



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL STUDY GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION



A. Committee

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world. The Council has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis.

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and making recommendations on them.

B. Topic

Russia has begun a large-scale military attack on Ukraine, having initially declared it acknowledges Donetsk and Luhansk as separate states. It scarcely wants spoken communication. Russia is violating jurisprudence – violating the prohibition within the world organization (UN) Charter on the employment of force, violating the requirement to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of different states, and violating the prohibition on intervention.

However, Russia is victimising the language of the law to defend its actions. all told the recent verbiage of President Vladimir Putin, some tries at legal arguments are often evoked – but they are not getting up to scrutiny.

Article 2(4) of the UN Charter prohibits the threat or use of force with the only two Charter exceptions to this prohibition being self-defence and action mandated by the UN Security Council. In his speech on 23 February, Putin points to two grounds on which Russia relies on self-defence – defence in aid of the two breakaway republics and self-defence in the light of threats against Russia itself.

International human rights law remains in effect and continues to apply at all times, including during armed conflict and occupation, to which the laws of war also apply. In some circumstances, a humanitarian law norm may trump a human rights norm, as the *lex specialis*, or the more specific norm for the particular circumstance.

Ukraine and Russia are both parties to a number of regional and international human rights treaties, including the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT). These treaties outline guarantees for fundamental rights, many of which correspond to the rights to which combatants and civilians are entitled under international humanitarian law.

While both the ECHR and the ICCPR permit some restrictions on certain rights during wartime or an officially proclaimed public emergency “threatening the life of the nation,” any reduction in rights during a public emergency must be of an exceptional and temporary nature and must be limited “to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation.” Certain fundamental rights such as the right to life and the right to be secure from torture and other ill-treatment, the prohibition on unacknowledged detention, the duty to ensure judicial review of the lawfulness of detention, and rights to a fair trial must always be respected, even during a public emergency.

HISTORY



Post-Soviet context and Orange Revolution

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1991, Ukraine and Russia maintained close ties. In 1994, Ukraine agreed to accede to the Treaty at the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon state. Former Soviet nuclear guns in Ukraine have been eliminated by Russia and dismantled. In return, Russia, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US) agreed to uphold the territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine via the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances. In 1999, Russia changed into one of the signatories of the Charter for European Security, which "reaffirmed the inherent proper of every and each collaborating State to be loose to select or alternate its safety arrangements, such as treaties of alliance, as they evolve". In the years after the dissolution of the USSR, numerous former Eastern Bloc nations joined NATO, which Russian leaders defined as a contravention of Western powers' assurances that NATO might now no longer increase eastward.

The 2004 Ukrainian presidential election changed into controversial. In November, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich changed into a declared winner, regardless of allegations of vote-rigging via way of means of election observers. The outcomes triggered a public outcry in aid of the competition candidate Viktor Yushchenko, and sizeable non-violent protests challenged the final results in what has become called the Orange Revolution. During the tumultuous months of the revolution, Yushchenko changed into poisoned via way of means of TCDD dioxin; he strongly suspected Russian involvement in his poisoning. After the Supreme Court of Ukraine annulled the preliminary election result, a 2nd spherical rerun changed into held, bringing to energy Yushchenko as president and Yulia Tymoshenko as a top minister and leaving Yanukovich in competition. Russian President Vladimir Putin attended the 2008 Bucharest summit and took part in bilateral NATO–Russia talks indicating that he was adverse to Georgia and Ukraine's NATO club bids. In June 2009, Yanukovich introduced his motive to once more run for president withinside the 2010 Ukrainian presidential election, which he sooner or later won.

The Orange Revolution is regularly grouped collectively with different early-twenty first-century protest movements, mainly withinside the former USSR, called shade revolutions. According to Anthony Cordesman, Russian navy officials considered such shady revolutions as a strive via way of means of the United States and European states to destabilise neighbouring states and undermine Russia's countrywide safety. Putin accused organisers of the 2011–2013 Russian protests of being former advisors to Yushchenko and defined the protests as a try to switch the Orange Revolution to Russia. Rallies in favour of Putin all through this era have been called “anti orange”.

Euromaidan, Revolution of Dignity, and war in Donbas

In November 2013, a wave of massive, pro-European Union (EU) protests erupted in reaction to President Yanukovych's unexpected choice now no longer to signal the EU–Ukraine Association Agreement, rather than deciding on nearer ties to Russia and the Eurasian Economic Union. The Ukrainian parliament had overwhelmingly authorized finalizing the settlement with the EU. Russia had placed stress on Ukraine to reject it. The scope of the protests widened, with protesters opposing big authorities' corruption, police brutality, and repressive anti-protest laws.

In February 2014, clashes in Kyiv among protesters and Berkut unique rebellion police resulted withinside the deaths of a hundred protesters and thirteen policemen; a maximum of the sufferers had been shot via way of means of police snipers. On 21 February 2014, Yanukovych and parliamentary competition leaders signed a settlement calling for interim authorities and early elections. The following day, Yanukovych fled Kyiv after which the country; the Verkhovna Rada, the Ukrainian parliament, voted to remove him from office. Leaders in Russian-speaking Ukraine declared persevering with loyalty to Yanukovych, mainly to pro-Russian unrest. The state-managed Russian media continually portrayed the disaster in Ukraine as having been instigated via way of means of the post-Yanukovych Ukrainian authorities and represented Euromaidan as being managed via way of means of "ultranationalist", "fascist", "neo-Nazi", and "anti-Semitic" groups, with Right Sector a not unusual place theme.

The unrest changed into accompanied by means of the annexation of Crimea via way of means of Russia in March 2014 and the struggle in Donbas, which began out in April 2014 with the formation of Russia-sponsored separatist quasi-states: the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic. Russian troops had been concerned with inside the conflict.

The Minsk agreements had been signed in September 2014 and February 2015 in a bid to forestall the fighting, despite the fact that ceasefires, again and again, failed a dispute emerged over the position of Russia: Normandy Format contributors France, Germany, and Ukraine understood Minsk as a settlement among Russia and Ukraine, while Russia insisted its position changed into that of an impartial mediator, urgent Ukraine to barter at once with representatives of the 2 separatist republics. In 2021, Putin refused gives from Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy for high-degree talks, and the Russian authorities finally recommended an editorial via way of means of former president Dmitry Medvedev arguing it changed into needless to cope with Ukraine at the same time as it remained a "vassal" of the US.

The annexation of Crimea brought about a brand new wave of Russian nationalism, with massive components of the Russian neo-imperial motion intending to annex extra land from Ukraine, which includes the unrecognized Novorossiia. Analyst Vladimir Socor argued that Putin's 2014 speech after the annexation of Crimea changed into a de facto "manifesto of Greater-Russia Irredentism". In July 2021, Putin posted an essay titled On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians, wherein he reaffirmed his view that Russians and Ukrainians had been "one people". American historian Timothy D. Snyder defined Putin's thoughts as imperialism, at the same time as British journalist Edward Lucas known it as ancient revisionism. Other observers seemed to view the Russian management as having a distorted view of present-day Ukraine and its history. Ukraine and different European international locations neighbouring Russia accused Putin of irredentism and of pursuing competitive militaristic policies.

CURRENT SITUATION

From March to April 2021, Russia began a main navy build-up close to the Russo-Ukrainian border, observed through the 2nd build-up between October 2021 to February 2022 in each Russia and Belarus. During those developments, the Russian authorities, again and again, denied it had plans to invade or assault Ukraine;] folks that issued the denials blanketed Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov in November 2021, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov in January 2022, the Russian ambassador to the United States Anatoly Antonov on 20th February 2022, and Russian ambassador to the Czech Republic Alexander Zmievsky on 23th February, 2022.

In early December 2021, following Russian denials, the United States launched intelligence of Russian invasion plans, such as satellite tv for pc images displaying Russian troops and gadgets close to the Ukrainian border. The intelligence stated the life of a Russian listing of key websites and people to be killed or neutralized upon invasion. The US persisted to launch reviews that as should be expected of the invasion plans.



In the months previous to the invasion, Russian officers accused Ukraine of inciting tensions, Russophobia, and the repression of the Russian audio system in Ukraine. They additionally made a couple of protection needs of Ukraine, NATO, and non-NATO allies withinside the EU. These movements had been defined through commentators and Western officers as trying to justify war. On 9th December 2021 Putin stated that "Russophobia is a primary step in the direction of genocide". Putin's claims had been brushed off through the global community, and Russian claims of genocide were extensively rejected as baseless.

In a 21 February speech, Putin puzzled the legitimacy of the Ukrainian state, repeating a faulty declaration that "Ukraine in no way had a subculture of true statehood". He incorrectly defined the united states as having been created through Soviet Russia. To justify an invasion, Putin falsely accused Ukrainian society and authorities of being ruled through neo-Nazism, invoking the records of collaboration in German-occupied Ukraine for the duration of World War II, and echoing an antisemitic conspiracy principle which casts Russian Christians, in preference to Jews, because of the authentic sufferers of Nazi Germany.

While Ukraine has a far-proper fringe, along with the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion and Right Sector, analysts have defined Putin's rhetoric as significantly exaggerating the have an impact on of far-proper agencies inside Ukraine; there may be no large assist for the ideology withinside the authorities, army, or electorate. Ukrainian president Zelenskyy, who's Jewish, said that his grandfather served withinside the Soviet navy combating in opposition to the Nazis; 3 of his own circle of relatives participants died withinside the Holocaust.

During the second build-up, Russia issued a need to America and NATO, along with that a legally binding association be agreed to stop Ukraine from ever becoming a member of NATO, and that there be a discount in NATO forces stationed in Eastern Europe. Russia threatened an unspecified army reaction if NATO endured complying with a "competitive line". These needs had been in large part interpreted as being non-viable; new NATO participants had joined due to the fact their populations widely favoured transport in the direction of the protection and monetary possibilities provided through NATO and the EU, and far from Russia. The call for a proper treaty stopping Ukraine from becoming a member of NATO became additionally visible as unviable through Western officers as it'd contravene the treaty's "open door" policy, even though NATO confirmed no choice to accede to Ukraine's requests to join.

Fighting in Donbas escalated appreciably from 17th February 2022 onwards. The Ukrainians and the Russian separatists always accused the alternative of firing into their territory. On 18 February, the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics ordered obligatory emergency evacuations of civilians from their respective capital cities, even though observers mentioned that complete evacuations could take months.

Ukrainian media mentioned a pointy growth in artillery shelling via the means of the Russian-led militants in Donbas as it tries to initiate the Ukrainian military. On 21 February, Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) stated that Ukrainian shelling had destroyed an FSB border facility a hundred and fifty metres from the Russia-Ukraine border in Rostov Oblast. On 21th February, the Russians stated that they'd killed a set of 5 saboteurs that morning that had penetrated the border from Ukraine. Ukraine denied being concerned and referred to it as a false flag operation. Several analysts, including the investigative internet site Bellingcat, posted proof that among the claimed attacks, explosions, and evacuations in Donbas have been staged via the means of Russia.

On 21 February Putin introduced that the Russian authorities could diplomatically apprehend the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics. The equal night Putin directed that Russian troops be deployed into Donbas, in what Russia called a "peacekeeping mission". The 21 February intervention in Donbas changed into condemned via way of means of numerous individuals of the UN Security Council; none voiced a guide for it. On 22 February the Federation Council unanimously permitted Putin to apply navy pressure outdoor Russia. In response, Zelenskyy ordered the conscription of military reservists; the subsequent day, the country's parliament proclaimed a 30-day national nation of emergency and ordered the mobilisation of all reservists. Meanwhile, Russia started to evacuate its embassy in Kyiv. The websites of the Ukrainian parliament and authorities, alongside banking websites, have been hit by way of means of DDoS attacks, extensively attributed to Russian-sponsored hackers.

ACTIONS TOWARDS PEACE AND IMPACTS



The Russian censorship equipment Roskomnadzor ordered the country's media to best hire records from the Russian nation reasserts or face fines and blocks, accusing some of the impartial media shops of spreading "unreliable socially massive unfaithful records" approximately the shelling of Ukrainian towns via way of means of the Russian navy and civilian deaths. The Russian authorities have prevented regarding those activities as a battle or an invasion, and Roskomnadzor requested media corporations to explain the battle as a "unique army operation" (Russian: специальная военная операция, romanized: spetsial'naya voyennaya operatsiya), in step with Putin's speech to the kingdom on 24th February 2022:



'In this regard, according with Article fifty-one of Part 7 of the UN Charter, with the approval of the Federation Council of Russia and in pursuance of the treaties of friendship and mutual help ratified via way of means of the Duma on February 22 with the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, I determined to release a unique army operation.'

— Vladimir Putin —



Stories that describe the Russian invasion of Ukraine as an "assault", "invasion", or an "assertion of battle" were ordered to be deleted via way of means of the Russian authorities. Roskomnadzor released research in opposition to the Novaya Gazeta, Echo of Moscow, inoSMI, MediaZona, New Times, Dozhd (TV Rain), and different Russian media shops for publishing "faulty records approximately the shelling of Ukrainian towns and civilian casualties in Ukraine due to the moves of the Russian Army". Pro-Kremlin TV and radio host Vladimir Solovyov voiced assistance for his country's invasion of Ukraine.

Russian nation-managed media, consisting of Russia-24, Russia-1, and Channel One, and pro-Kremlin TV pundits like Vladimir Solovyov by and large observed the authorities' narrative at the battle. RT, a Russian nation-managed tv network, changed into banned in Poland and suspended via way of means of tv provider companies in Australia, Canada, and Gibraltar. Many RT newshounds resigned from RT following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. On 25 February, the hacking collective Anonymous performed disburged denial-of-provider (DDoS) assaults at the RT internet site, in addition to at the internet site of the Russian Ministry of Defence.

On 25 February, Russia introduced that it changed into proscribing to get entry to Facebook; Russia's Foreign Ministry and the Prosecutor General's workplace introduced that Facebook changed into violating the rights of Russian citizens. The organization said it had refused a Russian call to prevent fact-checking the posts made via way of means of 4 nation-owned media organisations: Zvezda, RIA Novosti, Lenta.ru, and Gazeta.Ru. On 26 February, Facebook announced that it'd ban Russian nation media from marketing and marketing and monetising content material on its platform and Russia decided to restrict entry to Twitter. On an identical day, RIA Novosti posted after which took down a piece of writing incorrectly announcing that Russia had gained the Russo-Ukrainian War and that "Ukraine has again to Russia"; the thing declared a "new international order" with "Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, performing in geopolitical phrases as an unmarried whole" to counter the relaxation of Europe. Facebook exposed a Russian disinformation marketing campaign the usage of faux debts and tries to hack the debts of high-profile Ukrainians, which can be used to unfold incorrect information to big numbers of followers.

On 28 February, Russian instructors obtained distinctive commands on how to speak to college students about the invasion of Ukraine. The Mayakovsky Theatre in Moscow obtained a central authority email "to chorus from any remarks at the direction of army moves in Ukraine", caution that any poor remarks could be "seemed as treason in opposition to the Motherland".According to a ballot via way of means of the Kremlin-funded VTsIOM, posted on 28 February,68% of surveyed Russians supported a "unique operation in Ukraine", 22% antagonistic it, and 10% observed it tough to answer.

Some observers cited what they defined as a "generational struggle" amongst Russians over the belief of the battle, with more youthful Russians typically against the battle and older Russians much more likely to just accept the narrative offered via way of means of nation-managed mass media in Russia. Kataryna Wolczuk, a companion fellow of Chatham House's Russia and Eurasia Programme, said: "[Older] Russians are willing to suppose in step with the official 'narrative' that Russia is protecting Russian audio system in Ukraine, so it is approximately providing safety as opposed to aggression." Many Ukrainians say that their spouse and children and buddies in Russia consider what the nation-managed media tells them and refuse to agree that there's a battle in Ukraine and that the Russian navy is shelling Ukrainian towns.

Sanctions

Western countries and others began imposing limited sanctions on Russia when it recognised the independence of Donbas. With the commencement of attacks on 24 February, a large number of other countries began applying sanctions with the aim of crippling the Russian economy. The sanctions were wide-ranging, targeting individuals, banks, businesses, monetary exchanges, bank transfers, exports, and imports.

Nord Stream, a natural gas pipeline, runs under the Baltic Sea, bypassing Ukraine. Germany imports 50% to 75% of its natural gas from Russia. Nord Stream 2 would have doubled the annual capacity of Nord Stream to 110 billion m³.

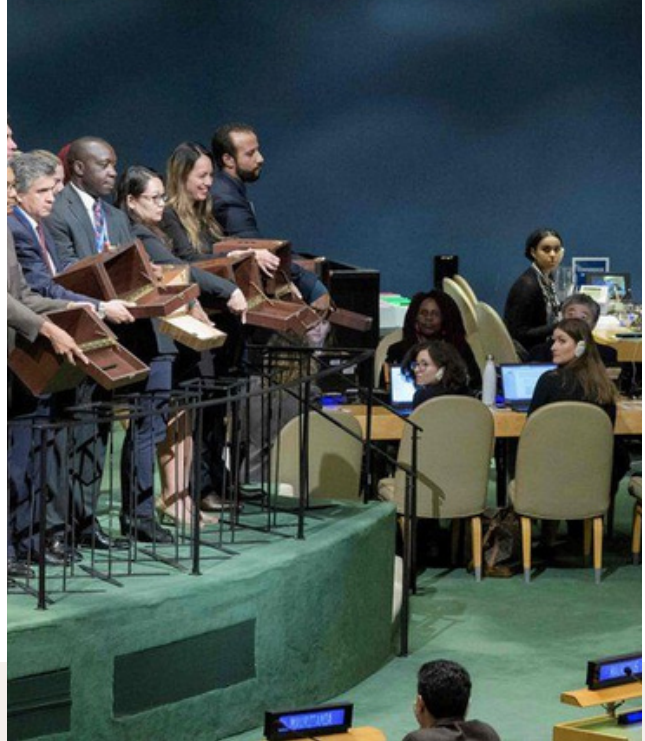
The sanctions included cutting off major Russian banks from SWIFT, the global messaging network for international payments, although there would still be limited access to ensure the continued ability to pay for gas shipments. Sanctions also included asset freezes on the Russian Central Bank, which holds \$630 billion in foreign-exchange reserves, to prevent it from offsetting the impact of sanctions and implicated the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. By 1st March, the total amount of Russian assets being frozen by sanctions amounted to \$1 trillion.

Several countries that are historically neutral, such as Switzerland and Singapore, have agreed to sanctions. Some countries also applied sanctions to Belarusian organisations and individuals, such as president Alexander Lukashenko, because of Belarus' involvement in the invasion.

On 27 February, Putin responded to the sanctions, and to what he called "aggressive statements" by Western governments, by ordering the country's "deterrence forces"—generally understood to include its nuclear forces—to be put on a "special regime of combat duty". This novel term provoked some confusion as to what exactly was changing, but US officials declared it generally "escalatory".

Following sanctions and criticisms of their relations with Russian business, a boycott movement began and many companies and organisations chose to exit Russian or Belarusian markets voluntarily. The boycotts impacted many consumer goods, entertainment, education, technology, and sporting organisations.

The US instituted export controls, a novel sanction focused on restricting Russian access to high-tech components, both hardware and software, made with any parts or intellectual property from the US. The sanction required that any person or company that wanted to sell technology, semiconductors, encryption software, lasers, or sensors to Russia request a licence, which by default was denied. The enforcement mechanism involved sanctions against the person or company, with the sanctions focused on the shipbuilding, aerospace, and defence industries.



Airspace

Countries that have banned Russian aircraft from their airspace in response to the invasion of Russian airlines and private flights, with the exception of certain permitted flights such as those made for humanitarian reasons, were banned from national airspaces in the EU, UK, and the US. Russia responded by banning several countries from its airspace. On 25th February, US carrier Delta Air Lines announced that it was suspending ties with Aeroflot.

Economic impact

Kristalina Georgieva, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, warned that the conflict posed a substantial economic risk for the region and internationally. She added that the Fund could help other countries impacted by the conflict, complementary to a \$2.2 billion loan package being prepared to assist Ukraine. David Malpass, the president of the World Bank Group, said that the conflict would have far-reaching economic and social effects, and reported that the bank was preparing options for significant economic and fiscal support to Ukrainians and the region.

Despite unprecedented international sanctions against Russia, payments for energy raw materials were largely spared from these measures, as were food supplies because of the potential impact on world food prices. Russia and Ukraine are major producers of wheat that are exported through the Bosphorus to the Mediterranean and North African countries. The expulsion of some Russian banks from SWIFT is expected to affect the country's exports. Due to the fact that Russia is the largest trading and economic partner for post-Soviet states in Central Asia and a major destination for millions of CIS's migrant workers, Central Asia has been particularly hard hit by sanctions against Russia.

Organizations

United Nations

- On 23rd February, UN Secretary-General António Guterres entreated Russia to right now stop aggression in Ukraine.
- On 25 February, Russia vetoed a UN Security Council draft decision "deploring, withinside the most powerful terms, the Russian Federation's aggression", as expected. Eleven nations voted in favour whilst China, India, and the United Arab Emirates abstained. The UN Security Council voted to maintain an emergency unique consultation of the UN General Assembly to vote on a comparable decision, which turned into convened on 28 February. On 2 March, the UN General Assembly voted 141–five to call for Russia to prevent the battle and withdraw all of its army forces; 35 nations abstained, which includes Algeria, Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan, and South Africa, whilst Belarus, Eritrea, North Korea, and Syria have been Russia's sole supporters. Russia's UN consultant stated that the adoption of the decision may want to gas in addition to violence.
- During an assembly of the UN Human Rights Council on 1 March, over a hundred diplomats walked out in protest over a speech via way of means of Russian overseas minister Sergei Lavrov.

NATO

- Many NATO member states in Eastern Europe induced safety consultations beneath neath Article 4. The Estonian authorities issued an announcement with the aid of using Prime Minister Kaja Kallas saying: "Russia's great aggression is a hazard to the whole international and to all NATO countries, and NATO consultations on strengthening the safety of the Allies have to be initiated to put in force extra measures for making sure the defence of NATO Allies. The handiest reaction to Russia's aggression is unity." On 24th February, Stoltenberg introduced new plans that "will allow us to installation competencies and forces, together with the NATO Response Force, to wherein they may be needed". Following the invasion, NATO introduced plans to boom navy deployments withinside the Baltics, Poland, and Romania.

European Union

- On 27th February, European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen announced that the EU would ban Russian state-owned media outlets RT and Sputnik in response to disinformation and their coverage of the conflict in Ukraine. She also said that the EU would finance the purchase and delivery of military equipment to Ukraine and proposed a ban on Russian aircraft using EU airspace.

CONCLUSION

The ongoing Russo-Ukrainian War has killed greater than 13,000 people and has led to numerous Western sanctions on Russia. In 2019, amendments have been made to the Constitution of Ukraine, which enshrined the irreversibility of the country's strategic path in the direction of EU and NATO membership.

Therefore, it is time for our delegates to take a step forward, learn from the successes and failures of their predecessors, create solutions.

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