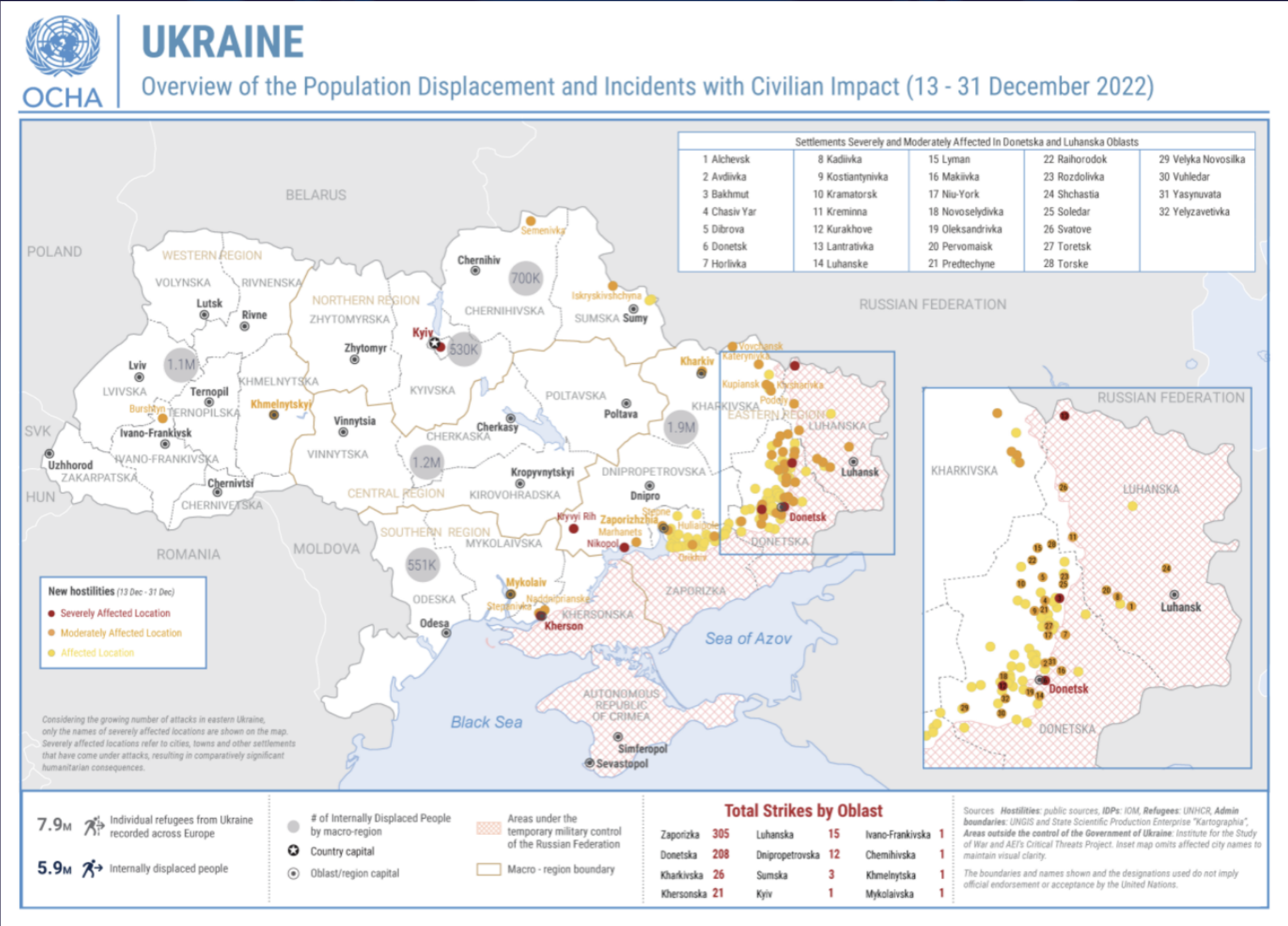
**8M**

Refugees in European countries



According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the number of people needing humanitarian assistance in Ukraine has gone up to about 18 million people since the beginning of the war:

Massive destruction of civilian infrastructure across the country decimated essential services, including energy, water supply, and heating. During the last quarter of 2022, continued attacks on energy infrastructure caused an energy crisis, testing the whole country’s resilience and creating a new dimension of the humanitarian crisis, as the country entered the cold winter season. Millions have been left without power, heating and water for days on end across Ukraine. The energy crisis also exacerbated challenges for those close to the front lines, already dealing with lack of access to water, electricity and gas for months.





## Possible Courses of Action

The United States, NATO and the European Union have already applied heavy sanctions on Russian individuals and the Russian economy. An extremely sensitive issue at this juncture is the question of European dependence on Russian oil and natural gas. Russian trade in this has also suffered greatly with countries in Europe pledging to move away from Russian oil altogether. Prices of Russian oil were capped lower as compared to the international Price per Barrel (PPB). A study by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) reported the following findings:

The short-term windfall generated to Russia by sky-high fossil fuel prices in 2022 is starting to wear out, in part due to reductions in fossil fuel consumption prompted by the high prices. Further cuts to Kremlin's revenue will therefore materially weaken the country's ability to continue its assault and help bring the war to an end. CREA's briefing assesses the impacts of measures taken by the EU and Ukraine's other allies to date, and identifies further options to drain the Kremlin's war chest.

Russia's earnings from fossil fuel exports fell 17% in December, to the lowest level since the start of the country's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The EU oil ban and price cap are costing Russia an estimated EUR 160 mn/day. The fall in shipment volumes and prices for Russian oil has cut the country's export revenues by EUR 180 million per day. Russia managed to claw back EUR 20 million per day by increasing exports of refined oil products to the EU and to the rest of the world, resulting in a net daily loss of EUR 160 million.

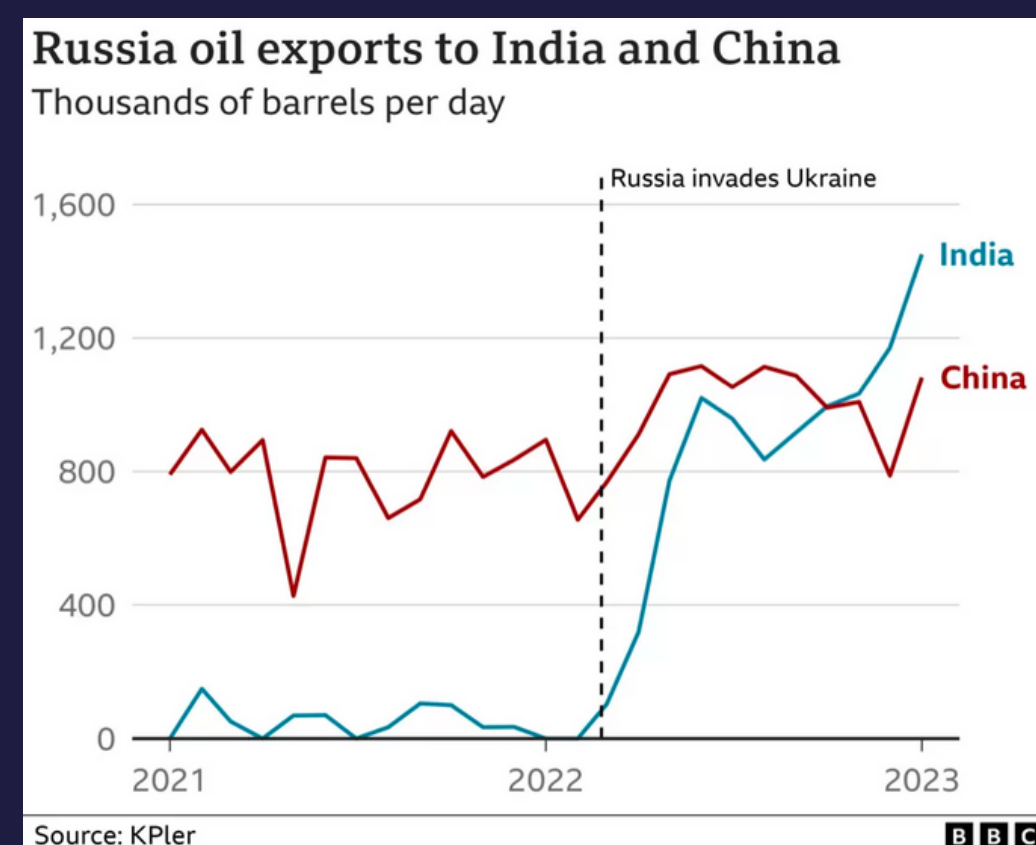
The measures caused a 12% reduction in Russia's crude oil exports and a 23% drop in selling prices, for a 32% drop in Russian crude oil revenues in December. Germany's stoppage of pipeline oil imports shaved off another 5% at the end of December.

Russia is still making an estimated EUR 640 mn per day from exporting fossil fuels, down from a high of EUR 1000 mn in March to May 2022. The EU's ban on refined oil imports, the extension of the price cap to refined oil and reductions in pipeline oil imports to Poland will slash this by an estimated EUR 120 mn per day by 5 February.

At the same time, Russian exports to countries like India, China and Turkey have gone through the roof - a natural result of the price of Russian oil being cheaper than the international



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While sanctions undoubtedly will cripple the Russian economy in the next few years, it is an open question whether it is a fast enough measure to help Ukraine in the short run. Sanctions on individuals and businesses close to the Russian leadership have had mixed reactions among people in the West, with many seeing them as a necessary but not nearly enough to affect the Russian war economy. A general consensus has emerged in political and economic policy circles that Russian oil exports are more or less funding the war and dealing with this may be the key to stopping the Russian war effort.

## Russia's economy in numbers\*

**17.1%** Annual inflation in May

**8-9%** Retail trade set to fall this year

**83.5%** Car sales fall in May 2022

**7.8%** Official forecast of fall in Russian GDP in 2022

**30%** Unofficial forecast of GDP collapse by IIF

\*Official sources: Akort; economy ministry; AEB; Rosstat

In such a situation, the Security Council's outlook must be threefold:

First, to consider a course of action which, if not ends, at least agrees a ceasefire to the hostilities until the legal issues can be resolved, all parties willing. How will the Council enforce such a ceasefire? Does a Peacekeeping Force for Ukraine need to be set up?

Second, to consider the validity of the Russian claims on Article 51 of the Charter and the allied issues of international law that have arisen since the 2014 annexation of Crimea. Several referendums of self-determination have been carried out: are they legitimate demands of a dissatisfied public?

Third, to consider the humanitarian situation and arrive at the best possible relief measures to help the people in the affected regions.

Broadly, then, any proposed resolution should keep the following aspects in mind:

Funding: Will the funding for the draft resolution come from a United Nations body or a coalition of nations? How will the accountability and transparency of the funding process be ensured?

Acting Agent: Will the plan of action be carried out by a UN body or an individual nation? Should a special task force or unit be established for this purpose? Should the UNSC choose to establish a peacekeeping mission, it must clearly and unambiguously delineate the mandate of the mission as well as the troop contributing countries, the size and duration of the peacekeeping force, its legal basis and details of special representatives or additional personnel accompanying the mission. The purpose of the peacekeeping mission, whether it exists for peace enforcement, peacekeeping or peace building must also be clearly mentioned in the draft resolution.

Economic: Considering the impact of this conflict on Russian natural gas production and the reliance of most European countries on Russian energy, what must the Council do to maintain economic stability? Is there any action the Council should undertake at all or leave it up to the affected parties?

Legal: The UNSC is a body ultimately grounded in international law and its resolutions must abide by established doctrines and norms, especially those in the Charter of the United Nations. Thus, if the Security Council chooses to intervene, militarily or through sanctions, it must also justify its actions to the international community to maintain its credibility and accountability.



Furthermore, the UNSC must also attempt to answer formative questions of international law such as: Under what circumstances is an act of aggression justified? Are the individual actions of nations in the region consistent with the norms of International Law? Why/ Why not is the invasion justified? How must the right to self-determination of the people be respected? Are individual members of the international community justified in intervening in the affairs of the Donbas, should they choose to do so? Does the world need a new doctrine to combat the frequent violations of the UN charter on the subject of the use of force? What penalties, of any, need to be adopted for the violation of the UN Charter?

Humanitarian: How must this body take on the protection and welfare of civilians in war? Can the UNSC collaborate with international organisations and bodies to ensure that aid reaches civilians? An important point of discussion could be how to coordinate the various humanitarian organisations working in Ukraine.

Peacebuilding: In order to ensure sustained peace in Ukraine, it is necessary to institute new frameworks for political stability and military security. How can the UNSC collaborate with regional organisations like NATO, EU or any other organisation to achieve this end? Besides, does the UNSC plan to leave the responsibility to rebuild the destroyed infrastructure on the affected countries' administration or is there a need for the Council to discuss the modalities of the rebuild?

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