

The Russia-Ukraine War: Shaking the Foundation of the Global System**Dana Mohammed Danish Aladdin Sajadi**

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After several months of posturing, the Russian army was stationed on the Ukrainian border, and the Kremlin denying any intention to invade or attack Ukraine, and the west kept escalating the situation. The world experienced a crucial moment on the 24th of February; when the Russian President, Vladimir Putin announced a special military operation against Ukraine. Since the eruption of the war, it has continued until this moment without cessation of hostilities or its stoppage, as diplomatic efforts have thus far not brought an end to it. Several global actors were involved in this crisis and the outcome of this war is going to have a major impact on the entire globe. This paper examines who handles this crisis and the implications of it for the International System, politically and economically. The paper, through the qualitative research framework, particularly document analysis and thematic analysis, secondary data were collected from academic works relevant to the paper, which were logically and thematically analyzed. The findings include disruption to the relative stability of the international system, changing global and regional geopolitical calculations and slower global economic growth and development. The paper recommends that urgent steps and strategies should be taken by the international community, especially the most influential state and non-state actors to bring a swift end to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Keywords: Russia, Ukraine, NATO, War, United States, European Union**Citation**

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1. Introduction

It is not just a military operation in the Ukrainian territory, rather than it is a war that will change the future of international politics and economy, on 24th of February, 2022, the first bullet shot and the war against Ukraine started (Andrew Osborn, 2022), Russia has its own justification, the NATO approaching Russian borders and Kyiv insisting on joining the NATO, this was the spark that started the war (Kirby, 2022). This special military operation or invasion depends on how individuals perceive it, according to the kremlin it would be over in 48, 72 or 96 hours (about 4 days) and the march toward Kyiv would meet only a light resistance, President Putin thought it might take few days maximum to overthrow the regime and it would not be a full-scale war (Lozovsky, 2022). the Russians thought they would engage in a thunder run towards Kyiv and other major cities and as was the case in 2014 in Crimea (Grant, 2017), Ukraine would be reduced to some sort of vassal state that belongs back to the Russian place of influence, but the plan did not go as it was expected, being more than hundred days into the Russian intervention in Ukraine and it is considered as one of the worst armed conflicts in the 21st century.

The war's havoc, displacement, and economic meltdown as it approaches this landmark with no signs of stopping. (Geneva, 2022), as no one knows the exact number of troops or civilians that have died, both governments often exaggerate or understate their statistics for public relations reasons and for the sake of the soldier part either to break it down or to lift it up and continue, therefore the number of casualties claimed by both government is not right and hard to verify due to the misinformation and spread of propaganda on both sides. The repercussion of this conflict is not regional, but global, it affected all the countries, and it will continue to affect the global economic system as war continues every day. It is so that the paper looks to examine those who handle this crisis and the political and economic implications of this war for the international system. Similarly, the paper looks to answer and achieve the following questions and goals:

- To what extent has the war been affecting the international system politically and economically?
- How could the war be resolved?
- To examine the political and economic impact of the war on the international system.
- To find out strategies that could help resolve the war.

2. Literature Review

The extant literature is topically reviewed as follows:

2.1 *The Economic Warfare against Russia*

The European union with the United States their language toward Russia were very aggressive, as before the intervention they were sending several warnings to the kremlin; when Russia mobilized a large combat force along its border with Ukraine (Masters, 2022), thinking this might actually change Putin's mind, but this tone did not work with President Putin, he worked on his goal, as planned throwing all sanctions warning behind his back, and when he launched his special operation in Ukraine on 24th of February, 2022, sanctions fell on Russia heavily, targeting every single sector, the EU has implemented sanctions on Russia in six packages, including targeted restrictive measures, travel bans, economic sanctions import and export restrictions, which means European companies are not permitted to sell certain items to Russia and Russian firms are not permitted to sell certain products to the EU (Union, 2022) as the United states and EU continue to impose packages of sanctions which reached more than five (5) thousands sanctions, made Russia the most sanctioned country in the world, surpassing Syria, Iran and North Korea (Wadhams, 2022). President Biden made it clear that he will not send a single American soldier to Ukraine even in the case of evacuation of Americans who were stuck in Ukraine, avoiding any direct clash with the Russians (Toosi, 2022), but he assured that he will respond with harsh sanctions that would destroy the Russian economy, isolate it from the global economy and therefore the heavy pressure would make Moscow withdraw their troops out of Ukraine (Skolnik, 2022), but the fact that all these sanctions did not even hinder the Russian army from marching and conquering more territories in Ukraine, even with millions of dollars and heavy military aid being sent to Ukraine (Milburn, 2022) to the latest assistance package of 1 billion dollar (about \$3 per person in the US), which is the 12th tranche, comes as Russian soldiers intensify their offensive in eastern and southern Ukraine (Biden to send another \$1 billion (about \$3 per person in the US) (about \$3 per person in the US) (about \$3 per person in the US) in military aid to Ukraine, 2022). It has not resulted in any positive results.

2.2 *The Repercussions of the War on the Global economy*

The economy as always gets affected extremely fast in the fields of conflicts and war and specially this time the war had its impact hardly because both sides play a significant role in the international

economic system and the conflict cannot be ignored because most of the states somehow are involve. This has reflected negatively on their economies and nationals. The first consequences of the invasion of Ukraine came from Russia itself, the Russian ruble recorded a significant decline against the dollar reaching its lowest level since the outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020 and the economy sector threatened with interruption (Ismail, 2022). To prevent this Putin had to take a lot of measures to spare his country's markets from what it would bear in the coming days as war continues, most of the heads of state declared that they will not intervene in this war directly and there will not be a no-fly zone over Ukraine, as President Zelensky demanded (Cox, 2022), but there were packages of sanctions rolled on Russia to become the most punished or sanctioned country in the world (Wadhams, Russia Is Now the World's Most-Sanctioned Nation, 2022).

These sanctions are not stopping; they continue as the war continues and their repercussions are beginning to appear not only on Russia but on the entire planet. The echoes of war started straight forward after the first couple days affecting the oil and gas market. Washington imposed a ban on buying Russian oil even though it supplies only 10 percent of the American's need (Releases, 2022), but even without an embargo, oil prices rose 30 percent (Kolaczowski, 2022), this embargo also fell hard on Russia when the European Union decided to impose an embargo aiming to cut 90% of Russia's crude oil imports to the European Union countries by the end of 2022 (Abnett, 2022). As Europe traditionally depended heavily on Russia for around 40 percent of its natural gas, with the majority provided via pipelines such as Yamal, which passes Belarus and Poland to Germany, and Nord Stream 1, which travels straight to Germany, and pipelines via Ukraine (Twidale, 2022). The reflection of this ban coming with a retaliatory actions from the Russian side as the oil products and other food commodity items recorded a high rise in prices (Kılıç, 2022) that European markets have not seen it since the beginning of the invasion (SE, 2022). While military operations are taking place in Ukraine, western military supplies and aid are pouring in to support the Ukrainians against Russians, as Poland became the main channel for the flow of all the American, British, and European military aid. They promised to serve as a logistical center for the delivery of military equipment and the channeling of it into the western part of Ukraine that Russian soldiers have not yet taken (Alexandra Brzozowski, 2022). From everywhere weapons flowed, including long range missiles, but the Russian tactics in this confrontation have other accounts, the global economy is suffering from a rise in prices, because Russia and Ukraine are among the largest producers of primary commodities such as wheat, corn, sunflower oil, and

fertilizer (Service, 2022), as both countries sell agricultural and chemical goods to a wide range of trading partners worldwide. Therefore, the disruption of the supply chain led to a sharp rise in world prices.

2.3 The Consequences of Sanctions

What the sanctions against Russia did, it tore the oil market because contrary to the West's expectations, there are major actors like India who dropped off the bandwagon and began importing Russian oil massively, in last April, Russia oil accounted for 10% of India's total oil imports. It is presently one of the top ten (10) providers and it surpassed Saudi Arabia to become India's second-largest oil exporter, after Iraq, when refiners bought Russian crude at a significant discount following the Ukraine conflict (India, 2022). As for China, Russia became the largest oil exporter surpassing Saudi Arabia, China's crude oil imports from Russia increased 55% in May 2022 compared to May of 2021 (Aizhu, 2022). "Not only are countries like China benefitting from getting sanctioned Russian oil at a 35% to 40% discount, but also Chinese businesses in terms of oil and to some extent gas costs, will now be outcompeting European business on a large scale, so it is not clear that they are going to be lining up to give up this advantage," said Christof Rühl, a senior research scholar at the Center on Global Energy Policy of Columbia University in New York City, in his daily energy markets review for Gulf Intelligence Consultancy firm," (Rühl, 2022) said.

2.4 Sanctions Backfiring Europe

Russia supplies the old continent with more than 40 % of its natural gas and around 27 % of its imported oil, but after the sanctions, the European leaders agreed on cutting off the Russian supply and during the last couple of months, they have been trying to find alternatives to fill the empty gap in their energy supply by diversifying their energy sources and to focus on the clean energy (Commission, 2022) But the question is, did the European plan work? At the first stages of the conflict, Moscow responded to the sanctions and the military aid, assistance the European union provided for Ukraine by reducing 60 percent of the amount of the gas that it delivers to Germany and other European countries by Gazprom, one of the top Russian state controlled energy companies, as war continues, Putin seems flipping the table on Europe and holding pressures card at least on the short term, another hit, the old continent received was when Russia announced that

it had completely shut down Nord Stream 1 gas pipeline for annual maintenance, whose flow of natural gas fell to zero (Aljazeera, 2022). Every year, the Nord Stream 1 pipeline delivers approximately 55 billion cubic meters of natural gas under the Baltic Sea to Germany. It also distributed to other European countries from there (Horowitz, 2022). This decision created uncertainty and worries for the European officials wondering whether Putin is going to reactivate the pipeline after the maintenance is down or to keep it off and use it as a leverage to push Europe and Ukraine to the negotiating table. The gas supply being cut already had impact on 12 countries and the further it continues, the further the crisis gets deeper and harder affecting everyone in Europe from big industries and utilities to consumers who are already struggling with unaffordable prices of foods, fuel, and other essential goods. Therefore, the continent was put on a high alert for fuel shortages (Isis Almeida, 2022). As a result of this move, Germany activated the second stage of its three-stage emergency gas plan, citing a decrease in natural gas supplies, German economy minister, Robert Habeck, cited in (Melissa Eddy, 2022) told reporters at a news conference held in Berlin “Even if you don’t feel it yet: We are in a gas crisis,” he said. “Gas is a scarce commodity from now on. Prices are high, and we must be prepared for further increases. This will affect industrial production and become a big burden for many consumers.” Even Christian Lindner, German finance minister, has warned that persistently high energy costs are threatening to plunge Europe's largest economy into an economic crisis, and the government has urged consumers and businesses to conserve gas (Melissa Eddy, 2022). Some of the factories and plants for steel and fertilizers in multiple European countries had to reduce production and some had been switched off already due to the high energy prices. if the situation keeps on till next winter, Europe will have to decide between heating its homes or powering its industry.

3. Methodology

The paper, through careful examination of relevant academic works and online materials obtained relevant secondary data, which helped in authoring the paper. The justification for using secondary data is informed by its availability and its qualitative nature. Thematic analysis was used in analyzing the data through the generation of two relevant themes under findings. The justification for the method lies in its suitability for application in this regard.

According to Heyman’s secondary analysis "the extraction of knowledge on topics other than those which were the focus of the original surveys” (Hyman, 1972). Its fundamental aim is the reanalysis

of earlier data, and this reanalysis can supply answers to a wide range of research questions, including descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory objects (Dale et al., 1988; Hakim, 1982; Moriarty et al., 1999; Riedel, 2000, as cited in Sales, Sara & Antonio, 2006).

Secondary Data in comparison to primary data sets are significantly less expensive and require far less time to arrange (in terms of getting the data together in a workable shape for data analysis), and can be obtained for free over the Internet or through agreements with the sponsoring organization or government bodies (Vartanian, 2011), as traveling to gather primary data is a challenge due to the cost of travel and the uncertainty that currently characterizes the environment, which is being torn apart or affected by the war.

4. Findings

4.1 Impact of the War on the Global Economy

The world is so beholden to Russian energy in a tight market, and it always had their role and contribution to the global economy; if the Russians do not provide that energy or oil to large parts of western European countries, large part of western European economy will shut down. The states function in an interdependent form which makes the interests intertwining, therefore a country like Russia cannot be excluded or eliminated easily from the international system, simply because it plays a significant role and it contributes to the global system which most of the states and their interests are connected to it deeply, so excluding Russia from the system will result in damaging the economies of most of the states.

4.2 Impact of the War on Russia, Ukraine, and the European Union

Most of the analysts believe that Asia has taken up all the Russian oil that Russia cannot sell to the West because of sanctions, and the Europeans made exceptions for themselves because they are heavily depended on the Russian oil and natural gas. So, for Europe, it led to an almost 10% inflation that they have not seen since World War II. Europe's single currency has fallen below parity against the US dollar for the first time in nearly two decades, weighed down by growing recession fears in the eurozone, this will lead to further collapse of European economies due to the rise in commodity prices and specially the energy as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian war,

especially now that Russia suspended its gas export to Europe and nationalized Sakhalin-2 Offshore Oil and Gas Project, which is a painful blow to Europe and the West (Executive, 2022).

The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine has been having negative implications for Ukraine, its economy, and citizens. The entire fabric of the Ukrainian society has been broken, with severe humanitarian crisis on ground. The Ukrainian forces have been trying to repel the Russian forces, but the war of attrition continues to take its toll on Ukraine (Ozili, 2022).

The war also affected Europe negatively, particularly in light of the economic collapse that Europe is experiencing, and it began with the resignation of British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson (Meredith, 2022), followed by the resignation of the Prime Minister of Estonia, Kaja Kallas (Peseckyte, 2022), then followed by Prime Minister of Italy, Mario Draghi, offering his resignation (Davide Ghiglione, 2022), who had visited Kyiv alongside German Chancellor, Olaf Schultz and the French President Emmanuel Macron. The resignation came after the Italian Parliament rejected a proposal, he given to support a group of companies and investors in his country for those companies to recover from the economic blows inflicted on them because of the war.

All these tensions in Europe are a result of Russia's ongoing advance in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine, despite all the support in military aid that NATO is providing since the first day of the war, it did not stop or push back the Russian army. The war is testing the solidarity of the European Union and NATO's cohesion, some members are bowing for Putin's demands such as buying the Russian gas in rubles to save their economies. There is also disagreement over the sanctions whether to add more packages and tighten it or to lift them, as Romania started lifting some of the sanctions on firms controlled by Russian entities in an attempted to save their economic chain, which was heavily affected by the western sanctions (Banila, 2022). Hungary was against the sanctions since the beginning and is yet again delaying the European Union's plans for new sanctions against Russia (King, 2022).

5. Conclusion

All wars end in one of two ways, either there is a decisive battlefield victory, which results in a decisive victory at the negotiating table or there is some negotiated settlement, typically the result of mutually hurting stalemate, a situation in which neither of the protagonists feel that they are likely to prevail on the battlefield and the costs of prolonging the conflict are rising and becoming

unsustainable. And when both sides get to that point, then you have the circumstances or the conditions are ripe for negotiated settlement, but both sides did not reach yet to this point as Russia keep expanding and taking over Ukrainian territories and the Ukrainian side keeps thinking that just few kinds of weapons or those weapons from NATO or the United States might push back the Russians and keep all the lost regions, they are unlikely to prevail on the battlefield.

Sanctions often fail to change regimes or to stop wars, President Putin, since the beginning of his special operation or war has made more money than ever, 93 billion dollars (about \$290 per person in the US) in the hundred days after 24 of February, so Russia has no problem in sourcing or financing their military mission in Ukraine and the political pressure on the West is enormous because if the Russian energy is kept shut off next winter, there will be chaos and hardship, industries will be shut down due to lack of gas, which would see people getting cold and average families heavily burdened. Disrupting the market chain, the lack of wheat, grains that a lot of African countries depend on and import them from Russia and Ukraine. Now it is unavailable, and their storage is insufficient to cover up for the next year, which will expose millions of people to hunger, therefore, continuing the war is not in the interest of the world.

6. Recommendations

The paper recommends that there should be a diversified economic system that countries openly and freely choose to cooperate and do business based on their interests and profits regardless of the political ideologies they believe or conduct. This is because the war could end up dividing the world into two geo-economic blocs – those aligned with the West and those working more closely with China and Russia.

It is also recommended that major powers should prioritize diplomacy over escalation and provocation and be aware of the dangers, humanity is facing; if this war keeps on going, as this might lead to an inevitable doom for the entire planet because this time it will not be a conventional war, but a nuclear one.

Finally, the paper recommends that the United States should have a restrained foreign policy and show greater understanding of international realities, especially geopolitical and geostrategic ones towards other great powers. This, therefore, would lead to more accommodation, balance, and stability around the globe.

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