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From conflict to catastrophe: Russia-Ukraine tensions ripple across

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Abstract

This paper is an analysis of the Ukraine crisis in 2014 evolving to 2022 as the prelude to the Russia-Ukraine full-fledged war that started in February 2022. The escalating conflict between Russia and Ukraine has reverberated beyond their borders, with the active involvement of key international actors such as the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the United States (US) in the conflict zone. Notably, the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, visited the Kherson and Luhansk regions, further exacerbating tensions in the area. Preceding these events, Russia organized a referendum on 20 September in Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson, wherein enthusiasm for joining the Russian Federation was expressed. These developments are perceived as manifestations of Russia's dissatisfaction with Ukraine's political decisions. The conflict's initiation in 2022 can be attributed to Ukraine's aspirations to align itself with NATO and the EU, which sparked Russia's aggressive actions. Despite Ukraine's efforts to regain control of Crimea and restore its sovereignty, exemplified by the formation of the Crimea Platform at its first Summit in 2021 with the backing of the EU and NATO, the situation has escalated into a full-scale war. By examining the sequence of events and the underlying geopolitical dynamics, this paper aims to shed light on the complexities of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its shift into a catastrophic war. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the interplay between political decisions, regional ambitions, and the global ramifications of military aggression in contemporary international conflicts.

Keywords:

Russia; Ukraine; EU; NATO.

On 24 February 2022, Russia's military aggression began in Luhansk Oblast. The geopolitical tensions and unrest between Russia and Ukraine can be traced back to the Ukraine crisis that erupted in 2014. The military forces from Ukraine and Russia deployed on their frontiers as part of the initial state of war in the Donbas region. Thus, military acceleration and competition between both countries eventually fell into bombardment, bloodshed, and massive displacement of people. Donbas region has been the center of the Russia-Ukraine military aggression for the last ten years.

On 8 June 2019, the Ukraine parliament developed a corresponding amendment (2017) related to membership in NATO. Thus, it became part of Ukraine's strategic foreign and security policy objective. However, the discussions on NATO membership continued, in September 2020, and on 14 September 2021, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky approved a new national security strategy for Ukraine to seek membership in NATO. Consequently, NATO reinforced its combatants in the Black Sea and advanced its cooperation with Ukraine and Georgia. Accordingly, Ukraine's military forces were receiving training and drills from NATO.

On 21 January 2022, the Russian Duma (Federal Assembly) passed a motion recognizing the independence of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic. Meanwhile, Russia intensified its military presence in Crimea and the borders of Ukraine, the same as Ukraine deployed its troops on the frontiers. However, it culminated in the Donbas separatist forces and the Ukraine nation's security forces waging fights in the region. On 21 February 2022, Russia conducted a joint military exercise with Belarus. Thus, these circumstances show the defensive preparedness and precariousness among both countries, as it can be taken as evidenced by their efforts to form alliances and increase in military strategy. However, these actions have significantly eroded the stability in the region and attempted to have two separate groups among the Russian and Ukrainian support in the international system. This eco-system of high tension has generated pervasive apprehension about a military conflict that could jeopardize the security of the states, thus ultimately resulting in the escalation of a concrete conflict zone between Russia and Ukraine.

Russia called the intervention of Russian troops in Ukraine an act of peacekeeping operation in the region by the Kremlin. Russia's involvement in Ukraine and the Donbas region has mainly been addressed as a special military operation to "denazify", demilitarise and defend the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republic. At the same time, Zelensky accused Russia of genocide in Ukraine; Russia denied its forces were killing civilians in Bucha, whereas Zelensky accused Moscow of trying to eliminate the whole nation. Moreover, it was not an unexpected war, as the West claims; it was inevitable in the Russia-Ukraine conflict frontiers, where the other international actors made their stand clear by imposing sanctions and isolating Russia. As it accused Putin of earlier moves against Ukraine, the US, the United Kingdom, and the European Union announced multiple sanctions against Russia.

Security – the Theoretical Framework

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, a new international order was constituted on the grounds of unipolarity, neoliberalism, and democracy. Russia appeared as the successor of the Soviet Union.

Many pieces of literature analyze war and security threat perceptions in international politics. War is connected to human behavior, state, and institutions in international society. Traditionally, war was a solution to dissolve the security dilemma and establish peace. Hedley Bull argues war is organized violence carried out by political units against each other. The development of the modern concept of war as organized violence among sovereign states resulted from a process of limitation or confinement of violence (Bull 1977, 184). As it suggests, war is a social institution and a mechanism for order. War delivers problems in the order of the international system. Kenneth Waltz said wars occur because there is nothing to prevent them (Waltz 1959, 232). The conventional belief is 'If you want peace, prepare for war.' Clausewitz's (1943) definition of war is a continuation of politics by other means, as it is an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds. However, realists and neo-realists believe that 'whatever order exists in this endless state of war results from the state's attempts to organize an ever-shifting balance of power' (Bull 2002, 24).

In many cases, if two or more states are antagonistic, then war is the tool for conflict resolution. War was considered an instrument of state policy (Holsti 1996, 31). However, this war intensified political tension, security concerns, economic downfall, and diplomatic pressures in Russia, Ukraine, and the Baltic states.

The idea of security is related to national security, the safety of the state, and lessening vulnerability. Walter Lippman (1944) observes security as the capability of the country to protect its core values, both in terms that a state need not sacrifice core values in avoiding war and can maintain them by winning the war. Normally, national or international security concentrates on the state's military potential to reduce the threat level. Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen (2009) pointed to the study of international security as more than a study of threats. Under the preview of the realist view, war and the threat of war are significant puzzles in explaining Russia and Ukraine's military aggression. It is more related to material competition and resource management, as it has an uncertain environment where armed activities may lead to deadly damage in the region.

As important players in international politics, Russia and Ukraine simultaneously reciprocate over security dilemmas and threats. The security dilemma is a comprehensive theoretical background delivered by the school of defensive realism. Security dilemma circumvolved with war and peace interactions. John Herz introduced the concept of the security dilemma in international relations in 1950. According to him (241), "Whether a man is by nature peaceful and cooperative, or aggressive and domineering, is not the question. His uncertainty and anxiety about his neighbor's intention place man in this basic security dilemma, making the

'*homo homini lupus*' a primary fact of man's social life. It is the mere instinct of self – preservation which, in the vicious circle, leads to competition for ever more power" (Herz 1951, 157). Herbert Butterfield enumerated certain premises on security dilemma: firstly, it is ultimately rooted in fear, which is based on the "universal sin of humanity;" secondly, it depends upon uncertainty over others intentions, thirdly, it is unintentional in origin, fourthly, it generates a catastrophic outcome, fifthly, it can be hysterical by psychological determinant, sixthly, it is the fundamental cause of all human conflicts (Butterfield 1951, 18-22). Glenn Snyder describes this theory, 'when no state has any desire to attack others; none can be sure that others' intentions are peaceful, or will remain so each must accumulate power for defense (Snyder 1984, 461). Military proliferation and alliance formations pose security threats not only at the regional level but also at the global level.

Methodological Notes

The analysis adheres to a blend of qualitative methods and content analysis of reports and official documents. This study used the official websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and Ukraine. This study stands for an inquiry into the decisive incident of the 2014 Ukraine crisis, in which the study referred to the third EU's Eastern Partnership Agreement and the Russian Parliament's municipal law, which was crucial to the realignment of Crimea in the same year. Distinguishably, the idea of Novorossiya developed as a germane analytical tool, deliberating multiple scholarly literatures to elucidate Russian views. The study attempts to conceptualize the pertinent Russia-Ukraine conflict. The strategic discharge of official documents, including the Minsk agreements and the other relevant documents on Russia and Ukraine, were utilized in this study. Moreover, the antagonistic previews and discussions on the sham referendum are critical in exemplifying the refined intricacies directed in this research aim. The analysis draws from the political history of conflict in Ukraine from 2014 onwards and the Minsk peace treaty's role till Russia's sham referendum in Eastern Ukraine. The Ukraine crisis in 2014 began the rivalry, followed by the 2022 Ukraine-Russia war, which turned into a full-fledged war.

Ukraine Crisis 2014 to 2022 War Zone: An Overview

Russia-Ukraine rivalry has turned into a hot topic in international politics since 2014. The 2013 Maidan protest, Crimea annexation in 2014, followed by the Donetsk and Luhansk unrest, self-declaration of Donbas Republics' independence, and domestic instability and frontier challenges severely impacted Russia-Ukraine relations. A series of events caused the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis in 2014; perhaps the situation that led to the wild-fired Ukraine crisis can be traced back to the third EU's Eastern Partnership Agreement. The EU Eastern Partnership Summit was conducted on 28-29 November 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania, and was focused

on economic integration and political involvement with East European countries. Ukraine was offered an Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) as part of the EU's Eastern Partnership deal. (Ash 2017, 4) pointed out that "it has sealed a landmark Association Agreement with the EU, opening up economic opportunity and making it clear that it sees itself as a fundamentally 'European' country rather than a Russian satellite or tributary."

In November 2013, Ukraine's President Viktor Yanukovich suspended trade and association talks with the EU and chose to revive economic ties with Russia. This has resulted in massive political fragmentation and civil unrest within Ukraine. David Cadier viewed "The rivalry between two economic integration regimes led to an escalation in coercive diplomacy, political revolution, military intervention, and territorial seizure Cadier (2018, 71)." On 21 November 2013, people who favored the EU's offer gathered in Kyiv's Independence Square (Maidan Nezalezhnosti) and protested against the government. This protest was known as the Maidan protest (Euro-Maidan).

On 21 February 2014, President Yanukovich and opposition leaders signed an EU-mediated peace pact. On 22 February 2014, the Ukrainian Parliament voted to impeach President Yanukovich, and he fled to another country. John Mearsheimer says that "the United States and its European allies share most of the responsibility for the crisis. The taproot of the trouble is NATO enlargement, the central element of a larger strategy to move Ukraine out of Russia's orbit and integrate it into the West" (Mearsheimer 2014, 77). Notably, Dmitry V. Trenin (2014) observed "the Maidan protests were supported, funded and exploited by Ukraine's oligarchic clan, which were unhappy with Yanukovich and his Donetsk allies wielding too much power and aggressively expanding their business interests at other oligarch's expense. To them, the Maidan was a means to force an early presidential election and unseat Yanukovich."

Re-mapping Crimea with Russia

Crimea is an important geopolitical and strategic location and a significant cause of the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war. On 27 February 2014, a large section of pro-Russians seized government buildings in Crimea and raised the Russian flag. On 1 March 2014, Russia's Parliament approved the Municipal Law Act, culminating in the Crimea annexation. According to municipal law, Russia demarcated the split of Crimea from Ukraine. On 6 March 2014, the local legislative organ in Crimea adopted a decree on the all-Crimean referendum. The resolution presented two choices: "Firstly, do you support the reunification of Crimea with Russia as a subject of the Russian Federation? Secondly, do you support the restoration of the 1992 Crimea Republic Constitution and the status of Crimea as a part of Ukraine?"

Crimea's Parliament announced its independence from Ukraine after the referendum. Russia officially declared that: "An agreement was formed on the grounds of free and

voluntary expression of the will by the people of Crimea at a nationwide referendum, conducted in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol on 16 March 2014, during which the people of Crimea decided to reunite with Russia.” ([The President of Russia 2014](#))

After the referendum, on 17 March 2014, President Putin signed an executive order recognizing the Republic of Crimea. The next day on 18 March 2014, the President of the Russian Federation pointed out to the government of the Russian Federation, the state Duma, and the Federation Council that local Crimean institutions had proposed joining the Russian Federation. The same day, Russian and local institutions signed an agreement on the admission of the Republic of Crimea into the Russian Federation. On 21 March 2014, President Putin signed a law formalizing Russia’s takeover of Crimea from Ukraine. Thus, this reunification of Crimea with Russia shifted the political map of both countries. Sergey Salushev argues that “the misguided attempts at ‘Ukrainization’ of the ethnic Russian community in the country, impatience of the Ukrainian opposition, and the inept support of the United States and the European Union of the protests that gripped the country’s capital precipitated Crimea’s secession” ([Salushev 2014, 38](#)).

Roy Allison argues that “Russia’s annexation of Crimea and attempts to dismember further the Ukraine state pose a challenge for Russian neighbors and potentially for the wider European security order of a greater magnitude than anything since the end of the Cold War” ([Allison 2014, 1255](#)). Anne Marie Le Gloannec ([2015](#)) explains that “a solution to the conflict is beyond reach because the conflict concerns two opposing worlds. If the war is eventually a means for Vladimir Putin to stifle democracy in Ukraine and to strengthen his hold over Russia, there is no room for compromise”.

However, Ukraine focuses on installing a Western democratic model through the Crimea Platform Summit. On 23 August 2021, the President of Ukraine arranged the Crimea Platform Summit, forming a resourceful structure to reunite Crimea with Ukraine. This venture collected support from powerful international actors, including NATO, the EU, and the USA, emphasizing a concerted aim to restore and reintegrate Crimea into Ukraine. The Crimea Platform functions as a manifold international consultation and coordination forum, encompassing Heads of State and Governments, Foreign Affairs Ministers, parliamentary bodies, civil society, and expert circles ([Crimea Platform 2022](#)). The Crimea Platform refers to further coordination and international consultation. Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX, stated that “whether one likes it or not, Crimea is absolutely seen as a core part of Russia by Russia. Crimea is also of critical national security importance to Russia, as it is their southern navy base. From their standpoint, losing Crimea is like the USA losing Hawaii and Pearl Harbor” ([TASS 2022](#)).

Novorossiya in Donbas: A Junction of Russia and Ukraine

Novorossiya is a terminology traced back from the imperial Russian era of the 18th century. Donbas is an energy resources center for Ukraine and is frequently tagged as pro-Russian (Mykhnenko 2020). In 2014, a separatist movement arose in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions against the government in Ukraine. On 12 May 2014, pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine's eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk charged definitive victory in a referendum upheld for "self-rule" within Ukraine. In the realm of the international system, many actors, including Western countries, criticized this political act committed by the separatists (Kasianenko 2019).

By the Donbas insurgency swift on 24 May, the Donetsk and Luhansk entities formed a *de jure* union called the 'Novorossiya Republic' (New Russia). On 07 June 2014, Petro Poroshenko became the President of Ukraine. Simultaneously, the Donbas region fell into insurrection and civil riots. When the Donbas region declared self-determination from Kyiv, they attempted to form the Novorossiya Union (New Russia) against the Ukraine regime. Thus, it disclosed the fidelity of pro-Russian and Russian speakers in the Donbas region towards the Soviet Union and Russia. Moreover, this could have been viewed as a potential act of resistance and disagreement on the political transition of Ukraine.

Novorossiya is a socio-cultural and historic construct deeply grounded on Russophiles as they believe in Eurasianism or Pan-Slavic ethnic composition. The Donbas majority admire the Eurasian economic integration of their region. Religion, language, government form, and economic-political orientations differed among the Russophiles and Europhiles in Ukraine. In general, Russophiles are referred to as Russian speakers and ethnic Russians and have a geographical link with Russia, whereas Europhiles are oriented towards Western political belief and economic development.

On 14 June 2014, pro-Russian separatists shot down a military jet in eastern Ukraine, killing approximately 49 Ukrainian service personnel. Meanwhile, President Petro Poroshenko agreed and signed the EU Association Agreement on 27 June 2014. One of the purposes of the EU Association Agreement was "To promote gradual rapprochement between the parties based on common values and close and privileged links and increase Ukraine's association with the EU policies and participation in programs and agencies. To establish conditions for enhanced economic and trade relations leading towards Ukraine's gradual integration in the EU market" (Government of Ukraine 2014).

Ilmari Käihkö (2021) states that "The war in Donbas was rather conventional; conventional refers to norms or expectations about appropriate conduct which serve as common guidelines for social action." (Käihkö 2021) Mark Galeotti points out that "the full panoply of Russian propaganda was deployed to muddy the waters

in the West, especially by presenting the new Ukrainian regime as comprising or depending on 'fascists' (Galeotti 2015, 153)." Many have brought the international civil war perspective on the Donbas War. Mearsheimer has the same point of view. Richard Sakwa stated: "Moscow was not ready to see the insurgent state defeated, but neither was it supportive of earlier aspirations to create a broad 'Novorossiya' entity, envisaged initially to encompass not only the two Donbas breakaway region (small Novorossiya) but also some of the neighboring south-eastern region as well as Kharkov, Kherson, Zaporozhia, Nikolaev, and Odessa region (greater Novorossiya)" (Sakwa 2014, 279-280). Ivan Katchanovski views that "the Donbas war is not only a major political development that affects the future of Ukraine. It is significantly beyond Ukraine. The conflict became a major international conflict and the biggest conflict between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War" (Katchanovski 2017, 2).

The elements listed below embellish the background narrative depicted in the official statements of The Russian Federation.

President Vladimir Putin stated that "In accordance with Article 51 (Chapter VII) of the UN Charter, with permission of Russia's Federation Council, and in the execution of the treaties of friendship and mutual assistance with the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, ratified by the Federal Assembly on 22 February, I decided to carry out a special military operation" (Putin 2022).

Russia thus launched a special military campaign to protect the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics as it accelerates its militarization and nazification of Ukraine. This is apparent in the official statement of President Putin given above. At the same time, the Russian official narratives are that likewise, the United States and its allies are organizing a major cyber-attack against Russia, The Western powers, using sophisticated information and communication technologies, aim to attack Russia's government institutions, media outlets, critical infrastructure, and essential facilities on a daily basis. The Kyiv regime has publicly announced its efforts to recruit anti-Russian IT experts to form an "offensive cyber force" and has steadily documented daily malicious attacks against Russia (The ministry of foreign affairs of the Russian Federation 2022).

Minsk Protocol

The serious civilian grief in Donbas determined international organizations and other external actors to mediate in the Ukraine-Donbas conflict. Thus, on 05 September 2014, Ukraine, Russia, the Organization for Security and Operation in Europe (OSCE), and the separatists in the Donbas region signed the Minsk I agreement. Minsk I was a protocol focused on implementing peace in Ukraine with a joint effort of the trilateral group. The major step put forward in the Minsk protocol was: "Ensure the immediate bilateral cessation of the use of weapons;

ensure monitoring and verification by OSCE of the regime of non-use of weapons; implement decentralization of power, including by enacting the Law of Ukraine on the interim status of local self-government in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk (Law on Special Status) ([Minsk Agreement 2014](#)).”

The Verkhovna Rada approved a temporary law on special status on 16 September, signed by President Poroshenko, for three years. As it gives liberty to form their police forces, to appoint judges and prosecutors, and ‘language self -determination’, the law includes the prevention of the central authorities from adjournment of the local council (Parliament) ([Allan 2022](#)).

The Normandy format was a diplomatic arrangement formed in June 2014 by the Ukraine, Russia, Germany, and France leaders to cease military aggression in Donbas. It was focused on a peaceful resolution to resolve the military aggression in the Donbas region.

Subsequently, the conflict intensified in January 2015 in Debaltseve, even after the Minsk protocol implementation. As a result, another ceasefire agreement came to deal with the issues of Donetsk and Luhansk region uncertainties on 15 February 2015. On 12 February, the Normandy format came up with a package of measures called Minsk II. Russia, Ukraine, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the leaders of the separatist group agreed on thirteen points in this Minsk Agreement II to de-escalate aggression. The thirteen points included immediate enforcement of a ceasefire, retraction of heavy artillery, OSCE observation, discussion with the Donetsk and Luhansk interim government, and acknowledgment of the special status by Parliament as per Ukrainian law, election in the areas of Donetsk and Luhansk ([Kostanyan and Meister 2016](#)).

Taras Kuzio argues that “President Volodymyr Zelensky has promised to continue reforms, fight corruption, continue Ukraine’s European integration, and bring peace to the Donbas. He could be successful in the first three goals, but the latter will elude him ([Kuzio 2019](#)).”

“The EU stood in silence while the population of Donbas was being exterminated and the Russian language was being strangled in Ukraine. It disregarded our endless calls to take notice of the predominance of Nazis in the Ukrainian authorities and the socioeconomic blockade and murder of innocent civilians in the southeast of Ukraine” ([Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Union 2022](#))

Giovanna De Maio says, “There are three major issues of concern for the Russian government that involve Ukraine; 1. It is important to contain Western expansion eastwards as a buffer state, 2. Russia’s responsibility to protect the Russian-speaking population living in Ukraine, and 3. As a danger in terms of spillover effects near abroad ([Maio 2016, 6](#)).” David J. Kramer (2015,9) stated, “Russian President Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine posed the most serious challenge to European security in decades ([Kramer 2015, 9](#)).” Miron Lakomy viewed “the war in Ukraine as an

outcome of multi-layered rivalry combined with unintentional mistakes committed by all possible sides ([Lakomy 2016, 279](#)).”

Military Escalation and the Sham Referendum

On 24 February 2021, the military escalation in the Donbas region resulted from the failure to implement the Minsk Accords and the political agenda of President Vladimir Zelensky. In addition, the existence of the Crimea platform summit and the vision of Ukraine to de-occupy Crimea were deliberate moves from the Ukraine side that posed severe challenges in this region as a whole. More importantly, military drills in Ukraine by NATO and Ukraine’s adherence to becoming a member of NATO and the EU culminated in warfare in the next year. President Vladimir Zelensky’s political campaign during the election was the reintegration of Crimea into Ukraine. However, the USA blamed Russia’s military intervention in Ukraine, at the same time, Russia alleged the US for provocative involvement in Ukraine to begin the war ([Chotiner 2022](#)).

Sam Cranny-Evans of the Royal United Service Institute states (2022 cited from BBC News), “The key is that the Kremlin has identified it as a Russian-speaking part of Ukraine that is more Russian than Ukraine.”

The referendum was conducted in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions regarding their accession to the Russian Federation. The Foreign Ministry’s statement on the referendums in the DPR, LPR, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia regions results in the voting was tabulated with the overwhelming majority of voters supporting unification with Russia: 99.23 percent in the DPR, 98.42 percent in the LPR, 93.11 percent in the Zaporizhzhia region and 87.05 percent in the Kherson region ([The ministry of foreign affairs of the Russian Federation 2022](#)). On 4 October 2022, formal laws were enacted to recognize the incorporation of the Donetsk People’s Republic, Luhansk People’s Republic, Zaporozhye Region, and Kherson Region into the Russian Federation. As per this law, these newly integrated territories were established as part of the Russian Federation ([President of Russia 2022](#)). On 19 October 2022, Vladimir Putin signed an executive order for implementation in the Constituent Entities of Russia in connection with the Presidential Executive Order. On territorial integrity, the President of Russia announced Martial Law on the territory of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions on 20 October 2022.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the military aggression between Russia and Ukraine in recent years has had profound consequences across various dimensions, including geopolitics, economy, socio-cultural fabric, and security. The theoretical framework employed in

this article, encompassing concepts such as war, security dilemma, and geopolitics, has provided valuable insights into understanding the complexities of the conflict. This article analyzes key developments that have influenced the Russia-Ukraine conflict since the 2014 Ukraine crisis, the EU-Partnership Summit, the Maidan protests, the annexation of Crimea, unrest in the Donbas, the election of President Zelensky, and the subsequent emergence of the Crimea Platform Summit. These events have significantly influenced the dynamics of the conflict, further exacerbating tensions between the two nations.

Amidst the conflict, several attempts at resolving the crisis have been made, including the Minsk Agreement and the formation of a Crimea Platform Summit. The military aggression between Russia and Ukraine is a complex and multifaceted issue, requiring a comprehensive and inclusive approach to find a lasting resolution. Diplomatic negotiations, international cooperation, and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity principles are crucial in resolving the conflict and restoring regional stability.

The findings presented in this article underscore the need for continued scholarly research, policy deliberation, and diplomatic initiatives to address the underlying causes of the conflict and seek a sustainable path forward. The region can move beyond the current crisis and strive for a more secure and prosperous future through concerted efforts and a commitment to peaceful dialogue.

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