

## RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT: GEOPOLITICAL SHIFTS AND WESTERN DECLINE

Dr Muhammad Usman Askari

Associate Professor, Chairperson Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Management and Technology, Lahore

usman-askari@umt.edu.pk

Corresponding Author: \*

Dr Muhammad Usman Askari

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### ABSTRACT

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has become a defining geopolitical crisis with global repercussions. It highlights the deepening rift between the West—led by the U.S. and EU—and an increasingly assertive Russia, signaling a broader shift in the global balance of power. The war marks a decline in Western hegemony and the rising influence of emerging powers such as China, India, and Brazil in diplomatic, economic, and security arenas. It has also elevated the importance of energy security, technological warfare, and international institutions. This article explores the conflict's impact on international relations, the role of emerging powers, and the evolving global power structure.

**Key Words:** - Global Power, Hegemony, Power Dynamics, Emerging Powers, Balance of Power, NATO Expansion, Cybersecurity.

### INTRODUCTION

Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 sent the Russia Ukraine war careening into a defining moment in contemporary international relations. It didn't start as a regional dispute; it has become a global geopolitical, and economic crisis, with implications for the entire world order. Russia — a former superpower that seeks to restore its geopolitical might — is fighting Ukraine — a sovereign state seeking to break free from Moscow and join Europe. Also, it proved that the West's power is reduced, and that old institutions like NATO and the European Union have weakened influence. In addition, the war has sped up the ascent of new major powers such as China, India and the Global South's nations, who now clamor for a challenge to the traditional Western-dominated world order.<sup>i</sup>

The major goal of this paper is to examine the multidimensional effects of Russia's the Ukraine war on global political power with a view to discussing how this war alters the dynamics of coalitions, directly orchestrates the reorganization of the

diplomatic rounds globally, and quickens the ascension of new powers. The article starts out by giving a historical background for the conflict; understanding the roots of the conflict in Soviet history and post-Cold War geopolitics. It will then explore the major global consequences of the war on western hegemony's decline, the roles emerging powers will play, and the increasing importance of nonwestern countries. Finally, the article will look at the new form of warfare, and its technological implications with regards to energy, cyber capabilities and military strategy.

This paper seeks to analyze the conflict in its broader geopolitical context, addressing three main questions:

1. How has the Russia-Ukraine conflict ruptured the norms of international power, and how has it challenged Western domination in a literal as well as figurative sense?
2. How do rising powers reshape international relations amid this conflict?

3. What role is changing technology and economic interdependence playing in the scope and nature of modern warfare, and in the alliances formed among countries?

Answers to these questions help to make sense of future international relations, both in terms of governance, economics, and balance of power.

#### Historical Context and Root Causes

- **The Geopolitical Legacy of the Soviet Union**

To fully understand the Russia-Ukraine conflict, it can't be understood without also looking back at the Soviet Union and its collapse in 1991. After USSR collapsed, 15 new independent states were formed including Ukraine. For most Russians, the collapse of the Soviet Union was both a political catastrophe, and a shame.<sup>ii</sup> The historical sense of loss – and one especially related to Ukraine – has been a key motivator for Russia's actions under President Vladimir Putin.

Strategically important to Russia by location and cultural-historical connections, Ukraine was part of the Russian Empire, then the Soviet Union, and has always been a part.<sup>iii</sup> Part of the reason for Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and 'invasion' in 2022 was to reassert its position as dominant over what it sees as its sphere of influence. Ukraine's tilt toward Europe and NATO has been regarded as a direct challenge to Russia's ambitions in its own backyard. The prospect of NATO expanding eastward and even east to the very edge of Russia, Ukraine, was an existential threat to Russia's security for Putin.<sup>iv</sup>

- **NATO's Eastward Expansion:**

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has centered on one of the central issues since the end of the Cold War: the expansion of NATO. The 1990s saw NATO turn to include former Warsaw pact countries and former Soviet republics such as Poland, Hungary and the Baltic States. According to Russia, NATO expansion is interference in its sphere of influence, and a direct challenge to their security.

A trouble spot for tensions between Russia and the West centered on whether Ukraine could become a member of NATO. Since at least 1997, Russia has said it will oppose Ukraine joining NATO because it is against Russia's strategic interests. A factor that the US and NATO have known is that their military

presence near Russia's borders has been perceived as a destabilizing factor and Putin has used this in rationalizing his military steps, including the occupation of Crimea and the 2022 invasion.

- **The Role of the European Union:**

The war in Ukraine also was fueled by Ukraine's increasing relationship with the European Union apart from NATO. To Ukraine, the EU was a way out for political and economic modernization and democratic reforms, and a built road for economic development. But the EU's expansion into Eastern Europe and ever closer ties with Ukraine were a challenge to Russia's influence in the region.

A turning point in the conflict came in 2014 with the 2014 Euromaidan protest, when Ukrainian government rejected and EU association agreement in favor of closer association with Russia. Violent repression by the government of President Viktor Yanukovich put an end to the protests, which resulted in his ousting and Crimea's eventual annexation by Russia. The start of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, where pro-Russian separatists overran parts of Donbas region, began.

#### The Global Impact of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict

- **The Decline of Western Hegemony**

Russia Ukraine conflict is another step towards the decline of the Western hegemony and vulnerabilities of the standard Western dominated international order. The United States and its allies have been central actors in their dealings on the world stage since they ended World War II, together creating a liberal international order based on democracy, free markets and human rights. The war in Ukraine has revealed some of the limits of that and the rising strength of non-Western powers.

The clearest sign among them is the shift, and the international community's response to the war evidences that. But while the United States and European Union have piled on heavy sanctions against Russia and offered substantial military and economic help to Ukraine, India, China, and many other countries on the African and Middle Eastern continents have stayed neutral or declined to take sides.<sup>v</sup> These are part of a broader trend away from unipolarity, meaningless power which is always more dissipated into the hand of several centers of influence and not of sovereignty of the West.

## Emerging Powers and the Multipolar World Order

### • China's Strategic Maneuvering

Russia Ukraine conflict has been centered as global geopolitical dynamics and China has been pivotal role in this conflict. Officially neutral, but China has been providing big economic support to Russia—for instance through energy imports. Buoyed by increasingly favorable deals for Russian energy exports targeted by Western sanctions, China has become a key buyer of Russian oil and gas.<sup>vi</sup> Beyond Beijing's support for Moscow, Beijing also has broader geopolitical calculations behind it.<sup>vii</sup> Russia is a strategic partner for China in its rivalry with the United States in terms of challenging U.S. global domination, especially on in the Indo-Pacific region. Western attention and resources have been diverted from China's aggression in the South China Sea, in Taiwan and its Belt and Road plan while the conflict in Ukraine rages on.<sup>viii</sup>

### • India's Neutral Position

Another important actor of the coming multi-polar world, India, has been more cautious towards the Russia Ukraine's conflict. India is maintaining strong ties with Russia, especially when it comes to cooperation in defense and energy sector, but is trying to get closer to Western countries, through the Quad alliance, which include the United States, Japan and Australia.

From the point of view of India, it is a matter of retaining strategic autonomy and at the same time keeping in mind its relationship with Russia – both historical and economic and security ones – as well as the partnership with the US and other key members of the West. Also, India relies on its energy needs, as it has been upping its purchases of discounted Russian oil while saying that the war should be resolved peacefully.

### • The Global South's Independent Stance

The conflict in Ukraine has brought to the fore the growing heft of countries in the Global South, which are gaining in their ability to reject Western influence. Countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia have declined to take sides and concentrate instead on their national interests. While these countries are mainly concerned about the economic repercussions from the war ranging from rising energy prices to food insecurity, exacerbated by disruption of Ukrainian and Russian exports, Russia's grievances with the EU are based entirely on

internal opposition to Russia's geopolitical policies and Russia's claims on certain territories within close proximity to the EU.<sup>ix</sup>

It also reflects more broadly discontent with the existing international system. The West's intervention in Ukraine is considered the continuation of imperialist tendencies of many countries; they demand more equitable and multipolar global order.<sup>x</sup>

## Energy and Economic Dimensions

### • The Impact of Sanctions

The impact of Western sanctions designed to isolate Russia has reverberated around the world. The sanctions have hit Russia's economy hard, but have failed to accomplish their stated goal of convincing Russia to pull back from its war aims in Ukraine. Russia has, instead, transformed it by expanding its trade relations across China and India. In addition, many of the countries of the Global South have either evaded sanctions or still interact with Russia. Part of the sanctions have also rippled across the global economy, pushing up energy prices, causing disruptions to global supply chains. Yet the war has worsened economic problems – inflation, food insecurity, and supply shortages – that existed before it, especially in Europe and around the world among developing countries. It shows interdependence of global economies and the inability to keep the unipolar international system in a worldwide increasingly multipolar.

### • The Weaponization of Energy

In Russia – Ukraine conflict, aside from all else, energy has always been pivotal: Russia uses its colossal energy potential as a means of geopolitical power. And Russian energy exports have given Russia the ability to leverage its energy exports in the conflict. The EU's attempt to cut down dependence on Russian energy – including measures to diversify energy sources and speeding the transition to renewable energy – have had massive geopolitical and economic repercussions.<sup>xi</sup>

Nevertheless, the war has revealed that energy security is also an important part of today's geopolitics. Energy is not only an economic resource, but it has also become a national security resource, and countries are increasingly coming to appreciate that. The competition of states has become more competitive about the energy resource, and in return the new geopolitical

alignment has been constructed on the basis of the energy dependence.

- **Technological Warfare and Cybersecurity**

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has also been focused on technology, and technology is becoming a bigger and bigger part of modern warfare. Both Russia and Ukraine have also launched unprecedented amounts of cyber warfare beyond pure military activity, from knocking out communications networks to critical infrastructure, even military systems. But the fight has become dotted with cyber-attacks, each side trying to take down the other side's ability to fight but keep its own intact.<sup>xii</sup>

The battlefield has used technology, too; drones, artificial intelligence, the latest surveillance systems have altered the very basics of military conflict itself.<sup>xiii</sup> With technological warfare becoming more and more reliant, global security is facing new challenges: The risk of cyberattacks, misinformation campaigns, and the spread of high-tech military technologies fall into this category.

#### The Role of Technology and Cyber Warfare in Modern Conflicts

Modern warfare is becoming dependent on technological advancement on a regular basis, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is a clear example of how cyber capabilities can be used, new military technologies, and digital strategies changing the conflict dynamics. These technologies have begun altering both their conduct of war and the wider global security landscape too.

- **Cyberattacks and Information Warfare**

The Russia Ukraine conflict is marked by eminent cyber-attacks and information warfare. Russia has been accused for some time of using cyber operations to interdict Ukrainian infrastructure including power grids, financial institutions, and communications systems. Initially, Russia's cyberattacks were seen purely as an extension of its hybrid warfare policy – an attempt to destabilize Ukraine without consequences in the real world. The most consequential cyberattack, at least thus far, was the 2017 NotPetya malware attack that targeted Ukrainian institutions, resulting in disruptive consequences that ultimately reached nearly every multinational corporation on the planet. But on the other side, using volunteer hackers and techy

civilians, Ukraine has used cyber capabilities to defend itself countering Russian digital aggression. Ukrainian cyber experts have helped protect critical infrastructure, limit the damage inflicted from cyber-attacks and are working to shut down Russian communication networks. Furthermore, Ukraine has used social media and digital platforms to build the global narrative, receive international support and to mobilize public opinion. Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has used social media to communicate with the wider world directly, cutting out traditional media outlets in an effort to garner support both abroad and at home. The conflict has been fueled primarily by misinformation campaigns. The utilization of disinformation has been utilized by both sides to sway global public opinion through means of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Telegram. Russia is accused of pushing false narratives, conspiracy theories, about the Ukrainian government in order to delegitimize its government and justify the invasion of Ukraine and that it made an effort to discredit the invasion; Ukraine feels that exposing Russia's war crimes and the unified narrative of the resistance is important. These tactics have far reached global repercussions. But the use of social media for geopolitical influence has sparked new debates over social media's regulation, where tech companies are taking the responsibility for containing it, and ultimately, information warfare. These are also foreshadowing of the future of conflict in which information, misinformation, and other cyber capabilities will be central to the outcome of conflict, as well as to shaping public perceptions about the conflict.

- **The Weaponization of Technology**

The Russia Ukraine war has become a paradigm of weaponizing advanced form of technologies, reshaping traditional military tactics and raising new ethical questions. The conflict has been changed through drones, artificial intelligence, and autonomous weapon systems. Ukrainian troops have used commercial drones to bombard Russian military convoys and artillery positions with a precision and efficiency that hasn't been seen in conventional warfare. While drones have been significant in the context of asymmetric warfare, where smaller nation states or non-state actors use low cost technologies to counter superior military forces. In the war, data analysis and surveillance are also tackled by artificial intelligence and machine



learning. With AI, Russia and Ukraine have improved their respective abilities to rapidly process vast amounts of intelligence data and use that analysis for decision making and battlefield awareness. Facial recognition technology has been used not only in context of urban surveillance but also as a part of AI powered systems to track combatants and civilians in urban landscapes to learn their movement patterns. Although it can have ethical and strategic questions. But autonomous weapon systems, which can operate unaided by humans, could threaten to take over battlefield decision making—possibly with catastrophic unintended consequences, including civilian casualties. On the one hand, the rise of cyberattacks combined with the proliferation of AI driven weapons is difficult for arms control frameworks to grapple with.<sup>xiv</sup>

#### • Global Security Implications

The developments of the Russia Ukraine war are setting new precedents of the use of technology in warfare and the implications shall be long term for global security. As cyber and technological warfare become more and more front and center on modern conflict, and international cybersecurity frameworks will need to adapt. Cyber-attacks and autonomous weapons are too new for current international laws, including the Geneva Conventions designed to regulate traditional forms of warfare, to handle. In addition, the conflict draws attention to the vulnerabilities of important infrastructure to cyberattacks. As our nations are growing ever more linked by these digital networks, the reality of cyber warfare and the possibility of being able to disrupt daily life — targeting everything from power grids to healthcare systems — is becoming a reality. New norms and agreements will have to be created by the global community to oversee cyber warfare, prevent state sponsored cyber-attacks, and to address the risk of existing technologies becoming weaponized.

#### Impact on Global Trade Routes and Supply Chains

The war in Ukraine has disrupted major global supply chains, including energy, agriculture and technology supply chains. The conflict has also cut off Ukraine's agricultural exports to Europe, a country it is known as 'the breadbasket of Europe'. A large part of the world's wheat, corn, and sunflower oil is produced in the country. The ports, including Odessa, have been blocked and have left

millions of tons of grain stranded. The world's food supply has been disrupted, leaving many countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East—most dependent on Ukrainian grain—counting the cost of rising food prices and shortages.

Moreover, the world of energy markets has witnessed huge volatility, as Russia has for decades been a key supplier of natural gas and oil to parts of Europe. Russia's sanctions on energy exports forced Europe to find alternative sources of energy, sending prices soaring in what amounts to an energy crisis. The immediate effects of European countries speeding up their transition to renewable energy sources have been felt throughout all industries, increasing production cost and inflation globally.

Technology supply chains were also affected. For example, the neon gas used in semiconductor production comes in large part from Ukraine, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine has put pressure on semiconductor manufacturing. Disruptions in critical raw materials like neon, and disrupted shipping routes, have, in addition, exacerbated electronic component shortages, from smartphones to automobiles.

In response to these challenges, countries are trying to diversify their trade routes and their supply chains. The crumbling of traditional trade flows has led to rethinking dependence on particular regions, especially those which depend heavily on Russia and Ukraine. Inequalities through which countries must be able to export have pulled more nations to focus on the securing of alternative trade routes via either building infrastructure for already existing routes or establishing new economic partnerships with nontraditional allies.

With regard to energy suffering from shortfalls, the European Union turned to the United States, the Middle East and Northern Africa to import liquefied natural Gas (LNG) for example. These factors are also motivating Europe's investments in renewable energy and infrastructure projects aimed at shoring up Europe against Russian fossil fuels. Similarly Asian countries are starting to increasingly look for ways to diversify their supply chains, especially in regard to industries such as semiconductors, and to explore new regional trading routes in order to keep their economic relationships stable.

- Sanctions and Countermeasures

The Western-led sanctions campaign meant to cripple Russia's economy and cut off funds for Russian military operations have become one of the highlights of the war in Ukraine. Sanctions imposed by the West have hit major parts of the Russian economy, from finance to energy and defense. That includes asset freezes, export controls on high tech goods and restrictions on Russian access to global financial markets. Such sanctions have... had a large impact on the Russian economy, but these sanctions may not last long term. Sanctions have been tough on Russia, but they have also been forced to respond in an increasingly headstrong way, with countermeasures and alternative systems of economic life. Russia's isolation from sanctions is being accomplished through new trade routes and stronger ties with non-Western powers such as India, China and Global South. Russia has also attempted to mix its financial system with settlement of trade in a wider range of currencies other than dollar, including Chinese yuan.<sup>xv</sup>

Meanwhile, Russia has attempted to develop its parallel financial systems, which would operate without Western institutions such as SWIFT (global payment system). Russia has built its own payment infrastructure, dubbed SPFS (System for Transfer of Financial Messages), and has been promoting greater use of the Chinese-developed Cross Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS) allowing countries to avoid the U.S. dollar based international settlement system.

Also, countries of the Global South, such as China and India also have developed strategies for evasion from Western sanctions. But the Russian energy supply and the ability to trade with Russia have led many nations in the Global South to resist the Western led sanction campaigns. However, they are instead increasingly wishing to conduct trade using non-dollar currencies or barter systems. For example, earlier this year, India increased its imports of Russian oil after India agreed to pay in rubles or rupees instead of dollars as a way to lessen dependence on the Western dominated global financial system.

Other than the development of alternative payment systems and trade agreements, there has been a burgeoning practice of country's outwitting the sanctions through regional trade agreements. Meanwhile, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro and his counterparts in Argentina and other Latin

American countries have latched onto further trade links with Russia and China, all the while straying clear of Western sanctions. This trend is hastening the move away from dollar denominated trade and precipitating the development of more regionalized, multilateral trade systems.

Although these countermeasures have reduced some of the impacts that coming sanctions on Russia would have imposed, they are also a sign of wider moves toward a more multipolar global economic order. These attempts to construct novel economic structures are opposing the limitations of Western monetary facilities and illustration hypertrophy of residual in global monetary relations.

#### The Rise of New Economic Alliances

The war in Ukraine has fast tracked the creation of new economic alliances, notably among Global South states and non-Western powers. Traditional Western powers, like the U.S. and the European Union, have come together in support of Ukraine and have slapped the Russians with sanctions, but African, Asian and Latin American nations together have for the most part taken a neutral position or in some cases sided with Moscow.

The BRICS nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—are shaping the new economic order, and are playing a more prominent role. Traditionally, first, the BRICS alliance focused on economic cooperation and development, however, now, it plays rather big role in the effort to challenge western led institutions such as IMF and World Bank.

BRICS nations have discussed developing alternatives to the Western dominated financial ecosystem. More recently the idea of a BRICS Development Bank, a joint financial institution charged with providing loans to developing countries and funding infrastructure projects, has gained momentum. What this initiative is doing is to provide an alternative source of funding to countries in the Global South who've relied on usually Western controlled financial institutions.

BRICS countries go beyond finance in their increasing economic cooperation. They also build ties of energy, trade and technology among themselves. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) promotes closer integration between growing economies of Asia, Africa and Europe with countries in the Global South that are dependent on receiving Chinese investment and infrastructure

development. Again, similar are India's expanding role as key trading partner in the region, increasing trade with Russia and China and efforts to counterbalance US and East influence.

With the growing assertiveness of Global South in the global economics, BRICS nations, or other emerging economies, are trying to create a multipolar world order in the wake of globalization. These emerging powers challenge the existing US dominated system of global economic rules and challenge these powers in an effort to reshape global economic rules to reflect their own interests. In addition, related to these efforts is wider economic diversification, the competition for influence on the world stage with multiple currencies, trade routes and economic systems battling it out.

New economic alliances rise, power dynamic shifts and that is a fundamental realignment of the global trading order. By tethering themselves closer together, these emerging economies aren't just undermining the old order of economic hierarchy, they also stand as a counternarrative to the monopoly that the U.S. and its allies enjoy in defining global economic policy.<sup>xvi</sup>

#### **The Future of Global Military Alliances: NATO, BRICS, and the Multipolar Security Landscape**

Economic and diplomatic spheres are by no means the only spheres of the geopolitical shift caused by the Russia – Ukraine conflict; it's also driven by the changing military alliances aimed at the response to new security challenges. Between others, the war has shown how NATO and the security architectures of the Global South are shaping the organization of global power dynamics.

#### **The Future of NATO and Collective Defense**

NATO is now on the front lines of attempts to balance Russian power in Europe amid Russia's aggression.<sup>xvii</sup> When it comes to the invasion of Ukraine, the alliance has responded in an unprecedented show of unity: NATO members have sent military aid, imposed sanctions and bolstered their eastern borders. But the conflict has also shaped how the NATO thinks about strategic priorities. The evolution of the war forces NATO to deal with the inclusion of new members and relations with nonmember countries in the area. More important than ever before, NATO functions as a collective defense alliance. Yet that alliance, too, is showing increasing internal splits, especially between European and U.S. powers. The United

States has urged stronger military commitments to deter Russian aggression while some European nations are more circumspect, scared of ratcheting up the conflict. Such internal differences are likely to complicate NATO's ability to respond effectively, if at all, to future threat challenges in a multipolar world.

#### **Emerging Security Alliances in the Global South**

At the same time, beyond the traditional Western frameworks, Global South countries have found new security alliances due to the war. Ever more assertive in the face of Western power, countries such as China, India and Iran have left countless analysts muttering that the world is no longer the same, and they have been right. Some of these new security partnerships directly challenge the Western dominated security architecture. China and Russia, e.g., have deepened their strategic relationship vis a vis NATO, and India, though allied with the West, has remained neutral on the war, deepening its terrorism and economic links with both Russia and China. The result of these shifting allegiances has been the emergence of new regional security coups, the construction of new reality serves to challenge or complement the security structure of NATO. The future of global military alignments will be shaped by the security policies of the countries that are becoming more powerful.

#### **The Militarization of Non-Western Powers**

The war in Ukraine too is a manifestation of the growing militarization of non-characterization powers. Particularly, China and India are increasing military capabilities through fast rise in defense spending and technological development. China's increasing assertiveness in the South China Sea, its claims over Taiwan, and its military modernization more generally, are all a source of concern regarding new conflict in and around the Indo-Pacific. The same is occurring in India, where large amounts of money are being invested in defense technology and a widened circle of strategic partnerships in the Indo Pacific is also being formed to restrain China's rise. These countries' militarization will likely result in new regional and global power dynamics, and could lead to resource, land or influence wars. Greater consolidated Western military outposts outside the traditional West, along with the swelling Asian arms race, could change the global balance of power over the next few decades.

### Environmental and Resource Impacts: Energy Security and Climate Change

The war has however shone a light on the broader environmental and resource related consequences of ongoing conflict in Ukraine to vulnerabilities in global energy security. On top of destroying infrastructure, weaponizing energy resources, and adding to already growing concerns relating to sustainability and climate action, the environmental toll of war is growing.

### Energy Security and Transition Challenges

Ukraine is a strategic point of a network node for natural gas and oil between Russia and Europe, and energy security is a big part of today's conflict. War consequent of destruction of pipelines and other infrastructure of energy supplies to Europe. Europe is not the only region to suffer as a result of exploding energy prices: Many countries have been hit hard by Central Asia as well and are looking for alternative sources of energy. For countries in Europe, the race to diversify energy sources means huge long-term implication to the global energy market. The war is speeding up the transition to renewable energy and as countries try to cut back on their reliance on fossil fuels. However, this transition seems a difficult one, highlighted especially by infrastructure investment, technology development and policy coordination. As much as the war's energy crisis will prompt closer cooperation on energy security, it could also aggravate already geopolitics wrangling over resources.

### Environmental Damage and Warfare

Military operations have great destructive effect that can have long lasting consequences, consequences which are often forgotten, because warfare also affects the environment. Ukraine's energy plants, industrial complexes and transportation systems have been devastated in the war in Ukraine. Additionally, some heavy artillery, landmines and explosive impurities have soiled environ, also ecologically and biodiversity wise destroyed. In addition, in some parts of the country, in the Donbas region for instance, environmental damage is compounded by the destruction of agricultural land and water resources. From an environmental point of view, the war's long-term consequences for Ukraine and countries in the region are likely to be of a generational nature and will compound efforts

at post war reconstruction and conflicts in the region.

### Climate Change and Conflict

It also throws up major issues about conflict and climate change. With temperatures increasing globally and more frequent strong extreme weather, competition for scarce resources is probably more likely to escalate. Due to the war in Ukraine, climate action efforts could be added to the list of challenges that the war might further strain, if it takes away attention and resources from global environmental problems. Furthermore, the war can be the preliminary wards of different clashes over assets. Climate change might yet be a more powerful agent of geopolitical tension as states strive to keep access to vital resources, water, energy, and food. The conflict, which brings up the role of the military in combatting climate change, is also one where militaries have the roles of causing more environmental damage but, in theory, also mitigating damages.

### The Future of Democracy and Authoritarianism: A Global Struggle

This Russia Ukraine conflict has turned into a symbolic battleground in the wider battle between democracy and autocracy. The war is also one of competing visions for the future of global governance.

### The Global Struggle for Democracy

The Russian conflict in Ukraine has placed the worldwide fight between democratic and authoritarian means of legislation in the world's spotlight. But Russia's actions are taken as an assault of the sovereignty and democratic values of Ukraine, and the war is reigniting debates on the defense of democratic institutions and human rights. Countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Latin America have followed their own well battles between the rule of democracy and autocracy, and see the conflict through the prisms of their own political systems. The international solidarity in defense of democracy is underlined by the conflict. More democratic countries increasingly join in the support of the anti-authoritarian Ukraine oppression: not only with military, but with diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian aid.



### Russia's Vision of a New World Order

Russia's aggression is also driven by its conception of a postliberal Asia and of worldwide multipolarity ruled over by authoritarian authorities whilst liberal democracy loses its relevance. Instead, Russia is trying to supplant the current international order in which sovereignty is acknowledged while simultaneously treating the principles of governance with less regard for democracy. In sharp contrast to the Western ideals of liberal democracy and human rights, is this vision. Implications of this shift are far reaching; from international governance and human rights standard to global trade and security norms. Authoritarian powers such as Russian,

China and Iran are the main challenges to liberal order of the world system that gained ascendancy after the Cold War.

### The Role of Civil Society in Defending Democracy

Civil society is an important defense for democratic values in the face of rising authoritarianism. In addition to in the Ukraine itself, activists, NGOs and international watchdogs have become increasingly important propelling human rights and democracy in regions being plagued by authoritarian regimes. The

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