



After Protesters in Ukraine brought down President Viktor Yanukovich who was an ally to Russia's President end of February 2014; Russia lost her political authority in Ukraine and invaded the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea, which led to the start of a fight between Russia and Ukraine a couple month later.

This fight, resulted in two secessionist to take the decision of becoming independent from Ukraine in April 2014, and accept that Russia occupies their territories in Donbas, Ukraine which are The Donetsk and the adjoining Luhansk People's Republic, located on the eastern border of Ukraine. As a result of this battle, around 13000 Ukrainian soldiers and civilians eventually died. After a series of cease-fire agreements known as the Minsk Accords signed by Russia, Ukraine, France, and Germany; the fight was finally over.

Four years later, Volodymyr Zelensky, who viewed a higher national interest with Europe and the west was elected by a large majority as the president of Ukraine. Zelensky promised in 2019 that he will restore and bring back the Donbas territory to Ukraine. In February 14, 2022, Russia's President, Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion of Ukraine, which led the Russian troops to launch an attack in Ukraine as a result of "demilitarizing" the country as President Putin said. In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the West launched an economic war. The United States took action by prohibiting the sale of a wide range of goods to Russia's big companies. In addition, a group of countries froze 60 percent of the central bank's international reserves. The purpose of these actions was to drive Russia's economy into free fall, and punishing President Vladimir Putin's aggressive behavior.

These actions resulted in the rouble losing a third of its value against the dollar rate in the week following the invasion, and many of the Russian enterprises' stock values to be plummeted (The Economist Newspaper).

In addition, individual NATO members provided guns, ammunition, medical supplies, and other critical military equipment to Ukraine, including cybersecurity and protection against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

On March 24, 2022, Russia found itself further isolated in the international community, after the U.N General Assembly voted powerfully in support of a resolution demanding that Moscow end its war against Ukraine immediately. (Besheer, 2022)

The opinion of The Economist Intelligence Unit divided the world into three broad categories: governments that are West-leaning, Russia-leaning and neutral amid the conflict.

We believe that Lebanon found itself with the governments that are supporting Ukraine and refusing any violent acts and aggression against the Ukrainian people.

As mentioned by the Lebanese Foreign Minister: "The Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the invasion of Ukraine, calling on Russia to immediately stop military operations,

withdraw its forces and return to negotiation as an ideal way to resolve the existing conflict in a manner that preserves the sovereignty, security and concerns of both parties.”

Lebanese authorities believe that every country enjoys its own land, sea, and airspace, and each country works to preserve the integrity and independence of its borders, but not at the expense of another country or its people.

The delegate of Lebanon believes that the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is a dispute over the fate and direction of Ukraine. Russia is working on joining Ukraine to the east. On the other hand, the European Union and the Nato countries are working on joining Ukraine to their side.

Russia is working on taking precautions and excluding NATO's influence from it. In the same case, Ukraine remains its huge ally, which is characterized by a strategic geographical location that is bounded by the borders of NATO which ensures Ukraine the same path as Europe.

By occupying Crimea, Russia remains in the sea confrontation with other NATO countries. Also, Ukraine is known as the breadbasket of the Soviet Union.

The Ukrainian people endured with their president, who refused to escape from the country in order to protect their land. As it was their duty to resist Russia. Ukraine is a free, sovereign, and independent country, it has the right to take the decision that is in line with the country's interest and not any other interest. Since, there is no agreement or connection that links both countries, nothing will prevent Ukraine from making decisions for their own interest. However, the Russian state is violating the eastern borders and the southern region of Ukraine. At that point, there is no right for an occupying state that is violating Ukraine's borders to interfere with their national interest.

The Russian invasion has resulted in an astonishing outflow of Ukrainian refugees and tremendous suffering for many of those who were unable to leave. The Russian forces have laid siege to Ukraine's cities by cutting off supply which inflicts mass destruction of the population.

To protect the civilians, the UN should create humanitarian spaces by calling for a safe, secure, and orderly evacuation from Ukraine, including not only Ukrainians but also foreign workers and students, seeking to leave Ukraine.

The UN can also negotiate with Russia to create safe zones for civilians within Ukraine, they can identify safe zones where civilians are protected, and no direct violence is taking place in these specific sites.

We should also ensure that civilians in conflict zones can access medical care and humanitarian assistance. Russia should avoid the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, which could mass kill civilians and destroy their homes, as well as conditioning its arms exports on respect for international humanitarian and human rights law.

We must note that Ukraine and Russia have deep cultural, economic, and political ties and were both parts of the Soviet Union. However, the collapse of the Soviet Union created a complex regional environment among the 15 republics that were born after the Collapse, among which were Ukraine and Russia. Additionally, Russia heavily depends on Ukrainian pipes to transmit its gas to European countries, and it pays billions yearly in passage charges. Therefore, common economic interests between the two countries can push them to settle the conflict through a negotiated agreement. In 2014 and 2015, Russia and Ukraine signed the Minsk agreements after finding a common interest and agreeing on twelve main points. The Minsk agreements of 2014 and 2015 were signed to establish a ceasefire and enable prerequisites to an enduring diplomatic solution to the geopolitical conflict between Ukraine and Russia. An agreement that could highlight the common economic interest between the two countries could end the conflict through an agreement. Russia could benefit from

Ukraine through its strategic location and transfer its gas through its pipeline, meanwhile, Ukraine could ensure Russia that it will not join any military alliance that could affect its economic ties with Russia.

The International Humanitarian Law or the law of armed conflicts is drawn from International treaties, such as the Geneva Conventions and the UN Charter. These rules are designed to limit unnecessary brutality and damage during warfare. During its invasion of Ukraine, Russia violated numerous articles of international humanitarian law, which constitutes a crime of aggression. Russia has violated several articles including, the right of civilians to enjoy general protection against danger, no attacks on non-military facilities, and the prohibition of taking any measure to cause physical suffering or extermination.

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