

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 2023

Introduction

The UNSC is the premier UN organization to tackle the most crucial geopolitical threats. During this session, you will try to mediate solutions for problems with no easy answers. You will help create solutions to help vulnerable people in regions like Ethiopia, which has suffered from a year of civil war that has displaced over 3 Million residents. You will create dialogue and communication for regions that are not currently at war but suffer from political instability, like that in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Finally, you will look to the future and open meaningful dialogue on preventing the armament of outer space.

Committee Background

The current state of the world is one of turmoil and constant upheaval. The crisis in Ukraine has spiraled into a full-scale energy crisis that affects countries around the globe. China and the U.S. continue their soft-power escalation of tensions and climate change continues to bring unprecedented challenges to the international community. Delegates of the UNSC interested in fulfilling their due diligence on broader topics facing the United Nations should refer to their State of the World brief for material related to the overarching themes and conflicts.

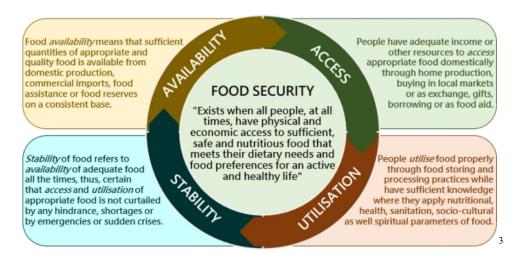
Topic A: Food Security amid Geopolitical Turmoil

Executive Summary

In May 2022, U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres had the following declaration: "Global hunger levels are at a new high. In just two years, the number of severely food insecure people has doubled, from 135 million pre-pandemic to 276 million today ... More than half a million people are living in famine conditions — an increase of more than 500 percent since 2016.¹"

Food security "exists when all people... have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences" and has four main elements:

- Availability There is a sufficient amount of healthy appropriate food available to the population.
- Access The population has the income and means to access the food (e.g. they have the wherewithal to go to a stocked nearby market or grocery that meets their needs)
- Utilization People have the right knowledge to utilize food appropriately in a safe manner. "Sufficient energy and nutrient intake by individuals are the result of good care and feeding practices, food preparation, diversity of the diet and intra-household distribution of food.2"
- Stability Does the level of Availability, Access, and Utilization stay steady or does it fluctuate over time? A family might have access to good quality food today, or this week, but if they are not sure about access in a month, or in a year, that also causes food insecurity and the associated negative impacts of food insecurity on that family.



¹ In Africa, Putin's War on Ukraine Drives Food, Fuel and Finance Crises | United States Institute of Peace

What is Food Security? There are Four Dimensions

³ Climate change and food security in Sri Lanka: towards food sovereignty | Humanities and Social Sciences **Communications**

The past few years have not been favorable for proponents of food security. In 2021, hunger surpassed all previous records as reported by the Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC)⁴. In 2020, the proportion of countries affected by high food prices increased dramatically. 2022 brought with it an increase of 119M people, or about 10%, over the 2021 number. Simply put, the rise of food insecurity across a wide swathe of countries indicates an extremely worrisome public health crisis that shows no sign of abating and will bring with it related negative correlated effects in the field of child malnutrition, education, and other SDG goals.

This committee will have to tackle the rise in food insecurity, looking at the root causes of this public health crisis and fostering creative solutions that will ensure equity and healthy living for all people.

Current Situation

The cause of this increased level of food insecurity is multi-faceted. Some of the causes include:

- The COVID-19 pandemic: The Pandemic exposed already-existing fissures in the public health system. According to a Feeding America 2021 report "Many people impacted by the pandemic were food insecure or at risk of becoming food insecure before the pandemic⁵"
- Armed Conflict and Violence: International and intranational conflicts force families from their jobs and homes, both of which are key drivers of food insecurity. Conflict can disrupt agricultural productivity and the networks used to transport resources, impairing access to land, food, and water. At the same time, political instability can create conditions that facilitate the spread of disease or pests, further damaging crop yields. One key example is the current crisis in the DRC. DRC is one of the largest hunger-crisis epicenters in the world right now, and the current violence happening within the country has created a huge wave of Internally-Displaced Persons (IDPs) who in turn suffer from hunger and malnutrition. Over 27 Million people in DRC face acute food insecurity according to the IPC⁶.

⁴ FAC parties contribute \$6.7 billion to aid food security | World Grain

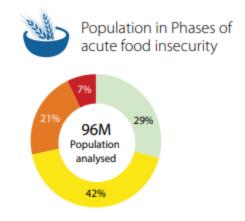
⁵ National Projections Brief 3.9.2021

⁶ Over 27 million people in DRC face high acute food insecurity due to conflict, COVID-19 and economic decline | IPC Global Platform

Key Figures | Current Situation | February - July 2021



Around 27.3 million people out of 96 million people analysed are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, making it the country with the greatest need of assistance in the world.





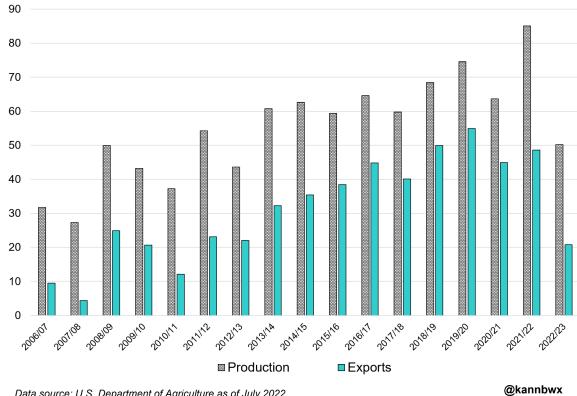
With a diplaced population of 5.2 million, the Democratic Republic of Congo currently hosts the second largest number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world. The country also hosts 527,000 refugees from neighbouring countries.

• Ukraine Situation: Russia and Ukraine historically have provided 40% of Africa's food supply and are known as "the Bread Basket" of the world. All that changed after Russian forces invaded Ukraine. Ukrainian farmland was destroyed or neglected in the ensuing conflict and reserves of grain were destroyed or left to rot. Most of the grain that left Ukraine went through the port of Odessa which was temporarily blockaded by Russian naval forces. Even after Ukraine and Russia reached a tentative agreement to open the port of Odessa, the level of grains leaving Ukraine has still not reached pre-conflict levels⁷. As far as Russian food exports, most international sanctions have included exemptions for energy and food. Still, some experts worry that Russia could artificially hike up the price of grain or limit the number of experts as a negotiation tool to get European influence to back out of the Ukrainian conflict.

⁷ Ship carrying grain leaves Odessa, Ukraine, in deal to ease food crisis - The Washington Post

Ukraine Grain Production & Exports

(Includes corn, wheat and barley; millions of tonnes)



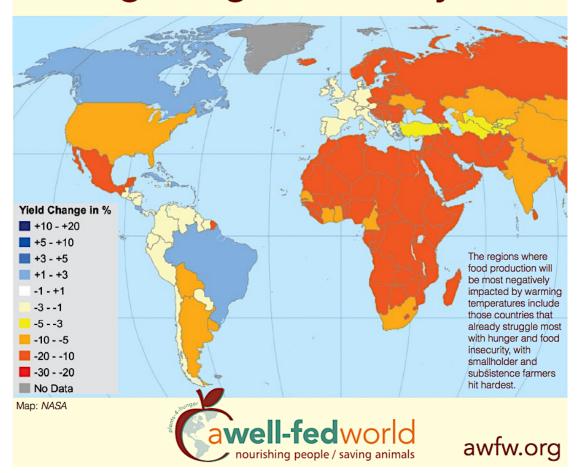
Data source: U.S. Department of Agriculture as of July 2022

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Climate Change: Global warming is influencing weather patterns, causing heat waves, heavy rainfall, and droughts across the globe. More relevantly, climate change is changing long-established weather patterns, upending existing agricultural norms and regions. Climate disasters not only cause devastation and destruction for crop yields and distribution networks, but also lower overall agricultural productivity in the near-mid term. Unfortunately, the regions that will be most negatively affected by climate change to their agricultural productivity are those regions that already suffer from a higher level of food insecurity, namely Africa and Asia. Above a certain point of warming, it becomes difficult or even impossible to mitigate the effects of the higher temperature on existing agricultural systems.

⁸ Column: Ukraine's grain exports, crop still must prove themselves | Reuters

Predicted impacts of climate change on global food yields.



Historical Background

Food insecurity has long been a core priority of United Nations actions and has always been a major concern of other governments and NGOs, particularly during times of conflict and war.

Sustainable Development Goals #2 (SDGs)

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 goals that were adopted by all UN member states in 2015. Together, they are a successor to the previous Millenium Development Goals (MDG) and seek to "provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity of people and the planet, now and into the future.

Of interest to this committee is Goal 2 of the SDG, Zero Hunger. Goal 2 of the SDGs is to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. The SDG goal has a number of ambitious targets including ending hunger by 2030, and specific malnutrition targets for infants, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons.

United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is the oldest permanent specialized agency of the United Nations and was established in 1945. The objective of the FAO was to "eliminate hunger and improv[e] nutrition and standards of living"⁹

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), oldest permanent specialized agency of the United Nations, established in October 1945 with the objective of eliminating hunger and improving nutrition and standards of living by increasing agricultural productivity.

Since 1945, the FAO has embarked on a number of ambitious initiatives including researching high-yield grains, promoting agricultural exports, hosting the 1974 World Food conference, and creating the World Census of Agriculture¹⁰. The FAO also created the 1992 World Declaration and Plan of Action on Nutrition, one of the most comprehensive worldwide actions on malnutrition and food security taken in the 20th century.

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⁹ Food and Agriculture Organization | United Nations organization | Britannica

¹⁰ About FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Discussion Questions

- How can the UNSC best promote the success of the Sustainable Development Goal #2?
- What steps can be taken by this body to help resolve the food security issues related to the current situation in Ukraine in a way that stays within the purview of this body and respects national sovereignty?
- In the long term, the world will have to adapt to changing agricultural climate trends. What can this body do now to ensure that the most vulnerable countries in Africa and Asia are not left behind with this change?

Key Terms:

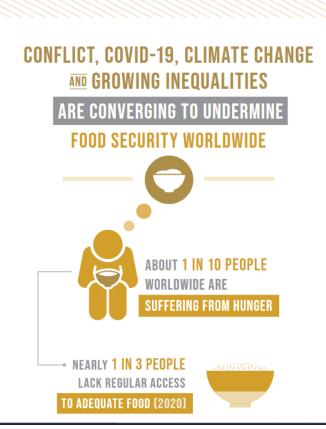
- Food Security / Insecurity
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
- Economic Commission for EUrope (ECE)
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- World Census of Agriculture
- International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)
- Africa Real-Time Environmental Monitoring System (ARTEMIS)

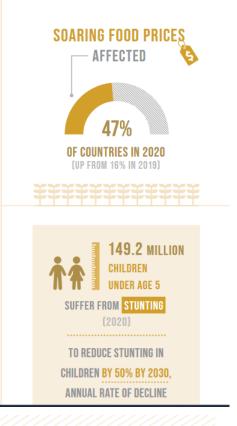
Resources

- The impact of Coronavirus on Food Insecurity -https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/National%20Projections%20
 Brief 3.9.2021 0.pdf
- Climate Change and Food Insecurity https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2022/10/17/what-you-need-to-know-about-food-security-and-climate-change
- Ukraine Odessa Grain Deal https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/08/01/ukraine-grain-deal-odessa-shipments
 -resume/
- DRC Crisis Overview -https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/alerts-archive/issue-37/en/
- SDG #2 Zero Hunger: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/
- UN FAO https://www.britannica.com/topic/Food-and-Agriculture-Organization



END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE





UKRAINE CRISIS TRIGGERED FOOD SHORTAGES FOR THE WORLD'S POOREST PEOPLE

UKRAINE AND THE RUSSIAN Federation Supply Global Exports:







THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2022: UNSTATS.UN.ORG/SDGS/REPORT/2022/

Topic B: Addressing the complex geopolitical fallout resulting from the situation in Ukraine

Executive Summary

The situation in Ukraine has reopened decade-old rifts between the U.S. and Europe and Russia and allies, breaking convention on what modern conflict looks like and plunging the world into uncertainty over food and energy prices. The actual military conflict may have stalled but there is no sign of an upcoming ceasefire anytime soon and the prospect of cyber-conflict, nuclear escalation, or economic damage continues to loom large. This body is called in to help promote the path of peace and dialogue and to talk about how to deal with the aftermath of the conflict, whether that is the internally-displaced persons, the devastation, or the economic effects across the world including malnutrition and energy blackouts created by the reverberations of the Ukrainian "special operation." With dialogue comes solutions and this body is uniquely equipped to bring those solutions to the forefront.

Historical Background

Tensions between Russia and NATO

NATO was created in 1949 to combat the influence of the Soviet Union and provide a counterweight to USSR influence¹¹.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, NATO was forced to reinvent itself or to fade away to obsolescence. NATO did not have far to look before finding a new rival, and a new purpose. Russia was no longer the USSR but still had formidable military, nuclear, and political power to bear. Moreover, Russia still had the inclination and political will to keep former USSR states in their sphere of influence. Over the 1990s and early 2000s, NATO absorbed a number of former Warsaw-Pact countries, including Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Albania, and Croatia. With each encroachment of NATO into the former Warsaw-Pact, Russian administrations grew increasingly frustrated. In their eyes, the NATO expansion had betrayed the original mission and promises made of the group from its inception and represented an existential threat to Russian stability and influence.

"The Russians were always concerned about how far NATO enlargement was going to go. It's one thing for Poland to come in, or the Czech Republic to come in. That's not such a big deal. But there was always a concern about Ukraine," Goldgeier said¹². In 2008, Europe and the U.S. promised Ukraine that there was a path for Ukraine to join NATO, but did not offer any concrete timeline¹². This in Russia's eyes crossed a very clear red line. When Ukrainian protesters ousted the pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovych in 2013, that made it even more clear to Putin that

¹¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 1949

¹² How NATO's expansion helped drive Putin to invade Ukraine: NPR

Ukraine was swinging away from Russia and towards the European Union. Russia then annexed part of Crimea, breaking the 1994 Budapest Memorandum it had signed. In the backdrop of the Russian invasion, both Finland and Sweden applied to be part of NATO in June of 2022¹³. Both countries had formerly rejected an interest in joining the alliance, partly to avoid antagonizing their neighbor to the East. Their accession to the union has gone relatively quickly and only Hungary and Turkey have not approved their inclusion. Experts expect Hungary to approve the accession in the near future and say Turkey is the main holdout. Russia on its part has warned that this is a "destabilizing" move for the region and that there would be "serious military and political consequences" from both countries joining the alliance. 14

In 2022, amid the Russian invasion, Ukraine applied to join NATO¹⁵. The application represents a monumental shift, and a step that Russia very clearly had tried to prevent over the past decade. The application still faces steep hurdles. In order to be accepted, Ukraine will need the approval of all 30 current UN member nations and European nations will be wary of further antagonizing Russia and risking war, not to mention nuclear escalation. THe NATO charter dictates that an "armed attack" against one member nation is considered an attack against all member nations and this could pull Europe into a war with Russia. Furthermore, Ukraine would have to meet requirements related to democracy and rule of law. Some experts say that Ukraine in the past has failed to meet these requirements. Still, some NATO leaders and experts have cheered the move and promised to fast-track the application in the face of the extenuating challenges facing Ukraine. Whether Ukraine ultimately joins NATO over the coming months or years, this represents the culmination of the shift for the former Warsaw Pact country.

"We condemn the irresponsible course of the North Atlantic Alliance that is ruining European architecture, or what's left of it," Russian deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov said. "I have a great deal of doubt as to whether the upcoming period will be calm for our north European neighbors," he added¹⁶.

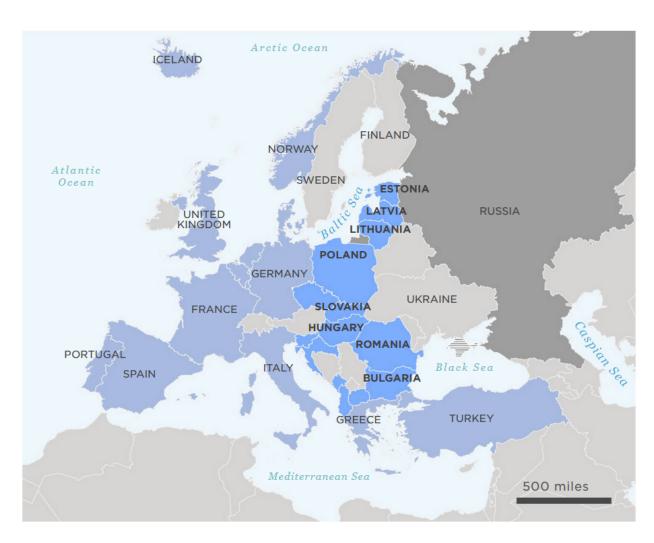
¹³ Finland & Sweden Accession | NATO PA

¹⁴ Turkey is keeping Finland and Sweden from joining NATO: NPR

¹⁵ Ukraine submits an application to join NATO, with big hurdles ahead.

This article is more than 6 months old Putin issues fresh warning to Finland and Sweden on installing Nato infrastructure





The Budapest Memorandum

In 1994, Ukraine had newly gained independence from the former Soviet Union and was in possession of a large quantity of nuclear weapons, the third-largest arsenal in the world at the time. Negotiations between Russian President Yeltsin, Ukrainian president Kuchma, UK PM John Mayer, and U.S. president Bill Clinton yielded a historic negotiation win called the Budapest Memorandum. This memorandum led Ukraine to relinquish its nuclear arsenal and join the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). In response, Ukraine received diplomatic assurances from the signatories that they would "respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine". These signatories included the US, Russia, and the UK. Many experts and observers claim that the 2014 Russian invasion of Crimea and the 2020 Ukrainian special operation are in direct violation of Russia's obligations under the Budapest

Memorandum. In 2016, the Russian Foreign Minister said "Russia never violated the Budapest memorandum," because it "contained only one obligation, not to attack Ukraine with nukes." 1718

Current Situation

In 2013, protests drove Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukavoych out of office in response to his anti-EU integration stance. The following year, in 2014, Russia responded by taking over a portion of Crimea, reportedly to "protect the rights of Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Crimea and southeast Ukraine." Russia then held an independence referendum that was considered to be disputed by the rest of the international community. Nevertheless, Russia used the referendum as justification to annex the disputed regions.

After annexation, there was a period of armed conflict in the region between Russian-backed forces and the Ukrainian military. This conflict ultimately ended in a stalemate between both sides. In 2015, superpowers including France, Germany, Russia, and Ukraine attempted negotiations via the Minks Accords. Ultimately, the accords failed to take effect and the armed skirmishes continued

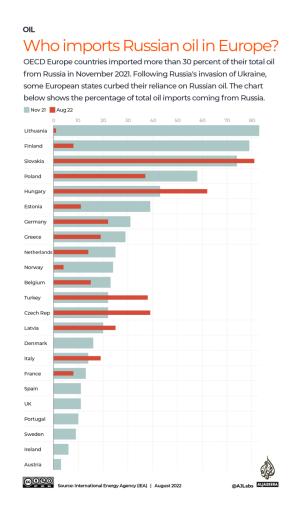
Ukraine's allies took further action to show their solidarity with Ukraine. In 2016, NATO conducted troop movements in neighboring states to deter future Russian aggression in the region and both the U.S. and Europe put sanctions on Russian individuals and companies. Russia's foreign ministry called on the U.S. and NATO to:

- 1. Cease military activity in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- 2. Commit to no further NATO expansion toward Russia
- 3. Prevent Ukraine from joining NATO in the future

The U.S. and NATO denied these demands. As a result, on Feb 24, 2022, President Putin authorized a "special military operation" to invade Ukraine across multiple fronts. U.S. and European Allies sanctioned Russian officials and companies as well as the Russian oil and gas industry. They also provided military and economic aid to Ukraine. One important result of this military operation was the permit denial of the long-awaited Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which would have transferred natural gas from Russia to Germany. The current German SDP administration has recognized the strategic risk of previous administrations of becoming too reliant on Russian Natural Gas. Now Germany has vowed to replace the need for Russian oil and natural gas, through other sources, clean energy, liquid natural gas reserves, and lower consumption if necessary. It remains to be seen how quickly Germany will be able to pivot; Germany gas import dependency on Russia has been as high as 55% over the last decade and that is not energy that will be easily replaced over a short time frame.

18 Ukraine war: what is the Budapest Memorandum and why has Russia's invasion torn it up?

¹⁷ Fact Check: Did Ukraine Give Up Nukes for Russia, U.S. Security Guarantees?



Russian forces made some quick tactical gains but progress quickly slowed on their invasion. Lack of communication and unfamiliarity with the terrain proved to be powerful anchors on the Russian military operation. Still, Russian forces seized control of key parts of Eastern Ukraine, including the Zaporizhzhia facility, the largest nuclear plant in Europe. The IAEA has since called for "a nuclear safety and security protection zone" around the plant to prevent any potential for nuclear disaster.

Equipment from U.S. and NATO allies and a strong national morale proved to be helpful in slowing or rolling back the Russian advance. Ukraine forces retook territory in the Kharkiv region, potentially cutting off Russian supply chains and providing a morale boost to Ukrainian forces. Russia responded with a partial mobilization to replenish their armed forces, causing thousands of Russian's to flee in order to avoid being drafted.

Now the war is again in somewhat of a stalemate. Ukraine slowly but surely advances in key regions of Kherson while new Russian mobilized troops may lack training and morale but number in the thousands. The U.S. and Europe have released another package of military aid, but political will to continue donating to the war effort seems to be slacking. Europe buys up Liquid Natural Gas and any spare energy commodities on the market, sparking accusations from nations

in Africa, Asia, and South America that they will be left without any natural gas to heat their

homes. President Putin faces growing unrest and protest at home over his "special military operation," but his rhetoric on Ukraine and the West grows stronger day by day. He has committed publicly and to retreat would likely mean the end of his credibility and status at home. Meanwhile, Iran has been more than happy to provide Russia drones and other military equipment much to the chagrin of the U.S. and NATO. Russian cyberforces have reportedly launched massive Denial of Service attacks and other cyberattacks on key Ukrainian infrastructure including banking, energy grid, and internet services.



Bloc Positions

Price caps and market sanctions for energy and food: There has been a debate across Europe on the efficacy of price caps and sanctions for Russian energy and food resources. Ukrainian president Zelenskyy has called for Europe to completely divest from Russian energy in a show of solidarity with Ukraine and to avoid funding the war effort. In large part, Europe has been aligned with that approach, introducing the first G7-Wide bloc price cap on Russian oil in an unprecedented market show of force. Still, many experts and economists have said that the sanctions up till now have been largely ineffective in reducing Russian oil revenue. Decreased demand from Europe has been more than offset by the increased prices in new and emerging markets. Moreover there have been concerns on what could happen if energy prices spike and disproportionately affect low-income housing, potentially causing illness or harm. There are also concerns on the implications and precedent this sort of action could set on the global stage. Could it portend a future in which every geopolitical dispute results in fracturing of international trade?

Expansion of NATO: In many ways the Westward expansion of NATO introduced the friction that allowed future NATO-Russia conflicts to materialize. Are there any actions this UNSC body can take to ease the tensions between NATO and Russia and potentially ease long-standing concerns on both sides

Risk of Nuclear Accidents: Fighting near the site of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Plant, the largest Nuclear Plant in Europe, has alarmed many experts who say that this threatens a nuclear accident that could be catastrophic for Ukraine. The IAEA has declared the situation in the region "untenable" and called for a cease in conflict around the Nuclear plant and recourse for IAEA officials to monitor the stability of the plant. Both Russia and Ukrainian officials have blamed the other for the conflict around the plant. Navigating this situation will involve working with both Ukrainian and Russian interests in the region and ensuring the IAEA has the support they need to minimize the risk of nuclear accidents

Discussion Questions

- 1. How can the UNSC ensure the free flow of energy and food to those who need it, minimizing the negative effects of malnutrition and blackouts and promoting the continued success of SDG goals in light of this conflict in Ukraine?
- 2. What steps can the UNSC take to ensure humanitarian respect and protection in the backdrop of this conflict, including through NGO action or mutual dialogue?
- 3. What role can UNSC member nations take to promote the dialogue that could lead to a ceasefire or negotiated end to the conflict in the Ukraine region?
- 4. How can the UNSC support the work of the IAEA to minimize the risk of nuclear accidents around the Zaporizhzhia power plant?

Key Terms

- Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Plant
- International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA)
- Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT).
- NATO
- Warsaw Pact
- Natural Gas
- Nord Stream Pipelines
- Anti-protest laws
- Crimea
- 1853 Crimean War
- Donetsk People's Republic
- Magnitsky Act
- 2004 Orange Revolution
- 2008 Russo-Georgian war

Additional Resources

- Ukraine Overview https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict-ukraine
- How much oil does Russia Produce infographic? https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/12/5/infographic-how-much-oil-does-russia-produce
- AL Jazeera Oil and Natural Gas Infographics https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/5/infographic-does-europe-have-enough-gas-for-winter
- Infographic for Refugee Crisis https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2022/6/16/visualising-the-fastest-growing-refugee-crises-around-the-world