

## **RUSSO-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT ESCALATING: “A WAR AT THE GATES OF EUROPE”**

After the **dissolution of the Soviet Union** in 1991, since **Ukraine** and **Russia** have a 1581-kilometer-long border to the east and north-east of Ukraine, in 1994, the country signs the **Budapest memorandum** on Security Assurances, which guarantees **territorial inviolability** versus the abandonment of its **nuclear stockpile**. In the early 2000s Ukraine is considered to dwell in the Russian sphere of influence.

In 2008, Vladimir Putin adjudicates against the adhesion of former Soviet republics to **NATO**. Indeed, these countries are stricken with separatisms: this very year, the **Russo-Georgian War** took place between Georgia, Russia and Russian-backed self-proclaimed republics of **South Ossetia** and Abkhazia. During 12 days, Russia invades Georgia for a “peace enforcement” operation; after a **ceasefire** on August negotiated by Nicolas Sarkozy, Russian troops stayed in Georgia until October and the European Court ruled that Russia maintained **direct control over the separatist regions** and was responsible for grave **human rights abuses** taking place there, such as an **ethnic cleansing of Georgians** in South Ossetia.

Between 2013 and 2014, demonstrations known as **Euromaiden** in Ukraine stand for the adhesion of the country to EU. At that time, pro-Russian president **Viktor Yanukovych** flees the capital city **Kyiv** after a vote of its destitution by the parliament, which is known as the **Revolution of Dignity** or **Maiden Revolution**. Demonstrations rose in the Eastern regions of Ukraine which were in favor of Yanukovych’s policy — these are followed by the **annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation** in February 2014 which Putin argued from the illegitimacy of the new government. This conflict only results in 6 fatalities on both sides, but nowadays, *de facto*, Republic of Crimea is still a federal subject of Russia. In April 2014, the **war in the Donbas** breaks out in the aftermath of Ukrainian revolution and goes on until today. It is corroborated by the creation of **Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics**, which are both supported by Russia.

On 14 September 2020, Ukrainian president **Volodymyr Zelensky** approves of a new national security strategy in order for Ukraine to adhere to NATO. It also aims at military strategy of reintegration of Crimea in **Sebastopol**, its leading city. During Autumn 2021, war in Donbas intensifies: on 24 February 2022, Russia invades Ukraine, and operation which is told by Ukraine to have been led under **false flag**.