

A THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT AND ITS IMPACT ON CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL SECURITY

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Abstract: This study is concerned with analysing the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its impact on contemporary global security. Anchored on the theory of Offensive Realism in the explanation of the phenomenon under study, the qualitative descriptive-historical technique was adopted which relied on secondary sources of data and content analysis. Findings from the study revealed that the history of the Russia-Ukraine conflict dates back to the Kievan Rus from which both nations emerged, conquest, domination by Russia and Ukrainian independence pre and post-soviet Ukraine; a majority of foreign powers and international organizations such as the United Nations, European Union, condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine, imposed economic sanctions, and provided overt and covert military and humanitarian support to Ukraine. It was further revealed that apart from increased refugees epidemic and IDPs, given the importance of Russia and Ukraine in gas, steel and grains supply in the world economy, the war has created a shortage of these important goods thereby heightening global inflation, economic recession, protests and social upheavals, arms proliferation capable of raising insurrection and further insecurity across countries. The study recommended that parties to the conflict should seek political rather than military solutions to end the war quickly so that the sanctions which have been detrimental to the global economy and security would be eased

Keywords: Military Invasion, Conflict, Economic Sanctions, Humanitarian Support, Refugees

1. INTRODUCTION

The Russia-Ukraine conflict is a renewed geopolitical rivalry between Western powers and the Russian Federation. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the confrontation between the two powers thinned down but the effect was felt among former Soviet republics. For fear of possible Russian aggression and influence that threaten its sovereignty, those republics joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a western military alliance comprising the United States of America and European Nations. Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland were the first former Soviet republics to join the alliance in 1991, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia in 2004, Albania and Croatia joined in 2009 while in 2017, Montenegro joined and North Macedonia in 2020. Russia claims that NATO broke an agreement made before the dissolution of the former Soviet Union. Thus, during the signing of the two plus four treaty guaranteed the reunification of Germany and becoming part of NATO, it was agreed that NATO will not expand eastward beyond the borders of East Germany.

Former US secretary of state James A. Baker assured former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that NATO will not extend past East Germany. If Russia want to stop NATO expansion it would try to build its relationship with its former republics because the North Atlantic Treaty is the basis of NATO and the treaty's Article 10 describes how non-member states may join NATO, and outlines NATO's "open door" policy whereby by dint of unanimous agreement parties to the alliance may invite any other European state to accede to the Treaty after depositing its instrument of accession with the government of the United States of America. Thus, being a European state Ukraine or any other former Soviet republic is qualified to join NATO as its treaty gave them a choice to do so. There can be no doubt that NATO enlargement has brought many benefits to its new members. It has helped integrate former Warsaw Pact members into Europe, reduced the risk of interstate conflict among the former communist countries of Central Europe, and allowed new member-states to spend less on security while modernizing their defence forces. Above all, it connotes that the small and militarily vulnerable Baltic States

can be reasonably confident that NATO membership will deter Russia from intimidating, or invading their countries in the current standoff between Russia and NATO.

Many scholars have their own opinion on what was the trigger of the conflict. Some say it was western expansion into Ukraine a 'vital zone of interest' for the Russians, which prompted it to take certain actions such as the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to secure the Black Sea and supporting a separatist movement in eastern Ukraine in an attempt to defend it by all means necessary. Following the invasion of Ukraine, realist thinker John Mearsheimer blamed the conflict on NATO and EU expansion into Russia's zone of interest. He further stated that Russian leaders have opposed NATO enlargement and would not stand by if their historical and their strategically important neighbour be under western influence (Mearsheimer, 2014). Others suggested that if NATO never expanded into the former Soviet republic, there would have been no conflict in Ukraine. Well, the pertinent question remains: What was Russia doing when NATO was expanding, why did it not help its former republics and create friendly relationships? The answer to these questions is not farfetched; Russia was weak after the collapse of the Soviet Union, with its weak economy it was struggling to get its economy back on track and was not a power that rivaled the United States. With Russia's failing economy, it needed foreign assistance and stretched out its hand to NATO but it did not receive what it had originally hoped for. The west viewed Russia as a weak defeated nation with a nuclear arsenal that is on par with NATO member United States. It was then seen as helping the enemy and when powerful enough will cause a rift in the alliance.

Other scholars see the conflict as Russia's first step towards realizing its imperialistic dream of reviving the former Soviet Union or creating what is called the 'Eurasia Union' modeled after the European Union to protect its influence in the region; hence the support for the expansion of NATO eastward beyond the borders of the former Eastern bloc.

Russia had always questioned Ukrainian sovereignty. Even during the Soviet Union era, when Ukraine wanted independence and sovereignty after World War I, Vladimir Lenin rebuffed such a move with the notion that a breakaway is not the best decision for the prosperity of Russia. Russia also meddled in Ukrainian politics when it voiced against the signing of a trade deal that would bring Ukraine closer to the west. This led to a regime change and annexation of Crimea.

Most literature did not delve deep into the history of Russia-Ukraine relations; they cover the period of post-Soviet Union collapse and not from the Kievan Rus era, where Ukrainians, Russians, and Belarusian origin could be traced. This study will close this gap and narrate the history of Russia-Ukraine relations starting from the Kievan Rus. Russian identity is considered to be superior to the Ukrainian by Russia, and thus, refers to Ukraine and Belarus as 'little Russians'. This led to widespread Nationalism and a search for identity in Ukraine. The struggle that started during the Russian Empire has continued to date and explains to a large extent why Vladimir Putin the president of Russia has called for the reunification of all Slavic tribes under a single Russian nation.

Another essential gap that this study seeks to fill is that previous studies do not emphatically focus on the updated record of the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on world security. During the collection of data for this study, it found that the available literature was centred on the impacts and consequences of the 2014 annexation of Ukraine by Russia and thus considered to have been overtaken by current events of Russia's incursion into Ukraine's mainland.

The third yawning gap is that while most works of literature captured the support given to Ukraine and condemnation of Russian actions among the comity of nations, many pieces of literature fail to cover the actions taken by international organizations on Russian invasion; there is a need to explore the actions taken by them in this research.

Statement of the problem

On February 24, 2022, Russia launched a military invasion of Ukraine. The purported reason behind this act of extraordinary territorial aggression was the eastern expansion of NATO, which Russia claimed that there was a treaty signed between NATO and former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1990 over the unification of western and eastern Germany, but a ban on NATO expansion to Eastern Europe was not in the treaty. During the cold war period, to provide collective security against the Soviet Union, NATO was created by eleven founding

members in 1949 which comprised Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and presently they are thirty member states (NATO., 2022). In response, the Russian Federation created the Warsaw Pact in 1955 made up of Eastern European countries. With the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact in 1990 the goal of NATO needed changes. However, the Warsaw Pact ideology of preventing NATO from expanding into Eastern Europe is still held intact in Russia even after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, thus, NATO expansion to Eastern Europe is seen as a victory over communism and trampling of the motive of the Warsaw Pact, this caused frosty relation between NATO and the Russian Federation.

With NATO, extending its influence to Russian borders, it is seen as a hostile action that no Russian leader will allow, so the invasion of Ukraine began when NATO accepted Ukraine's aspiration to join the military alliance. NATO has been constrained from intervening directly in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine due to Article 4 of the NATO treaty which states that: "The parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the parties is threatened" Given that Ukraine is yet a bona fide member NATO, it cannot seek direct help from NATO thereby limiting NATO to only economic sanctions and mere condemnation of the attack. Hence, because Russia has not attacked any NATO members, the latter cannot invoke article 4 of the treaty. Given the above dilemma and the incessant attempts by Russia to wield influence and control the Ukrainian territory, there is a need to delve into distant history to trace the origin of this quest for control and quest for independence by both parties respectively, to fully understand whether the problem could be systematically located at the origin and processes of emergence of the two states in the form of construction of superior-inferior identity between the former and the latter. Secondly, beyond the existing literature on the consequences of the 2014 Russian invasion of Crimea in Ukraine, which is dated, the present study aims at providing an updated analysis of the security implications of the current Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 on a global scale. More so, the nuanced responses by both international organizations and individual countries require an update to fill the gaps in literature, which this present study seeks to achieve; putting into consideration the fact that will provide scholars, academics, students of security, policymakers, and security experts with updated information/literature on the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict as serve as reference material on the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

The established gap has elicited the following research question as listed below:

- i. What is the history of the Russia-Ukraine conflict?
- ii. What are the responses of foreign powers and international organizations to the Russia-Ukraine conflict?
- iii. What are the impacts of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on global security?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is the largest military invasion of a sovereign nation since World War II. This led experts and scholars in the field of international relations and intelligence to begin to ventilate their observations, opinions, deductions, and analysis of the Russian invasion of Ukrainian territory right from the invasion of the Crimea peninsula. The literature surrounding this conflict grouped can be categorized into three major approaches. The first approach compromises those who are of the view that the Western powers like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are the aggressors while Russia is only protecting its interests. On the contrary, the second approach sees Russia as the aggressor to go back to pre-cold war status. The third approach sees the conflict from the lens of a renewed geopolitical conflict between NATO and Russia as well as the Ukrainian's quest to assert its identity and nationality. The study is anchored on the theory of Offensive Realism.

The Perspective of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union as the Aggressor

Realist thinkers such as Mearsheimer (2014), Kanet (2015), Kanet and Ibryamova (2001), Kanet (2010a), Tsygankov (2022), Umland (2015), Kuzio and D'Anieri (2018), Frix (2016), Amirkhanov (2021), Kissinger (2014), Trenin (2014), Walker (2022), Sakwa (2015). John Mearsheimer (2014) observed that the Russia-Ukraine conflict is caused by NATO and EU expansion into Russia's zone of interest, which Russia would not stand to see their historically and strategically important neighbor be under western European influence. (Mearsheimer, 2014). Mearsheimer further stated that the crisis in question shows that realpolitik remains relevant and states that ignore it do so at their peril. In light of this, Mearsheimer noted the claim that Ukraine has the right to determine whom

it wants to ally with and the Russians have no right to prevent Kiev from joining the West is a dangerous way for Ukraine to think about its foreign policy choices because the concept of self-determination appears hollow when powerful states conflict with weaker states. Thus, it is in Ukraine's interest to understand these facts and tread carefully when dealing with its more powerful neighbor. Corroborating Mearsheimer's view, Kanet (2015) observed that it was Boris Yeltsin's administration that Russia's interest was sold to the West in the bid to rebuild its economy and integrate into the global economic system. Thus, the Western powers took advantage of it to embark on NATO expansion into the former Soviet Republic. However, the present twist Russia-West relationship began in 1995 when Russian policy shifted in a more nationalistic and assertive direction. Thus, Kanet saw western expansion as a driving force for President Vladimir Putin's nationalist and radical approach to securing its interest.

Kanet and Ibryamova (2001) and Kanet (2010a) agree that it was indeed the western powers' view of Russia as insignificant power in the international system that made them ignore Russia's protests about NATO expansion that is at the heart of this present Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Adding to the above view, Tysgankov (2022) and Umland (2015) subscribed to the fact downplaying of Russia's place in the international system by the West directly challenged its sense of honor and status and sparked Russian nationalist paranoia which expanded and effectively manipulated by Vladimir Putin.

Frix (2016), expressing the realist view argues that NATO expansion caused Russian aggression in the first place. In line with this thinking, Frix noted that since the world is anarchic, states act as self-interested actors that seek to use power to secure themselves. He, therefore, recommended that the best course of action that can bring peace and stability is a cessation of NATO's eastward expansion, which in itself is questionable in practice given that both parties in the conflict are all playing a game of interest.

Amirkhanov (2021) analysed NATO expansion from the perspective of the two theories of international relations, Realism, and liberalism. From a liberal perspective, had the West tried to cooperate with Russia and bring Russia into the mainstream like that of the West during the post-Soviet era, Russia may not have been threatened by NATO's eastward expansion.

To Kissinger (2014), even though Ukraine has the right to choose its economic and political association, NATO membership should not be extended to it. He further stated that Ukraine leaders should be wise enough to adopt a policy of reconciliation between the various parts of their country and can cooperate with the West in most fields but carefully avoid institutional hostility toward Russia. In any case, Kissinger stated that the West must understand that to Russia-Ukraine is a red line that should never be crossed noting that the history of Russia began with Kievan-Rus. Hence, Ukraine has been part of Russia for centuries and this calls for caution by Europe in negotiating its relationship with Ukraine. Still apportioning the war blame on the West and NATO, Trenin (2014) argued that Russia aspired for a more welcoming approach with western powers, but the west still view Russia as an adversary after the cold war without showing any real interest in integrating Russia in terms of strategic interest even though the West made efforts to assist Russia to establish domestic political, economic, and social institutions that aimed at bringing it closer to the West merely in qualitative terms. Therefore, NATO's eastward expansion is seen by Russian leaders as a major breach of faith by the West such as NATO's colour revolutions in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004), and Kyrgyzstan (2005). Trenin concludes that as long as Russia would want Ukraine which it sees as belonging to the same Orthodox Christian/Eastern Slavic civilization, to join its Eurasian union and it runs counter to the expansionist policies of the European Union and the United States, more conflicts in Ukraine will spark-of U.S.-Russian confrontation.

Walker (2022) asserted that it was NATO expansion that is the principle that has stoked up the dangerous geopolitical struggle for influence in the countries to Russia's West and South, particularly Ukraine as overwhelmingly viewed by a majority of the Russian political elite. Sakwa (2015) shares the same view with Walker but added that "NATO enlargement eventually ran up against the countervailing power of a resurgent Russia with a preponderance of hard power along its borders. It did so first in Georgia in 2008, and it did so again in Ukraine in 2014".

The Perspective on Russian aggression as the driver of the conflict

Kuzio and D'Anieri (2018) and D'Anieri (2018) in their criticism of Mearsheimer (2014), faulted his liberal approach for saying that NATO should not have expanded eastward to avoid confrontation with Russia because this is in contrast to the realist view of power play where the self-interest of parties prevail. To Kuzio and D'Anieri (2018) Russia is merely seeking to expand its influence and gain recognition as a world power and is not comfortable with the independence of Ukraine having considered it as being an important part of Russia's history.

Frix (2016) expressing a liberal view noted that Russian aggression in the region justifies NATO expansion whereas their notion of the proliferation of IGOs as an effective means of cooperation strongly favoured the sustenance of NATO and its eastward expansion in the post-Soviet era. Corroborating this viewpoint, Baldoni (2016) stated that President Putin has a penchant for playing war games to show that he is the Russian leader that can push the country to its rightful position in the international arena, which he has exhibited in 2008 with Georgia and 2015 intervention in Syria. Amirkhanov (2021) in his discourse used the theory of constructivism to explain why Russia is at fault explaining that the domestic system of Russia influences its foreign policy while its identity creates its interests. According to Amirkhanov Crimea has been very important to Russia. He further noted that Crimea is a geostrategic location that increased Russia's influence in the Black Sea region and considers that since the port of Sevastopol had been serving Russian interests for a long time, Russia could not have risked losing it. Besides, in realpolitik with Ukraine leaning toward the west the port could be under NATO control, and Russia losing its influence in the black sea.

Mankoff (2014) stated that the Russian elite thought that Russia still has special rights in the former eastern bloc countries. He further stated that Russia is hell-bent on justifying its status as a world power and preserving its interest in former Soviet republics is the way to preserve its greatness. Putin aspired for a Eurasian Union modeled after the European Union; his plans are similar to the creation of the Warsaw pact modeled after NATO during the cold war and he wants Ukraine to be part of the Eurasian utopia just as it treasures Crimea as not only a historically valuable region to Russia but also strategically vital to its influence in the Black Sea. He further noted that to preserve its interest in the Black Sea Russia's economy has been damaged by sanctions from the West coupled with international condemnation.

Perspective on a renewed geopolitical conflict and Ukrainian nationalism

The leading proponents of this approach include Kuzio and D'Anieri (2018), Menon and Rumer (2015), Mirkhanov (2021), and Trenin (2014). For Kuzio and D'Anieri the conflict can be seen as part of a broader geopolitical competition between Russia and the West. Ukraine is seen as a battleground between the West and Russia, this approach according to Kuzio and D'Anieri observes that the foundation of the conflict stem from the exclusion of Russia from post-cold war security architecture in Europe.

Menon and Rumer (2015) offer what may be called an objective and balanced narrative of the origin of the Russia-Ukraine crisis. The authors are of the view that long-term failures of aspirations in Brussels, Kiev, Moscow, and Washington led to the present crisis hence, all the parties to the conflict should share in the blame for the conflict. On the part of Brussels, its failure to fashion a strategy for bringing Russia into the mainstream of European international order left Ukraine on the front lines of a geopolitical confrontation; thus attempt by the United States and Europe to integrate Ukraine into the Western system while keeping out of the arrangement made confrontation with Russia inevitable. Also, the deeper issue of the decision to expand NATO to the east was done largely to forestall further attempts at Russian expansionism thereby creating the climate for a renewed confrontation using Ukraine as a proxy. Furthermore, Russia's annexation of Crimea and intervention in the Donbas region appear to be part of its long-term plan for the post-Soviet region. The authors argue that these brazen acts of aggression by Russia against its immediate neighbours which put them on the edge of vulnerability pushed them, particularly the much-treasured Ukraine to take actions that could protect them from further Russian moves, which include joining NATO.

Amirkhanov (2021) argued that based on constructivism since the Russian Empire was a great power, it had a security belt around it, and it always aspired to expand its territory in the name of pan-Slavism, communism, or recently Eurasianism. Thus, the history, the people and the elites, and their identities were the determinants of Russia's actions either in the form of nationalism, militarism, adventurism, or expansionism.

Trenin (2014) sees the conflict from the angle of renewed Russian competition with the United States for global hegemony. Thus, the resurgence of Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union is an attempt to counter the 'New World Order under US hegemony while strengthening its position in the global power equation.

Having examined the nuanced scholarly views that seek to rationalize its position on the cause of the Russian-Ukraine conflict, it could be observed that none of these approaches could offer a comprehensive explanation of the causative factors of the conflict, the study to fill the gaps the study will take a systematic and balanced approach to present an updated and objective analysis of the current Russia-Ukraine conflict.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: OFFENSIVE REALISM

The Offensive Realism school of thought is an offshoot of Structural realism as developed by Kenneth Waltz in his 1979 book 'Theory of International Politics' which contends that the international system is anarchic, non-hierarchical, with functionally similar units, varied distribution of power capabilities that seek their preservation. From Structural realism stems two perspectives: Defensive realism and Offensive realism. Offensive realism as expounded by John Mearsheimer is a response to the proposition of Defensive realism which states that the international system encourages states to pursue moderate and restrained behaviour to ensure their survival and safety while providing incentives for expansionist behaviour or rare occasion because it is deemed unproductive (Lobell, 2010).

Offensive realism given that security is scarce, the anarchic international system compels states to maximize their share of world power and to seek superiority, rather than equality as the sure way to secure themselves and for survival. Mearsheimer's perspective of Neorealist focuses on states as the principal actors and they operate in an anarchical system in which they pay attention to the balance of power, hence the domestic structure does not matter in an anarchical system but the balance of power (Mearsheimer, 2001).

States are therefore disposed to competition and conflict because they are self-interested, power maximizing, and fearful of other states; they are bound to behave this way to survive in the international anarchical system (Johnson and Thayer, 2016). States in the view of Offensive realists adopt competitive, offensive and expansionist policies once the benefits outweigh the cost of such action even as conquest often pays (Lobell, 2010).

Offensive realism best explains the Russia-Ukraine conflict because it captures the realist competitive, offensive, expansionist, self-determination, and survival strands and nuanced issues in the conflict. Going by offensive realist calculation, each of the parties deploys its perceived strengths and positions to actualize its self-interest in the anarchic international system. Since the post-Soviet era, Russia sees Ukraine as its sphere of influence and a territory that is so strategic to it. The country, therefore, views NATO's eastward expansion and advances towards Ukraine as a grave encroachment and threat to its sphere of influence that must be resisted at all costs, hence its invasion of the latter to protect its perceived security interest as well as a ward of what it sees as the Western threat. Again, Russia wants to be regarded as a world power that can engage the United States in stiff competition by adopting an offensive policy to secure its interest and influence from Western influence.

NATO members on their part are also self-seeking when they started making moves to enlist Ukraine into their fold as another strategic partner in an attempt to increase the numerical strength as well as expand the sphere of influence of the alliance. Apart from giving a greater advantage to the NATO alliance, it would also weaken Russia's position and loosen its grip on the former Soviet countries. Thus, in an attempt to resist this encroachment decided to pre-empt and forestall NATO's moves by invading Ukraine.

On the part of Ukraine, its attempt to join NATO and the western alliance is its calculated attempt to free itself from undue influence from Russia as well as assert its independence believing that once a member of NATO, Russia will refrain from invading or annexing the country. Also, in a sequel to Russia's invasion in February 2022, Ukraine has stoutly resisted Russia's total control in defence of its territorial integrity. In a deft realist manoeuvre, Ukraine has been able to win the sympathy of other countries as a way of increasing its military strength and capability to withstand Russia's aggression.

History of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict

The Russia-Ukraine conflict is a product of historical origin, absorption, alliance, domination, occupation, and identity formation. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine dates back to intertwined history of contentions that set the stage for the present conflict far beyond NATO's eastward expansion. The two countries share a common heritage that dates back to over a thousand years when Kyiv, the present capital of Ukraine was at the centre point of the first Slavic state known as Kievan Rus, from where both Ukraine and Russia evolved. Thus, both states share the same cultural roots that owe their origin to about the 10th century. It was in the process of time that the two countries framed up distinct cultural and political identities (Conant, 2022; Timesofindia, 2022). In a nutshell, the intertwining history of the Russia-Ukraine relationship and conflict could be grouped under the following periods: the Kievan Rus era; the Mongol era, the Russian Empire era; the Polish-Lithuanian era, imperial Russia era; the era of the Ukrainian quest for independence; Soviet Union era; independence era, the era of renewed Russian influence and quest for domination and annexation.

The era began in the 10th century when the Varangian dynasty, the Rurikids ruled the Rus principality. The first era ended in the 13th century, with an invasion of the Mongols leading to the fall of the principality and the capital was moved from Kyiv to Moscow under the principality of Muscovy. The third era ushered in the reign of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569 when the city of Kyiv became part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a federation of two states: the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the city of Kyiv became the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. With the annexation of Ukraine by Imperial Russia in 1783, Ukraine was annexed by Imperial Russia. This annexation served as the bedrock of the expansion of the Russian Empire into the Balkans and the Black Sea region. During the 19th century, the Russian Empire began to suppress Ukrainian culture and language in a bold attempt to assimilate Ukrainians into Russian culture in continuation of the 18th-century movement of ethnic Russians into present-day Ukraine. The essence of populating Ukraine with the Russian population was to strengthen Russian control over the area and to extend the empire's borders. Russian action was referred to as the policy of Russification which banned the use and study of the Ukrainian language, and people were pressured to convert to the Russian Orthodox faith (Conant, 2022, Timesofindia, 2022).

The above period was followed by the era in which Ukraine began to clamour for its independence. Thus, on January 22, 1917, the Ukrainian Central Rada (council) pronounced the "Universal of the Ukrainian People" which heralded the declaration of Ukraine's autonomy within a federal Russian state. This later led to the "Declaration of Independence of Ukraine" and the nation's sovereignty on November 2, 1917, by the council. A few months later, the council proclaimed the establishment of the Ukrainian People's Republic on January 6, 1918 (Timesofindia, 2022). The next period was the era of the Soviet Union in which the war between the Ukrainian Bolsheviks and the national government in Kyiv from 1917 to 1921 boiled down to the establishment of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) after which Ukraine SSR joined Russia to become the founding member of the Soviet Union in 1922. Within this period with its rich soil and climate that is favourable for agriculture, Ukraine SSR became "the bread basket of Soviet Russia", the region witnessed industrialization under Soviet Russia and became a major producer of coal, iron, and steel. However, there was a man-made famine from 1932 to 1933 that claimed the lives of about 3.5 million people. The famine was believed to have been orchestrated by the Soviet government of Joseph Stalin. This enabled him to import large numbers of Russians and other Soviet citizens into Ukrainian to repopulate east Ukraine. Later in 1954, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev transferred the strategically important territory of Crimea to Ukraine SSR as part of Khrushchev's vision for a politically unified Soviet Union (Calamur, 2014; Conant, 2022, Timesofindia, 2022).

The last of the era which ushered in a renewed plot by Russia to subordinate Ukraine is the post-Soviet period that heralded the independence of Ukraine following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Leonid Makarovich Kravchuk (1991-1994) was sworn in as the first president of independent Ukraine in 1991. Within this period Ukraine started leaning towards the West. The country opted to sign the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). As well as the Budapest Memorandum with Russia, Britain and the US on December 5, 1994, whereby Ukraine, was promised security guarantee having acceded to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state (Timesofindia, 2022). Also, in 1994, The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) admitted Ukraine into its Partnership for Peace, a collaborative arrangement open to all non-NATO European countries and post-Soviet states with Russia inclusive. The collaboration involved the conduct of various cooperative activities with NATO, including joint military exercises, until 2014, when NATO formally suspended the ties. As part of the resistance to

Russian control, there was an Orange Revolution in 2004 in Ukraine. This was in response to the elections of Viktor Yanukovich, whom they believed was a puppet of Russian President Vladimir Putin with a rigged election. The election was annulled and the second ballot saw the emergence of the people's favourite, Viktor Yushchenko. The build-up to the present annexation of Ukraine was Russia's annexation of Crimea in February 2014 and the installation of pro-Russian Sergey Aksyonov's government. Crimea was formally incorporated into Russia as part of its federating unit. This was followed shortly by a separatist uprising in the eastern Ukrainian region of Donbas that ended up in the declaration of the Russian-backed People's Republics of Luhansk and Donetsk.

With the emergence of Volodymyr Zelenskyy in April 2019, he took a more proactive pro-west measure by approving Ukraine's new National Security Strategy, which provides for the development of a distinctive partnership with NATO to gain membership. The next year Zelenskyy ordered a series of measures against oligarchs, notably Viktor Medvedchuk, a businessperson, chairperson of Ukraine's largest pro-Russia political party, and close friend of Putin's. The government froze his financial assets for three years and shut down three pro-Russia TV channels that Medvedchuk controls, alleging that they broadcast "misinformation." That made the authorities lodge treason charges against Medvedchuk, claiming that he transferred to oil and gas production licenses in Crimea to Russian authorities. Zelenskyy said the moves were necessary to defend the country, while Putin saw them as being motivated by anti-Russia bias.

The annexation of the Crimea peninsula and the conflict in the Donbas region strengthened Ukraine's interest in joining NATO and the European Union. Again in 2021, Russia began a large military buildup on the border with Ukraine. The buildup continued despite warnings from other western countries. On February 24, 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops to formally invade Ukraine (Conant, 2022, Timesofindia, 2022). In an address to the Russian people, Putin accused the government in Kyiv of a "puppet regime" run by foreign powers and that NATO ignored Moscow's security demands. The response of foreign powers and international organizations to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the impacts of the conflict on global security are subjects of discussion in the next two sections of this study.

4. RESPONSES OF FOREIGN POWERS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

The first line of response by the international community was outright condemnation by countries on both bilateral and multilateral fora. The United Nations through the General Assembly passed a resolution condemning Russia's plot to annex four regions of Ukraine. During the voting, 143 countries supported the resolution, 35 states which include China and India abstained while Russia and four other countries including Belarus, North Korea, Syria, and Nicaragua. This happens to be the highest number of votes against Russia since the invasion (BBC News, 2022). The resolution called on the international community not to recognize any of Russia's annexation claims and demanded "immediate reversal". The UN body welcomed and expressed its strong support for efforts to de-escalate the conflict through negotiation.

The second line of response from the international community is economic and diplomatic sanctions. On the part of the 27-member European Union (EU), the organization implemented an array of policy responses to Russia's 2022 war against Ukraine. The EU actions in collaboration with the United States are an important EU partner including rounds of punitive sanctions and restrictive measures intended to cripple Russia's war funding capability, impose costs on Russia's elites as well as deplete Russia's economic base (Congressional Research Service, 2022).

Some of the EU sanctions include: imposing asset freezes and travel ban on 1,212 Russian officials, legislators, and other elites and freezing the assets of 108 entities (including several key banks); expanded sanctions on Russia's financial sector, including debt and equity restrictions on certain banks and companies; restriction of transactions with Russia's Central Bank and blocking access to its reserve holdings; disconnection of 10 leading Russian financial institutions from SWIFT (the world's dominant international financial messaging system, headquartered in Belgium) including Sberbank, Russia's largest bank; prohibiting Russian coal imports; prohibition of imports of Russian crude oil and petroleum products (with an exemption for crude oil delivered by pipeline) and a ban on oil transport services; prohibition of imports of steel and other raw materials, spirits, seafood, and gold (including jewellery) from Russia; placing ban on certain exports in the oil refining, aviation, maritime, and technology sectors and export of luxury goods to Russia. Other sweeping sanctions include expansion on the scope of export controls on dual-use goods and technologies; closure of EU airspace, seaports, and roads to

Russian aircraft, ship, and freight operations, respectively (with some exceptions, including energy-related cargo); extending sanctions to Belarus for supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine (Congressional Research Service, 2022). These sanctions aim to cripple the Russian economic ability to finance the invasion by targeting political elites, Russian media, and foreign diplomats, economic relations with Crimea, the Donbas region, and economic cooperation.

Furthermore, suspended broadcasting of five Russian state-owned media outlets which include Russia Today (RT), and Sputnik, across all platform types (cable, satellite, websites, and apps) (Congressional Research Service, 2022). Other countries have followed the European Union and imposed sanctions on Russia which includes, including the United States, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, and New Zealand and all sanctions are fully compliant with obligations under international law, whilst respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. On the flip side, China did not join in to impose sanctions on Russia because it receives 13.8% of Russia's total export based on 2021 statistics, making China the top importer of Russian products.

The third stream of global response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict is the military assistance provided for the two principal actors in the conflict. The EU pledged €2.5 billion worth of military assistance funds to Ukraine via the European Peace Facility (EPF). This fund comprises €2.33 billion for lethal equipment and €170 million for nonlethal supplies since 2022 (Congressional Research Service, 2022). The United States on its part has since the February 24, 2022, invasion, provided \$18.2 billion making it approximately \$21 billion worth of security assistance since 2014. This is to assist Ukraine in preserving its territorial integrity, securing its borders, and improving its operational relationship with NATO (US Department of State, 2022).

Since the start of the invasion on February 24, 2022, Ukraine has received billions of dollars' worth of weapons and military equipment from at least 28 countries. Given this foreign military assistance, Ukraine can repel Russian advances and continue to sustain its territorial integrity without the collapse initially conceived by Russia. Twenty-five (25) of these countries belong to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Despite its supply arsenal of sophisticated weapons, the Ukrainian army is still outnumbered by Russian forces. The United States is the largest supplier of military aid to Ukraine, committing at least \$54bn in aid for Ukraine, including more than \$20bn in military support approved by Congress in May and several aid packages approved in March.

The U.S. through the Department of State (DOD) sent the following military equipment for self defense: High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems and ammunition, Five counter-artillery radars, Two air surveillance radars, 1,000 Javelins and 50 Command Launch Units, 6,000 anti-armour weapons, 15,000 155mm artillery rounds, Four Mi-17 helicopters, 15 tactical vehicles, Spare parts and equipment, and M114 155mm howitzers-long-range artillery launchers. Also provided by the Biden administration is a high mobility artillery rocket system (HIMARS) under the condition that Ukrainian forces did not use them to hit targets inside Russian territory.

Other countries pledged the following weapons: Artillery: Howitzers have been provided by countries such as Estonia and Norway; Anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons such as Shoulder-fired MANPAD systems, NLAWS, Harpoon anti-ship missiles, Stinger missiles, Javelin anti-tank missiles, MILAN anti-tank guided missiles, and Cheetah anti-aircraft missiles; Armoured vehicles, which include the UK-made Mastiff armoured vehicles, M113 armoured personnel carriers, and Bushmaster protected mobility vehicles pledged by Australia; T-72 tanks pledged by Poland. Turkey also pledged Reconnaissance and attack drones called Bayraktar TB2 combat drones, US-made Phoenix Ghost tactical drones, and Puma Unmanned aerial systems; the U.S. and Czech Republic Mi-24 helicopters; small arms such as automatic rifles, machine guns, assault rifles, sniper rifles, submachine guns, pistols, and ammunition to Ukraine from many other countries, etc. Some of the above weapons have been delivered while some are yet to be sent and some nations keep their transfers secret.

The next stream of global response is humanitarian assistance for refugees and displaced persons. Based on the refugee crisis occasioned by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the EU countries granted Ukrainian nationals and other legal immigrants, temporary protection mechanism, immediate residency rights, and access to benefits in countries such as Poland (1.4 million), Germany (1 million), Czech Republic (400, 000) as well other tens of thousands of refugees from Ukraine taking refuge in neighbouring Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Moldova, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, etc (OECD, 2022; IRC, 2022). Thus, between February and June 2022, the EU made available €4.1 billion in assistance funds for Ukraine, including macro-financial, humanitarian, and emergency aid as well as the provision of "in-kind" emergency supplies. Also, in July 2022, the EU declared an additional €1

billion in macro-financial assistance, which was the first tranche of a proposed €9 billion financial support package for Ukraine (Congressional Research Service, 2022).

Below is a look at the weaponry pledged by other countries, some of which have been delivered and some of which have yet to be sent. It should be noted that it is not a comprehensive list, since some nations keep their transfer a secret.

Impacts of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict on Global Security

In the first instance, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has increased the global epidemic of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. For example, as of July 2022, about 7 million persons have been displaced internally in Ukraine while more than 6 million have sought refuge elsewhere outside Ukraine (Congressional Research Service, 2022). The refugee figure rose to more than 7.6 million from Ukraine as recorded across Europe (IRC, 2022). The sanctions have caused changes in commodities prices and the disruption of supply chains for commodities which has affected the global economy, during the first week of the invasion the global prices of oil and natural gas rose severely especially in Europe which is the number one importer of Russian natural gas. Cut in the supply of natural gas has precipitated high costs which have equally forced production costs, especially in fertilizers. While Europe is reeling under the pangs of the damaging effect of gas cuts, countries such as India is facing the challenges of shortage of fertilizers and edible oil as well as other forms of trade disruptions owing to the Russia-Ukraine conflict (Sabadus, 2022).

Ukraine is regarded as the breadbasket of Europe and the former Soviet Union because of its rich dark soil, suitable grain-growing climate with high moisture storage capacity, and Chernozem, which is known to be extremely fertile and known to produce high agricultural yields. Known as the breadbasket of Europe if its economy suffers the world food supply will be affected because it has around 32 million hectares of land that is cultivated each year, supplying a quarter of the world's wheat and half of its sunflower products, and also, corn, soybeans, barley, potatoes, and rye which it exports across the European Union, China, Turkey, India, and Africa. Statistics show that Ukraine's cereals and soybean production is expected to reach 78 million tons in two years. In addition, the agriculture sector sits at the heart of Ukraine's economy. Acknowledging the food shortage catastrophe caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Arif Husain, chief economist at the World Food Programme, has decried how the devastating impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict has extended beyond the shores of Ukraine. As a major global food supply country, Ukraine's Food commodities globally have risen abruptly and exacerbated hunger across the globe, particularly in some vulnerable regions such as Africa. East Africa for instance, which has been suffering from persistent drought is facing mass starvation and if no proactive action is taken, over 3 million people could lose their lives in that region. The same hunger affects the Sahel and Mahgreb regions in Africa, the Middle East, and Central Africa. For instance, Ukraine accounts for 80 percent of Lebanon's imports and is a leading supplier for countries including Somalia, Egypt, Syria, and Libya (IRC, 2022). The impact of the war has tripled throughout the international grain and vegetable oil markets.

Along with Russia, Ukraine exported a combined 43.8 million metric tons of steel in 2020. However the Russian invasion in 2022 has effectively removed both Russia and Ukraine from the global steel export market, it has also upended the global steel production chain, and this sudden shift has sent steel prices skyrocketing as supply lines shrivelled, and shortages loomed.

The prices of key mineral commodities such as nickel, palladium, and neon, have increased significantly, if higher global commodity prices are sustained or worsened, it would likely cause accelerated and prolonged high inflation in many countries, especially in Europe. The conflict would exacerbate inflation and weaken economic growth, and the cost of transporting oil tankers has increased to fears that Russian and Ukrainian pipelines might disrupt thereby increasing demand for Middle-Eastern and West African oil. With a higher risk of inflation because of the sanctions and Ukraine's failing economy, this will set the world in a new great depression with more crime than the world had ever seen.

Security-wise, there is a likelihood that the amount of military aid and weapons Ukraine has received could eventually end up in the hands of criminal organizations in Europe and beyond. Thus, the high availability of weapons during this conflict might lead to the proliferation of illicit arms in the post-conflict phase as observed by Interpol Secretary-general, Juergen Stock (France 24, 2022, May 17). When and if this happens, it will increase

criminality, banditry, and terrorism within Eastern Europe and beyond thereby contributing to the global insecurity index. Besides, there is bound to be civil unrest in many developing countries, where food costs make up a larger portion of household spending. Protests have already erupted in several countries, like Sri Lanka where the war has further pushed up already high food prices, especially for imported commodities such as wheat, pulses, and sugar. Third-world countries and nations with weak economies will feel the burden the most because with each increase in food prices millions of people are thrown into poverty and will have to commit criminal acts like kidnapping, robbery, internet fraud, and hijacking with mass protests from the public thereby heightening the existing global insecurity.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study set to examine the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its contemporary impact on global security. To accomplish this goal, three research questions were set which set to delve into history to explore the complex relationship between the nations that sprung from their common Kievan Rus origin and later quest to dominate and subordinate Ukraine by Russian federation at different epochs and assertion of independence from Russia by Ukraine. Though three scholarly perspectives/approaches have sought to rationalize the cause of the conflict, however, the result from the present study reveals that the NATO expansion is just one of the triggers of the present Russian invasion of Ukraine; there has been an age-long drive by Russia to dominate Ukraine and bring it under its rule or exclusive sphere of influence. It was the resistance to Russian occupation, the quest for independence from Russia, and security that prompted Ukraine to seek closer ties with the West as well as join NATO in the post-Soviet era. This led to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and this elicited responses from the global community and international organisations most of whom became sympathetic to Ukraine and condemnation of Russia. The study reveals that while most countries in the globe placed sanctions on Russia they provided massive humanitarian and military support to Ukraine to enable it to contend with Russian aggression. The study found that there are grave global economic and security consequences of the conflict which include increased refugee and IDP epidemic, galloping food, steel, and gas inflation, hunger and starvation, and economic depression, particularly the developing countries that are made more vulnerable. There is also the likelihood of future security threats of arms proliferation and poverty-induced criminality and banditry. Based on the findings from the study, the study recommended that to de-escalate the tension and quell the conflict, Ukraine should not join NATO to avoid more conflict with Russia, which will affect the global economy. The economic sanctions should be ameliorated, as it has damaging effect on global economy and security with high inflationary trend and crime rate on both regional and global scale.

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