

POSITION PAPER – ZIMBABWE

PAULINE CHIRIPANYANGA



Question: Is there a common interest that can allow for Ukraine and Russia to end the conflict through an agreement?

1.INTRODUCTION

The Russia Federation and Ukraine are both UN members, used to be Under the USSR, they share the same culture, ethnicity, race, history and language of which they share about 62% of their vocabulary, support each other economically, Ukraine used to be the old cultural centre. The two countries shared heritage that goes back more than a thousand years to a time when Kyiv, now Ukraine, was at the centre of the first Slavic state. Kyivan Rus, was the birth place of both Ukraine and Russia. Vladimir 1, the Pegan Prince of Kyiv, accepted the orthodox Christian faith and was baptised in the Creemean city of Cheesiness. From that moment, Russian leader declared, “ Russians and Ukranians are one people, a single whole”. Since 1914 the 2 countries have been having conflicts and failed to resolve these over time and this led to the tension.

Conflicts like these in the past were solved through peaceful diplomatic resolutions, just to name a few below ; -

- Paris peace treaties, which established peace with Italy, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Finland in 1947.
- Security Council Resolution 598 (20/07/1987): Iraq-Islamic Republic of Iran which called for Iran and Iraq to observe immediate cease fire, discontinue all military actions and withdraw all forces to the internationally recognized boundaries.
- Political Agreement for peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, February 2019 UN SC (S/2019/145)
- The Burundi peace Negotiations: An African Experience of Peace Making, Review of African Political Economy, 34(113)), Daley P 2007
- **Article 33 of the Charter of the UN provides that “The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of International peace**

and security, shall first of all , seek a solution be it negotiation, enquirer, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice”.

2. As you are aware, there was a vote in the UN General Assembly on the 2nd of March, on a resolution on Ukraine. Zimbabwe abstained in that vote. We wish to assure you that Zimbabwe is a strong believer in the United Nations Charter and all its principles and purposes including the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The situation in Ukraine is a very complex one and is deeply rooted in the history and geopolitics of that region. Zimbabwe believes that it is the duty of the International community not to make that situation more complex than it already is. The International Community must tirelessly work towards the facilitation of dialogue aimed at finding a durable solution to the situation. Zimbabwe is not convinced that the resolution adopted yesterday points in the direction of dialogue. On the contrary it poured more fuel to the fire thus further complicating the situation.

As you know, Zimbabwe does not support the imposition of unilateral sanctions of any kind on any member state for that matter, as this is contrary to the United Nations Charter. Unilateral sanctions have never worked to resolve any situation. On the contrary, sanctions unleash untold humanitarian crises and human suffering of the ordinary people. Zimbabweans, have been victims of unilateral sanctions for over 20 years and would not wish this on any member state. Dialogue is the way forward. It is for these reasons that Zimbabwe abstained in the vote on the resolution on Ukraine in the UN General Assembly on 2 March 2022.

3. If this crisis continues it will have effect on global economy as seen by the rise in fuel prices globally, fuel shortages, disruption of trade routes, shortages and price hikes of wheat, barley, maize, rape seed, rise of gas prices. It will also have substantial impact on industrial sectors such as automotive industry across the globe. Together Russia and Ukraine account for more than a quarter of the Global wheat trade and produce produce 12% of calories consumed globally. It is against this backdrop that Zimbabwe therefore, commends the Russian Federation and Ukraine for initiating dialogue and urge them to intensify their efforts towards finding a durable solution to the conflict taking into account the security interest of both parties.

Zimbabwe is enemy to none and friends to all, as seen in the engagement and reengagement of member states hence we are not taking sides, small as we are , we are not supporting conflict but encouraging peaceful diplomatic solution and open dialogue talks. Each party has concerns and taking sides only escalates and complicates the conflict.

