

RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE, VALUES OF UNITED NATIONS AND CAUTIOUS APPROACH OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY: THE NUCLEAR ARMS FACTOR

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Abstract: The idea of every war is usually sparked by action, inaction of someone or encouragement of a state of affairs, nurtured by the pride or vultuous ambition of players in the events leading to the war. The avoidable but now catastrophic war in Ukraine is not any different but its wild consequences, including annexation of some Ukrainian Regions, war crimes and crimes against humanity, along with threat of deployment of Nuclear weapons in the C21st called for interrogation in this paper. Using doctrinal approach, the paper examined rhetorics of all sides to this conflict from the background of values of the United Nations and inability of the United Nations to engage in proactive measures to arrest the ugly trend, and decried situation where world powers denigrate values of the United Nations where their national interests are involved and thus recommended that these endorsed values require a review. The paper noted that with the commitment of America and its allies to decimate Russian Political influence and with Putin's determination to stay afloat despite enormity of his antagonists, it now takes intervention of a man with tall credentials to bring parties involved, both real and proxy, together, for a dialogue. The paper thus recommended that with existential threat to humanity by this war, both sides and their allies should bury the hatchet to ensure painful compromises for peace, while the world returned to the drawing board to reassess the structure and values of the United Nations, along with the future of Nuclear arms, to reflect contemporary realities.

Keywords: Invasion of Ukraine, Values of United Nations, Cautious Approach, International Community; and Nuclear arms.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every war is an avoidable miscalculation arising from self pride of any two stakeholders to a disagreement, inflamed by selfish activists around the stakeholders. It is a product of pride of two individuals, inflamed by some selfish individuals with selfish motives, depriving them of self-control, bereaved of implication of how their selfish decisions may affect the general public, after all.¹ War is like wild fire; it is ignited by a spark of fire demanding tones water to quench it after leaving

behind trails of losses upon the innocent. A lot of the times, the fire of war is not put out by the individuals that ignite it, either because they themselves are consumed by the war or because impact of the war has nurtured more active voices they see differently from the perspective of starters and sponsors of the war.² This also is the picture of Russian invasion of Ukraine, with the unfolding events that seem to be creating ungovernable impact that stakeholders of the war, the United Nations and even non-aligned groups and Nations hardly know how to arrest as at today.

Although the cold war ended, not on the note of any peaceful resolution around the table but events that followed, including disintegration of the USSR, the deep-seated animosity between Russia and America as the major players of that war has never ended.³ While America adopted NATO as its arrow-head with which to clip the wings of Russia as emerging relics of USSR but Putin, as an emerging power, with venomous regrets against perceived architects of the fall of USSR has been seeking alliance in perceived opposition to America with unlimited ambition, which alliance Putin has found in China, North Korea and Iran.

Over the years, it has been apparent that Putin's ambition has been how to build a Russia that can stand up to American influence in all regions of the world, by building all kinds of arsenal by which Russia could be revered and given a pride of place in international politics.⁴ In pursuit of this dream, Putin hardly thought about carrying along his immediate next door neighbours. Instead, he resorted to measures designed to weaken them, creating ideological and imperialist puppets out of them without thinking ahead, that these surrogate States may seek solution to their vulnerability in NATO, the arrow-head of America. Way back about a decade ago, some Nationalist sentiments began to grow in Ukraine that made Ukrainians look for self-determination outside Moscow, which aspirations resulted in an uprising against the then Ukrainian Pro-Russian President, with consequent replacement by a Pro-American President.⁵ By this, the seed of discord and mutual suspicion was sown between America and Russia that Snow-Ball into the Donbas civil war between the Pro-Russia separatists and Ukraine government in 2014.⁶ The cease fire that followed already damaged Ukraine's national integrity as Russia annexed Donbas, the Russian speaking part of Ukraine.

The current war that threatens to escalate into a world war came on the heels of Ukraine's declarations of intention to join NATO alliance, as a measure to secure her National Integrity against Putin's regime that Ukraine sees as an imperialist that will stop at nothing to make Ukraine a bulwark to Russian security in the immediate neighbourhood.⁷ Reaction of America and its allies and Putin's resistance of the entire build up is what has brought the world to the point of threat of another Nuclear war today.

In this article, the author seeks to address several questions, including why ideals of the United Nations seem to fail in this war; why United Nations and its Security Council seem to remain on the side-line in an engagement that threatens aspirations of the founding Fathers of the United Nations; the role of nuclear weapon in the build-up to this war and its place in determining outcome of this war; the feasibility of slowing momentum of this war; who would de-trigger the war and how. These questions and several others, especially as to why International Community has not been able to stop Putin

¹ M. N. Alhassan "The conflict in Sudan: Between Personal Agenda and External Intervention" Sourced at arab-reform.net/public on 24-07-2023; P. Smith, "Warring Generals and Western Interests: Here's what to know about the Bloody Battle for power in Sudan" nbcnews.com on 24-07-2023

² K. Al-Anani; "The Sudan crisis: How Regional Actors' Competing interests Fuel the Conflict" Sourced at arabcenterdc.org/resot accessed on 24-07-2023

³ Kinnu, "Consequences and Legacy: how the Cold War has influenced the Modern World" Sourced at <https://kinnu.xyz> on 24-07-2023

⁴ N. Melvin, "Nationalist and Imperial Thinking Define Putin's vision for Russia" Sourced at <https://europeanstudies.macmillan.yale.edu> on 24-07-2023

⁵ J.J Mearsheimer, "The Causes and Consequences of the Ukraine War" Sourced at <https://nationalinteret.org> accessed on 24-07-2023.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

even when his exploits drive the world into apprehension of Nuclear war is a question that must of necessity lead us to the issue of Nuclear arms and their deterrent effects, later in this paper.

Conceptual Clarifications

Operative words and concepts that call for clarification in this work are values of United Nations and Nuclear Arms Factors. However, to avoid verbosity, since the issue of values of the United Nations as endorsed in the United Nations Charter will be central to our discourse subsequently, the author has elected to shelve its clarification as part of the main body of discussion in this work. In any case, to bring the issue of Nuclear Arms within perspective, let us at this point clarify its import within the context of this work, albeit, briefly.

Nuclear Arms

Nuclear weapon is a device designed to release energy in an explosive manner, arising from fission or a combination of two processes. Made of several *Kilotons* and *Megatons* with enriched Uranium, its blast energy, compared to equivalent weight of conventional chemical explosive is enormous.⁸ Its explosion produces shock wave, enormous amount of heat and lethal ionizing radiation.⁹ Indeed, the lesser replication of modern nuclear weapon, containing only some 64kg of highly enriched uranium dropped by America on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan in 1945, released destructive energy of about *15 kilotons* of chemical explosives that drew dust and other debris into the air, creating mushroom shaped cloud that resulted in death, injury and sickness on a scale never experienced in any war, in human history.¹⁰ In recent years, more destructive versions have been developed, including nuclear weapon delivered by aircraft and the strategic ballistic versions, artillery projectiles, land mines, anti sub-marine depth charges, torpedoes and shorter-range ballistic and cruise missiles, all of which could be fitted with nuclear warheads.¹¹ Indeed, nuclear plant accident of this contemporary version has been known to release dangerous levels of radiations over long range areas, to the point that its fume-dust can settle and contaminate people outdoors, buildings, food, water and livestock. Where people within the plume environment breathe air of the radioactive substance or eat or drink from the contaminated product, they could experience short-term and long-term health effects, including cancer.¹²

The Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster in Ukraine in 1986 which released more than 5,300 Peter Becquerel of radioactive materials and Japan's Fukushima Nuclear disaster of 2011 which released 520 Peter Becquerel are the most recent ugly experience that attest to the horrendous accident of Nuclear installations and weapons.¹³ This is what has influenced international community to establish several checks and monitoring agencies through treaties overseen by *International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)*.¹⁴ Indeed, the generalized nuclear anxiety and anxiety disorder from the thought of possible deployment of nuclear weapon in the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been so immeasurable, apparently informing courteous intervention by various world powers, including nuclear powers all over the world.

⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "What is Nuclear Weapon" Sourced at <https://www.cdc.gov/infographics> accessed on 24-07-2023; T.B Codram, *et al*, "Nuclear Weapon, History, Facts, Types, Countries, blast Radius" Sourced at <https://www.britanica.com/...nucle,> accessed on 24-07-2023

⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁰ R.Wolfson; F. Dalnoki-verses, "The Devastating Effects of Nuclear Weapons" Sourced at <https://www.atomicarchive.com/ef...> accessed on 24-07-2023

¹¹ ICAN, "How Destructive are Today's Nuclear Weapons?" <https://comw.org/how-destr..> accessed on 24-07-2023

¹² CDC, "Nuclear Power Plant Accidents Chemical Radiation" Sourced www.cdc.org/multimedia/infographics accessed on 14-07-2023

¹³ A. Konoplev, "Fukushima and Chernobyl: Similarities and Differences of Radiocesium Behaviour in the Soil, Water Environment" Sourced at www.ncbi.nih.gov/pmc/9608664 accessed on 18-06-2023

¹⁴ J.A.B Jibson, "History of the International Atomic Energy Agency: the First Forty Years" Sourced at iopscience.org/article accessed on 12-07-2023

Behind the Scene

The root of all existential threats to humanity must always be traceable to something, somewhere; somebody somewhere, and the Russia invasion of Ukraine is not any different. Looking at the events of February 2022, Putin's Russia may be adjudged as the aggressor, but before we seal up that conclusion, it is instructive to look at events behind the scene that culminated in outbreak of the war.

It appeared that the mutual suspicion between America and its allied Western Nations as against Russia's existential interest was more to blame for the ugly situations in Ukraine today, which neither side can now arrest. The most immediate of these political miscalculations date back to April 2008, when NATO Alliance expressed the dream of integrating Georgia and Ukraine, two Russian neighbours into NATO Membership.¹⁵ Perceiving such move as part of antics of America and its Western allies to birth a new generation of Pro-Western democracies under Russia's nose, it was obvious that Putin would not accept such development. As it were, this projection fueled mutual suspicion between the America-Western block and Russia, as Putin swore that any such ambition must exclude Crimea, Donbas and other Russian speaking areas, West of Ukraine.¹⁶

Emphazing the danger-signal this trend portended, William Burns, the then United States Ambassador to Moscow said:

*Ukraine's entry into NATO is the brightest of all red lines for the Russian elite (not just Putin) in more than two and a half years of conversations with key Russian players, from knowledge-draggers in the dark recesses of the Kremlin to Putin's sharpest liberal critics, I have yet to find anyone who views Ukraine in NATO as anything other than a direct challenge to Russian interest.*¹⁷

Indeed, as the Ambassador projected, entry of NATO by Ukraine would be seen by Russia as throwing down the strategic gauntlet, resulting in Russian-Ukrainian relations going into deep freeze, and fertile soil for Russian meddling in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. No wonder, Angela Merkel, the then German Chancellor in her opposition to the move, saw it as "a declaration of war" against Putin's Russia.¹⁸

As it turned out, Russia's reaction to Georgia's membership of NATO resulted in war between Georgia and Russia, as sufficient warning that a more volatile situation could ensue if Ukraine, the closest Russian Neighbour dared the move of joining NATO or any form of close alliance with the West.¹⁹ Despite this ugly development, America and her NATO allies resorted to sponsoring an uprising against Viktor Yanukonyeh the Pro-Russian President, replacing him with Arseniy Yatsenyuk, a Pro-American Prime Minister.²⁰ Russia's immediate response was to seize Crimea and then fueled a civil war between Pro-Russian Separatists and Ukrainian government in the Donbas Region of Ukraine, a Russia-dominated region in Ukraine.²¹

Although NATO and America seemed to double-down on their quest to integrate Ukraine into NATO after this initial crisis but NATO and its American driver resorted to training and equipping a stronger army for Ukraine, in the events leading to the final outbreak of Ukrainian invasion by Russia in February 2022.²² In what looked like further provocation for Russia,

¹⁵ Mearsheimer, *Op.cit.*

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁹ P. Dickinson, "The 2008 Russo-Georgia warn: Putin's Green Light" Sourced at www.atlaticConnil.org.ukrainealert accessed on 14-04-2023

²⁰ M Fisher, "Everything You Need to Know about the 2014 Ukraine crisis" <https://www.vox.com>2014>ukra...> accessed on 27-07-2023

²¹ Mearsheimer, *op.cit*

²² Associated Press, "Expend U.S Training for Ukraine forces Begins in Germany" Sourced at www.npr.org>2023/01/16>expanded accessed on 12-02-2022

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America held regular joint Military drills with Ukraine, with obvious complicity by NATO.²³ These, no doubt, account for initial sustainability of Ukrainian army at the beginning of Russian invasion in 2022.

It would be recalled that President Zelensky came to power in March 2019, upon a promise of working towards amicable resolutions of all crisis with Russia but no sooner had he ascended the reins of power than he reneged on that promise and resorted to several anti-Russian measures, including greater stride towards joining NATO.²⁴ In the height of the crisis, instead of managing the already deteriorating situation, NATO declared:

*We reiterate the decision made at the 2008 Bucharest Summit that Ukraine will become a member of the alliance with the Membership Action Plan (MAP) as an integral part of the process; we reaffirm all elements of that decision, as well as subsequent decisions, including that each person will be judged on its own merits. We stand firm in our support for Ukraine's right to decide its own future and foreign policy course, free from outside interference.*²⁵

Following this, when Biden, a man with long standing super hawk attitude towards Russia ascended the American Presidency in January, 2021, Blinken, his Secretary of State signed what they referred to as "US-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership", underscoring a commitment to ensure reforms necessary for full integration of Ukraine into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions.²⁶

In response to these expansionist antics of America, Putin resorted to beefing up the number of Russian troops on Ukraine Boarder, along with demands on both NATO and Joe Biden's America, for written guarantee that Ukraine would not join NATO; that no *offensive weapon* would be stationed near Russian boarder; and that NATO troops and equipment stationed in Eastern Europe be moved to the West²⁷. Since these demands, apparently sounded too extreme and dictatorial, neither NATO, nor America responded favourably.

While Putin's position seemed to align with the *Monroe Doctrine*²⁸ against distant powers stationing their forces in the Western Hemisphere but the main questions this author demands answer to are: why Russia insists on weak neighbours, and whether there is room for violent annexation of any part of territory of member States of the United Nations for whatever reason. Looking at the United Nations Charter intently, as we will do later, it is obvious that amicable resolution of disputes is central to the aspirations of the Union but whether in existential situation, a particular member State could resort to such level of violence as to occupy and permanently annex territory of member states is an issue that is not condoned, either under United Nations Charter or all the Treaties and Protocols of International Laws. For clarity, let us make an excursion into specific provisions of the United Nations Charter in this behalf

UN in the Build-Up

The ugly consequence of man's inhumanity to man arising from the way the Second World War was prosecuted definitely played into the long standing philosophical principle of human rights as a nature-endowed, imprescriptible and indivisible right.²⁹ The atrocities of Nazi Germany and the beastly horror of the regime during the war directed attention to the nexus between outrageous behavior of a government towards its own citizens and aggression against other nations of the world.³⁰

²³ *Ibid*

²⁴ C. Miller, "Zelensky's First Year: He Promised Sweeping Changes: How's he Doing?" Sourced at www.rjal.org> Zelenskys-first-years-he.> accessed on 04-08-2022

²⁵ B. Sullivan, "How NATO's Expansion Helped Drive Putin to Invade Ukraine" Sourced at www.npr.org>2022/01/29>ukraine-rus...> accessed on 06-12-2022

²⁶ State Department, "U.S-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership" Sourced at <https://ua.usembassy.gov>>u-s-ukra... accessed on 24-07-2023

²⁷ A. Roth, "Russia Issues List of Demands it Says Must be Met to Lower Tension in Europe" Sourced at www.theguardian.com>work>dec>r..> accessed on 14-07-2022

²⁸ National Archive, "Monroe Doctrine (1823)" Sourced at www.archives.gov>milestone-document> accessed on 24-07-2023

²⁹ O.N. Ogbu, *Human Rights Law and Practice in Nigeria: An Introduction* (CIDJAP, 1999)36.

³⁰ L. Oppenheim, *International Law: A Treaties* (Longman Group, 1970) 737; Ogbu, *op.cit* at 35

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It brought to the fore, the need for effective protection of human rights as an essential condition for international peace and progress, stressing that as long as human rights were respected, democracy was secured and danger of dictatorship and war was remote.³¹ It was in pursuit of this that the UN Charter imposed obligations on member States to universally guarantee and encourage the protection of human rights, in fulfillment of the ideals for which the Allied Powers went to war.³² That was why the UN Charter took a stride in reaffirming faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person; in the *equality of rights of men and women and the nations, large or small*, as part of the measure for promoting human rights for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.³³

In further pursuit of human rights and world peace, the Charter also mandated the UN General Assembly to “initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose of ... assisting in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms”.³⁴ This philosophy informed the preamble of the United Nations Charter stating that:

We the Peoples of the United Nations Determined

To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish condition under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treatise and other sources of International Law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom

And For These Ends

To practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure by the acceptance of principles and institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

In pursuit of this philosophy, Article 1 of the Charter provides that:

The purpose of the United Nations are:

1. *To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and which might lead to breach of the peace;*
2. *To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;*
3. *To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and*
4. *To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.*

From the layout thus far, it is apparent that the United Nations is presumably the body that binds all member States together, all over the world, and has so done since 1945 following end the of the second world war. Apart from other agencies of the body, we have the General Assembly and the Security Council, both of which perform different functions towards the same end, all the same. While the General Assembly as representatives of all member States could pass non-binding resolution

31 See Preamble to the Charter. See also Ogbu, *op.cit* at 36

32 Article 1(3) of the United Nations Charter (hereinafter referred to as, UN charter)

33Ibid

34 Arts 13(b) and 55(c), UN Charter

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but the Security Council, as the enforcement organ of the United Nations can pass binding resolutions.³⁵ Unfortunately, by the way the instrument creating the Security Council was crafted; all her resolutions must be unanimous to command respect.³⁶ What this means is that even where the culprit is a permanent member of the Council, it must concur with whatever resolution other members of the Council would pass, for such resolution to be sustained. Where such a member declines to concur, it exercises its veto power to frustrate the resolution.³⁷

This unwholesome provision of the Charter, designed to ensure unanimity has been misused and abused over the years thus frustrating effort of the Council to take pro-active measure against acts of aggression of members of the Council or their Cronies against international law. This provision has virtually polarized membership of the United Nations along ideological lines so that no matter how culpable a particular member State of the United Nations may be, it is usually protected by the member of Security Council to which she pledges allegiance. This is why all resolutions of the United Nations against some Nations that abuse human rights never pass.³⁸

No matter the case, basic principles of all domestic and International Law demand that in the present Ukrainian scenario, whether for existential reason or for self-pride of Putin or some other clandestine purpose, it is obvious that where International Laws, including the UN Charter, the Human Right Charter and other Treaties and Protocols have been breached, demanding that justice should take its course, the law should not be a respecter of person. Quite unfortunately however, despite the UN Human Right Commission's cry of enormous instances of war crimes and crimes against humanity, Russia has continued to bombard civilian population, without a single UNSC resolution condemning such beastly acts.³⁹ More unfortunately, as it is, end of the war is not in sight.

As it is, the issue of equality of member States of the United Nations remains a paradox that exists only on paper rather than in practice; as can be seen from attitude of the so-called world powers against the poor or weak nations of the world in times of crisis. For instance, in the Ukrainian war, if equality of Nations is central to the ideals of United Nations, then the basis for the war in Ukraine and all rhetorics of Russia over a sovereign State decision to join an alliance remains to be seen. From his several utterances, Putin presented Ukraine's joinder of NATO as an existential one for Russia. For instance, in Putin's address to the Russian Defence Ministry in December 2021, he queried:

*What they are doing, or trying or planning to do in Ukraine, is not happening thousands of Kilometers away from our National Boarder, it's on the doorstep of our home. They must understand that we simply have nowhere further to retreat to. Do they really think we do not see these threats? Or do they think that we will just stand idly watching threat to Russia emerge?*⁴⁰

Indeed, in several public *fori*, including a few days before his invasion of Ukraine, Putin categorically declared:

*We are categorically opposed to Ukraine joining NATO because this poses a threat to us and we have argument to support this. I have repeatedly spoken about it in this hall.*⁴¹

³⁵Council On Foreign Relations, "The Role of the UN General Assembly" Sourced at www.cfr.org/org/backgrander/un-genor... accessed on 25-07-2023; A. Camus, "Security Council of the UN" Sourced at [guide-humanitarian-law.org>article>se..](http://guide-humanitarian-law.org/article>se..) accessed on 25-07-2023

³⁶Chapter 4 of the United Nations Charter

³⁷ DAG Library, "UN Membership-UN Research Guides" Sourced at research.un.org/unmember>scmembers accessed on 14-06-2023

³⁸ As in the inability of the Council to pass binding resolutions on the genocidal war in Syria and condemnation of Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia for the murder of Khashoggi

³⁹ As in the case of Myamer: as in the case of Russian aggression Against Georgia, and now, Ukraine

⁴⁰Kremlin News, "Expanded Meeting of the Defence Ministry Board" Sourced at en.kremlin.ru/events/president/new accessed on 27-07-2023

⁴¹ A. Taylor, "That Time Ukraine Tried to Join NATO" Sourced at www.washingtonpost.com/2014/0904 accessed on 27-07-2023; J. Sommeriad, "Why Does Russia Want to Block Ukraine From Joining NATO?" Sourced www.independent.co.uk/world/europe accessed on 27-07-2023

Incidentally, Putin neither declared how Ukraine's joinder "Poses a threat to us" nor "argument to support this". For the much we know from the ideals of NATO and its trend of practice, it has never been an alliance of aggression but of defence thus calling to question the paranoiac disposition of Putin against NATO. Indeed, the Russian leader was an invited guest to the April 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, showing that the alliance has never been antagonistic against Russia⁴² This is why we think Putin's attitude tends to lend credence to the school of thought that he has always nursed Imperial ambition towards Ukraine and all the other weak neighbours, with the dream of creating a grater Russia. That, in our view is suggestive of why America and the West do not believe his contradictory rhetorics that he believes in the sovereignty of Ukraine in one breath and his opposition to Ukraine's quest to determine its own fate as a sovereign State, with properly defined International boundaries, recognized under International Law, on the other

Indeed, Putin in some instances declared that "modern Ukraine was entirely created by Russia, or to be more precise, by Bolshevik Communists Russia" and regarding Ukraine's independence, he said "of course, but we must, at least admit them openly and honestly"⁴³ On some other occasions, he regrettably referred to Ukraine as an "artificial State"⁴⁴. Speaking on the collapse of the Soviet Union as "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century" and that "whoever does not miss the Soviet Union has no heart and whoever does not want it back has no brain"⁴⁵ seem to point to Putin's nostalgia in harnessing all his weak neighbouring States into a greater Russia of his dream, in the C21st.

Here, it appears that Putin refused to be guided by history, especially in this age of Nationalism. As Mearsheimer put it:

Putin and other Russian leaders (should) understand from the cold war that occupying countries in the age of Nationalism is invariably a prescription for a never ending trouble. The Soviet experience in Afghanistan is a slaving example of this phenomenon. The Soviet Union put down a major insurrection in East Germany in 1953, and then invaded Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 to keep their line. There was serious trouble in Poland in 1956, 1970 and again, in 1980-1988. Although Polish authorities dealt with these events, they serve as a reminder that intervention might be necessary but must be handled with care; thus informing why even when in later years, Albania, Romania and Yugoslavia routinely caused Mosco trouble, but Soviet Leaders tended to tolerate their misbehaviours⁴⁶

No wonder, in Putin's July 12, 2021 Essay, he stressed how much he understood that from the civil war in Donbas in 2014, it was obvious that Ukrainian Nationalism was a powerful force, doing so much damage to Russian-Ukraine relations⁴⁷. Such understanding should have put Putin on the path of caution that it would be a herculean task to subjugate Ukraine. As it is, it were better if Putin had seen that NATO's enlargement all along, from the framework of intention, not just to contain Russia's threat *per se*, but part of a broader policy to spread the liberal order of the world; towards the dream of a single Europe; instead of perception of antagonism

The Nuclear Arms Factor

Less than two years into the Ukrainian War, three self established facts are identifiable. These include

- a. That the United Nations, its Security Council in particular has failed the people of Ukraine primarily, and the non-nuclear Nations of the world, in general.
- b. That Ukraine war has virtually turned proxy, between Russia, China, Iran and North Korea along with their other background cronies on the one hand and Ukraine, America, NATO, the European Union and their allies, on the other hand

⁴² S. Enlarger, "Putin at NATO Meeting" Sourced <https://www.nytime.com>>europe accessed on 27-07-2023

⁴³The Washington Post, "The Long History Of Russia" Sourced at Imperialism Shaping Putin's war" Sourced at washingtonpost.com accessed on 14-06-2023

⁴⁴ The Print, "Modern Ukraine Entirely Created by Russia" Sourced at theprint.in accessed on 14-05-2023

⁴⁵ NBC News, "Putin: Soviet Collapse a genuine Tragedy" Sourced at <https://www.nbcnews.com>>wbna> accessed on 14-05-2023

⁴⁶ Mearsheimer, "The Cause and Consequences of the Ukraine War" *op.cit.*

⁴⁷ P. Dickinson, "Putin's New Ukraine Essay Reveals Imperial Ambitions" <https://www.atlaticcouncil.org>>pu.. Accessed on 14-05-2023

c. That with America and NATO's unwavering support for Ukraine at whatever financial and material cost, and with Putin's determination not to be disgraced out of the battle field, it is obvious that this is not a war that would produce a victor or vanquish. What this means is that history is about to repeat itself one more time, in living-memory. When America discovered that the battle equation was refusing to tilt in her favour and her allies during the second world war, it resorted to Nuclear weapon upon the then strongest points of the enemies, in Nagasaki and Hiroshima⁴⁸. It is remarkable to note that effect of this ominous weapon and armament has continued to linger with today's generation in Japan, even when Nuclear weapon of that age was not as nucleic and effective as in the current, more sophisticated world.

Unfortunately, Putin, a trigger-happy dictator presides over Russia, a Nuclear power at war against Ukraine here. As it is, one factor that defined extent of external intervention in the Ukraine war thus far is the wealth of nuclear weapons in the Russian arsenal with which Putin has always threatened all perceived opposition to Russian interest⁴⁹. While other Heads of States would rather speak of Nuclear war in low tone but from the war against Poland into the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Putin has been known to threaten deployment of Nuclear strike as an option. He is as obsessed as to threaten that by pressing the next available Nuclear button, "we will go to heaven as martyrs and they will drop dead"⁵⁰

Indeed, earlier, during the Ukrainian Civil crisis in 2014, Putin was known to have directed that Russian troops should engage in Nuclear strike practice, thus making NATO, America and all opposing powers to back pedal on any conceived intervention⁵¹. This, no doubt explains the delay of America and her Western allies in providing Ukraine with heavy duty war machines with capacity to equal-up with Russia in the present war that could provoke a retaliatory Nuclear strike. Similar reason accounts for why the United Nations Security Council seem to tread the path of *caution* in condemning several Russian atrocities, including war crimes, Crimes against humanity and other genocidal attacks against Ukrainian Civilians and non-military installations in this war⁵². However, while this kind of caution seems to produce short-term effect in calming Russian disposition towards Nuclear strike in Ukraine, but the long-term effect is incalculable. This assertion is substantiated by the fact that once the trigger-happy dictators presiding over Nuclear States *understand* that this weapon could constitute an hedge against any form of external intervention in their atrocious affairs, either domestically or even as aggressor against other non-Nuclear States, such dictators could go extra mile to intimidate both the very civil nuclear powers and non-nuclear members states of the United Nations.

Indeed, the compromise of International Community in the Georgian war seem to encourage Putin now, that he can always have his way, as aforetime, which is a bad precedent⁵³. Beyond this is the wrong signal this scenario creates to the non-nuclear states that ideals of the United Nations having become of non-consequence, the only ultimate way they could insulate themselves against whatever they consider as "external aggression" is to resort to proliferation of Nuclear weapon. This perception will call to question the moral basis of the *rat race* between the International Atomic Energy Agency and

⁴⁸ Britanica, "Why Did The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshime and Nagasaki Happen? <https://www.britanica.com/why..> Accessed on 12-06-2022

⁴⁹ IMEMO, "Nuclear Factor in the Ukrainian Conflict (IMEMO Analytical Report" Sourced at <https://www.imemo.ru/events/text..> Accessed on 12-06-2023; A. Applebaum, "Fear of Nuclear War Has Warped The West's Ukraine Strategy" Sourced at <https://www.threatlantic.com/archive...>> accessed on 12-06-2023

⁵⁰ Reuters, Aggressor Will Be Annihilated, We Will Go to Heaven as Matyrs" Sourced at <https://www.theroscowtimes.com/>> accessed on 14-07-2023

⁵¹ CNN, "Russia was Ready for Nuclear Strike alert over Crimea" <https://www.cnn.com/Europe/rus..> accessed on 26/7/2023

⁵² UNHR, "War Crimes, Indiscriminate attacks on Infrastructures, systemic Torture and Widespread Torture show Disregard for Civilians, say UN Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine" Sourced at www.ohchr.org/press-release/2023?03 accessed on 14-06-2023; accessed on 14-06-2023; T.G Weiss, "UNSC is Powerless to help Ukraine" Sourced at theconversation.com/un-security-counc... accessed on 25-07-2023

⁵³ OCHA, "Six-Point Peace Plan for the Georgia-Russia Conflict" sourced at <https://reliefwebb.int-report/back> accessed on 26-07-2023

Countries like North Korea and Iran that are accused of Uranium enrichment towards development of Nuclear weapons⁵⁴. This means that the Nuclear factor is polarizing the world into such factions that managing the differences by the United Nations could create an insurmountable task. Quite unfortunately, that was the scenario that evolved into the second world war, meaning that the situation the world is running away from in allowing Russia to satisfy its yearning against a sovereign Ukrainian State would still manifest as end-result of the present political game of Chess. Mentioning a few instances of international consequences of quest for Nuclear war heads by various Nations as the most needed National Security from the seed sown by Russia would do here.

Recently, in April 2023, there was a strategic security agreement between the US and South Korea, otherwise called the *Washington Declaration*, deploying some American Nuclear warheads into South Korea's territorial waters as a deterrent to the Nuclear threat of North Korea⁵⁵. This measure was meant to douse the heightened clamour of 80% of the polarized South Koreans for an indigenous Nuclear Program, seeing what Ukraine is going through in the hands of Russia⁵⁶. While China condemned the Washington declaration as a measure towards triggering regional tension without stating how, but it is obvious that China was only speaking with the voice of concern of Russia and North Korea because, the North Korea's unjustifiable threat to its neighbours could put non-Nuclear Nations like Japan and South Korea on their heels, to fast track their Uranium enrichment to enhance their Nuclear warheads status, as a measure towards securing their National interest that world avert Ukraine's kind of horrendous experience. This is because, with the way Europe and America have held back from direct confrontation against Russia because of Russia's Nuclear capacity, it appears that Nuclear stockings will become the only measure for securing sovereignty of every Nation, in no distant future.

Another fall-out of Russian invasion of Ukraine and consequent annexation of Ukrainian territories is the challenge it poses to International peace and security as it sends wrong signal that once a Nation possesses Nuclear weapon, it could resort to violence to vent its grievance, even if in breach of International Law. For instance, in recent times, China, a Nuclear Power resorted to flexing muscles around Taiwan that China regards as her breakaway province that must be reharnessed⁵⁷. Perceiving that only a more pronounced presence of another super-power could checkmate China's threat in the similitude of Russia against Ukraine, America enlarged its Military Basis in Taiwan to the annoyance of China and its allies⁵⁸.

As it is obvious under International Politics, the Super-powers do not invest where they have nothing to gain in their quest to outwit one another, either politically or in economic- race⁵⁹. The question then is, what is the stake and guarantee of the politically and economically weak Nations in the framework of the United Nations. As it is now, it is apparent that as poor as North Korea is, it resorted to nuclear weaponry as a survival measure in a region that has been opposed to its survival since the Korean war⁶⁰. And this measure has dragged America and its allies to a point where they now call for negotiation with North Korea without pre-condition as they did in the past⁶¹.

⁵⁴C. Min-Lee, "The Evolution of the North Korean Nuclear Crisis: Implication for Iran" Sourced at <https://insis.iaea.org/public...> Accessed on 26-07-2023; Le Monde, "Iran: The Nuclear Quest" Sourced at <https://mondediplo.com/2003/10> accessed on 26-07-2023

⁵⁵ Hyung-Jin Kim, "US Deploys Nuclear Armed submarine to South Korea in Show of Force Against North Korea ABC News" Sourced at <https://www.jstor.org/stable> accessed on 26-07-2023

⁵⁶ BBC News, "Nuclear Weapons: Why South Koreans Want the Bomb" <https://www.bbc.com/news/world..> accessed on 27-07-2023

⁵⁷ AP News, "China Renews Threat Against Taiwan as Island Holds Drills" Sourced at <https://apnews.com/article/taiwan...> Accessed on 26-07-2023

⁵⁸ CNN, "Biden says US Would Respond Militarily If China Attacked Taiwan.." Sourced at <https://www.cnn.com/politics/bi..> Accessed on 27-07-2023

⁵⁹ M. Beckley, "The Power of Nations: Measuring What Matters" Sourced <https://direct.mit.edu/isec/article> accessed on 27-07-2023

⁶⁰ Jstor, "What is the Root Cause of the North Korean Nuclear Program?" Sourced at <https://www.jstor.org/stable> accessed on 27-07-2023

⁶¹ Reuters, "Tillerson says US willing to Talk to North Korea Without Pre-condition" Sourced at <https://www.reuters.com/article> accessed on 20-07-2023

Another fall-out of Russia's Nuclear threat can also be seen in the recent Expanded Defence Treaty between America and the Philippines in apprehension of any attack by China, in the endless escalation of skirmishes in the South China sea⁶². Following this also is the collapse of Conventional Arms Treaty in Europe as a result of Moscow's withdrawal, all of which signal a realignment of security interests in Europe, which is a threat to regional and world peace and security⁶³.

With the evolving scenario, it is worrisome that as witnesses to indelible consequences of nuclear involvement in the Second World War, Putin continues to engage in attitude that can promote his agenda for an escalation that could afford him opportunity of venting his genocidal ambition of a nuclear strike. Only in July 2023, the Wagner Mercenaries, after their botched mutiny against Putin have now relocated to Belarus where they now resorted to provocative drills on the border with Poland⁶⁴. As if to claim that this drill is sponsored by Putin for another war engagement with Poland, he warned Poland against any possible reaction to enable him further escalate the face-off in the region, as excuse to actualize his ambition for nuclear strike⁶⁵. Even regarding the issue of UN-Turkey brokered agreement for Ukrainian grain-export, Russia within the same month, of July 2023 reneged on the periodic renewal of the said agreement, on the condition, amongst others that there must first be commitment to lifting ban on Russia's own export, with antics on how to draw African Nations into his web through offer of the same grains to them at a meeting with African leaders on 27-07-2023⁶⁶. Such antics suggesting weaponization of food does not present Putin's intention in bright light. Instead, it is obvious that the world is dealing with a dictator who is not only looking for opportunity to escalate the already volatile situation but one that does not care what happens to the world, so long as he has his way.

This is one reason that the world must not gamble further escalation of this war but to set in motion measures that could deflate Putin's calculation in dragging the world into a mindless destruction. In the end, it appears that the world is waiting for how the Russian invasion of Ukraine will unfold to either drag the world to the precipice of another world war or such realignment that will trigger the need to reassess values of the United Nations, as endorsed in the Charter. The world is watching!

The Way Forward

With the extent of human and material damage done to Ukraine and having regards to economic consequences of this war upon Russian and American tax payers along with their allies, it is apparent that the world is in a hurry to see the end of this war. However, having regards to the part played by America, NATO and European Union in the events leading to outbreak of this war; and with Russia's annexation of strategic regions of Ukrainian territory and the need to save Putin's face before the Russian public, it is difficult to see either side to this conflict walking away without the prompting of a mediator of tall credentials. As it is today, it appears that America, NATO and the European Union are fast shedding off absolute fear of Nuclear deployment by furnishing Ukraine with such weapons that they loathed releasing in the first year of the war⁶⁷. All the same, as it is characteristics of all dictators and with self-seeking disposition of Putin, the world needs a more strategic reassessment of the situation in managing the defeat of Russia without some untoward fight back. In Mearsheimer's view:

⁶² US official Website, "FACT SHEET: US-Phillipines Bilateral Defence Guidelines" Sourced at <https://www.defense.gov>>article accessed on 27-07-2023

⁶³ Reuters, "NATO Condemns Russia's Withdrawal From Conventional Armed Forces Treaty" Sourced at <https://www.reuters.com>>europe> accessed on 27-07-2023

⁶⁴ A. Roth, "Putin Warns Poland Against Belar Aggression" Sourced at <https://www.theguardian.com>>jul.. Accessed on 26-07-2023

⁶⁵ *Ibid*

⁶⁶ VOA News, "Latest in Ukraine: Russia Ends Ukraine Grain Export Deal" Sourced at <https://www.voanews.com>>latest.. Accessed on 27-07-2023

⁶⁷ SWIDISH GOVERNMENT Press; " Heavy Advanced Weapons to Ukraine in New Support Package" Sourced at <https://www.government.se>>2023/02 accessed on 27-07-2023

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There is a perverse paradox at play here: the more successful the United States and its allies are, at achieving their goals, the more likely it is that the war will turn nuclear⁶⁸.

This looks like a political risk because, as Applebaum reasoned:

In a one-man dictatorship, the decision whether to use nuclear weapons lies in that one-man's head (but) because no one else lives inside that head, no one also knows what would really provoke him or where his red lines really are⁶⁹.

But as Applebaum concluded,

The only guide we have is the past, and given Putin's behaviour in the past, we should at least consider the possibility that by arming Ukraine, we will also prevent the use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine if Putin genuinely believes that a Russian nuclear attack will carry catastrophic consequences. The less fear we show, the more Putin himself will be afraid⁷⁰.

Feasible as this reasoning sounds but as it is characteristic of all dictators and with the ego-seeking *Hilter* in this war, the International Community must not only continue to tread the path of caution but encourage Ukraine to accept some hard decision of some concessions even if, in breach of the UN Charter and all other International Laws in that behalf. Admittedly, such measure could set a bad precedent for some other ambitious Nuclear States but in the short-run, we would have contained this quagmire while the world looks elsewhere on the future of Nuclear weapons.

In the words of Marc Fanaud and Marie-Pia Norain,

Russia threatens to use nuclear weapons in the event of NATO interference in the war in Ukraine, but above all the combination of ambiguities in Russian doctrine, the existence of so-called "tactical" nuclear weapons, and the possibility of delegated, accidental, or unauthorized use, all contribute to a serious increase in the weapons being used as a direct or indirect consequence of Russia's invasion of Ukraine⁷¹.

And then, they concluded on a cautious note that:

This is all the more reason to conclude that nuclear weapons, far from ensuring International Security, serve as a shield for all aggressor countries, convinced of their impunity⁷².

2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article on *Invasion of Ukraine, Values of United Nations and Cautious approach of International Community: The Nuclear Arms Factor* interrogated causes and all other narratives of the war, including the threat, real or imagined, of deployment of nuclear weapons determining final outcome of the war. The author examined emerging issues in the war, including annexation of Ukrainian territories from the background of values of the United Nations, including several damaging instances of war Crimes and Crimes against humanity against Ukrainian Civilians and Civilian infrastructures.

In the end, the author found that the world has moved beyond the values informing birth of the United Nations in 1945 and projected that the trend by which Nuclear weapon is shifting base from ensuring International Security to the realm of becoming a shield for aggressor Countries could encourage such level of impunity that it will be difficult to check proliferation of Nuclear weaponry in the immediate aftermath of the Ukrainian war. From the narratives of Russian invasion of Ukraine also, the paper found the need to review values of the United Nations as endorsed in the Charter, if there should be any more future for the Organization. The paper thus recommends as follows:

⁶⁸ Mearsheimer, *op.cit*

⁶⁹ A. Applebaum, "Fear of Nuclear War Has Warped the West's Ukraine Strategy" Sourced at <https://www.threatatlantic.com/archive/> accessed on 27-07-2023

⁷⁰ *Ibid*

⁷¹ M. Fanaud-Norain, "Risk of Nuclear Weapons use Higher Than at Any Time Since Cold War, Disarmament Chief Warns Security Council" Sourced at <https://press.un.org/sc/s520.doc.h...> accessed on 27-07-2023; L. Sukia, "Rattling the Nuclear Saber: What Russia's Nuclear Threat Really Mean" Sourced at <https://carnegieendowment.org/rat> accessed on 27-07-2021

⁷² Fanaud-Norain, *op.cit*

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- a. That the United Nations should shop for an envoy of impeccable credentials that could talk all stakeholders in the Ukraine war into a political dialogue that can resolve the ugly trend that may drag the world into another ugly experience in the similitude of the Second World War. Reading between the lines in Putin's speaker during his meeting with African Leaders on 28-07-2023 on seem to suggest his expectation of such a facilities.
- b. That the world should return to the drawing board, to reassess the values of United Nations, including the need to create new checks and balances within the ranks of various organs, especially regarding vetoe power of members of the Security Council where their National interests are at stake
- c. That International Community should revisit the place of Nuclear weapons in the world quest for peace and stability for this and the upcoming generations.