MODEL UNITED NATIONS

CONFERENCE - JULY 2023

UNSC

United Nations Security Council

Letter from the Executive Board

Greetings Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to DPSHMUN's United Nations Security Council. The committee will be a UN simulation at the organizational, structural and functional levels. We will follow the broadly used UNA-USA Rules of Procedure. As the executive board, we will place significant importance on diplomacy, courtesy, adherence to foreign policy, sovereign exercise of functions, and methodical negotiations.

As a principal organ of the UN, we are guided by the principles enshrined in the Preamble of the United Nations Charter. The United Nations Security Council is relatively the most powerful body of the United Nations with an extremely vast mandate and we are excited to moderate you all your heated debates and discussions. UNSC meetings are inclusive, and strongly averse to discrimination, misconduct and malpractices. As a representative at the conference, Members shall be bound by the codes of conduct, policies and regulations of the conference and the UNSC. Needless to say, we expect the highest possible standard of commitment from all members involved.

With hope that you will enhance the quality of this meeting with your substantive participation, we invite you to be a part of this Security Council meeting. We will strive to maintain a positive, inclusive and educational atmosphere for all. Remember, this background guide is not the end of your research but just its beginning. We expect all delegates to come prepared to committee with a much more detailed, holistic, contextualized and country-specific outlook on the agenda.

Looking forward to working with you,

Ishan Jasuja: Chairperson

Vetali Machavarapu: Vice-chairperson

Minnila Nalluri: Rapporteur

Agenda: discussing the situation in Ukraine in light of the latest developments

Introduction to the United Nations Security Council

The United Nations Security Council is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN). After holding its first session on 17 January 1946 in London, its meetings now take place at the UN Headquarters in New York City. The Security Council is the only United Nations institution that can adopt resolutions which are legally binding for all 193 United Nations Member States (Art. 25 UN Charter). It deals with matters on the protection of international peace and security (Art. 24 I UN Charter)

The Security Council has 15 members of which five are permanent members (PS). The P5 Member States are The People's Republic of China, French Republic, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Each two years, ten of the other fifteen Member States are elected by the United Nations General Assembly for a two-year term in the Security Council.

Every Member State represented in the Security Council has one vote. The adoption of a resolution requires a qualified majority of nine Member States, which can either vote in favor or against a resolution, or abstain (Art. 27 II UN-Charter). The P5 have a "veto power" and can block the adoption of a resolution by voting against it. During the Cold War, the lack of agreement between the P5 caused a frequent use of the veto power. But otherwise, usually, the Security Council adopts resolutions unanimously. The United Nations has four purposes:

1. To maintain international peace and security;
2. To develop friendly relations among nations;
3. To cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human
4. To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations.

The United Nations Security Council is the primary mechanism for the fulfillment of the UN's first purpose. The UN Charter provides a framework for conflict resolution between member states with the UNSC playing a pivotal role. The process to responding to a threat to international peace and security begins with the Security Council noting the presence of such a threat. When a

complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to reach an agreement by peaceful means. The Council may:

1.   Set forth principles for such an agreement;

2.   Undertake investigation and mediation, in some cases;

3.   Dispatch a mission;

4.   Appoint special envoys;

5.   Request the Secretary-General to use his good offices to achieve a peaceful settlement of the dispute.

However, these methods may not always suffice and neutralize a threat. In case of prolonged conflict leading to hostilities, for example, the Council's primary concern is to bring them to an end as soon as possible. In such situations, the Council may:

1.   Issue ceasefire directives that can help prevent an escalation of the conflict;

2.   Dispatch military observers or a peacekeeping force to help reduce tensions, separate opposing forces and establish a calm in which peaceful settlements may be sought.

Beyond this, the Council may opt for enforcement measures, including:

1.   Economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties and restrictions, and travel bans.

2.   Severance of diplomatic relations;

3.   Blockade;

4.   Collective military action.

Delegates are urged to go through chapters V, VI, and VII of the UN Charter to gain a sound understanding of the UNSC's functions and powers.

(It is hardly 4 and a half pages of reading combined)

Timeline

February 24th 2022 : Putin orders Russian troops to advance into Ukraine.

March 2nd 2022: Refugees from Ukraine at the Polish border. At least a 100,000 Ukranians had left their homes in the first 24 hours of the military assault.

March 16th 2022: Mariupol theater bombing. Ukrainian officials estimated 1,300 people were sheltering in the theater. An estimated death toll of over 300 people.

April 1st 2022: Bucha atrocities uncovered. Images showing dozens of bodies of civilians scattered around a single street in Bucha prompted calls for Russia to be investigated for war crimes.

April 14th 2022: Moskva, the flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet, sank. Cause remains disputed. Proved to be an embarrassing loss for Russia.

May 17th 2022: Mauripol steel plant defenders withstood weeks of relentless Russian bombardment before finally surrendering in May.

September 1st 2022: A blistering Ukrainian counteroffensive in eastern Ukraine in September recaptured large swaths of territory and forced Russian troops to flee the Kharkiv region.

September 21st 2022: Following a string of embarrassing defeats in Ukraine, Putin announced Russia's first mobilization since World War II on September 21.

October 10th 2022: Kyiv blackout. A new phase of the war began when Russia launched the first of several waves of missile strikes on Ukraine's critical energy infrastructure.

November 12th 2022: After eight months of brutal Russian occupation, the southern city of Kherson was liberated on November 12, prompting scenes of celebration by residents. Russia's hasty withdrawal from the west bank of the Dnipro River was another bleak moment for Moscow, since Kherson was the only Ukrainian regional capital that Russian forces had captured.

December 21st 2022: Zelensky traveled to Washington, DC to meet with US President Joe Biden at the White House and to address the US Congress. The Biden administration announced it was sending nearly $2 billion in additional security assistance to Ukraine — including a sophisticated new Patriot air defense system.

21 February 2023: President Putin announces Russia will suspend the New START bilateral nuclear treaty with the US.

22 February 2023: President Putin revokes a 2012 decree that in part underpins Moldova's sovereignty. China's top diplomat, Wang Yi, meets President Putin in Moscow, as they reaffirm their close bilateral relationship.

23 February 2023: The UN General Assembly adopts a resolution calling for the ending of the war in Ukraine.

March 2023: Wagner mercenaries struggle to secure Bakhmut. Heavy losses suffered by both sides. Russia contemplates moving tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus.

May 25th 2023: Wagner mercenaries capture the East-Ukranian city of Bakhmut. Yevgeny Prigozhin, Wagner founder and leader threatened to pull Wagner troops out of Bakhmut, saying that Russia's top military officials were depriving his force of ammunition.

June 2023: Soviet-era Nova Kakhovka dam in Russia-controlled southern Ukraine is blown up.

June 24th 2023: Yevgeny Prigozhin and his Wagner mercenaries rebel against Russia's leadership. A dramatic 36-hour sage unfolds, as they capture Russian cities such as Rostov-on-Don and march on Moscow.

June 2023: Prigozhin stopped the rebellion after negotiations with the Kremlin, which were mediated by Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko. Wagner fighters were told they could join Russia's regular army or go into exile to Belarus, with Prigozhin. Despite the deal, Prigozhin's whereabouts since the mutiny have been a mystery.

Background to the conflict - the Donbas Region

The Donbas region, in eastern Ukraine, had been a source of contention between the Russian Federation and Ukraine since 2014. The Donbas region consists of two small self-declared states: The Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic. Post the annexation of Crimea in 2014, these states were overcome with pro-Russian demonstrations culminating in referendums voting overwhelmingly in favor of independence from Ukraine. Russia recognized the independence of these republics in 2022, and deployed troops to fight against the alleged oppression of their citizens by the Ukrainians. There have been previous attempts to provide a solution to this contention in the form of the Minsk agreements. The Minsk agreements were singed in two phases: Minsk 1 and Minsk 2. Minsk 1 was signed in 2014 but was rendered worthless due to several violations by both sides. Minsk 2 was more comprehensive and internationalized with the inclusion of 13 key points:

1. Immediate, comprehensive ceasefire

2. Withdrawal of heavy weapons by both sides,

3. Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OCSE) monitoring,

4. Dialogue on interim self-government for Donetsk and Luhansk, in accordance with Ukrainian law, and acknowledgement of special status by parliament.

5. Pardon, amnesty for fighters.

6. Exchange of hostages, prisoners.

7. Humanitarian assistance.

8. Resumption of socioeconomic ties, including pensions.

9. Ukraine to restore control of the state border.

10. Withdrawal of foreign armed formations, military equipment, mercenaries.

11. Constitutional reform in Ukraine including decentralization, with specific mention of Donetsk and Luhansk.

12. Elections in Donetsk and Luhansk.

13. Intensify Trilateral Contact Group's work including representatives of Russia, Ukraine and Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OCSE).

The Stakeholders

Russia

Russia is one of the major belligerents in the current situation, as the issue at hand raised by many nations is to dissuade a Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russia and Ukraine were both a part of the Soviet Union, and had fairly good relations with each other post the dissolution of the USSR. Though there were a series of tensions when Ukraine had proposed joining NATO, which was highly protested by Russia as it would bring NATO forces to the Russian border. Further Crimea was annexed by Russia due to its strategic position in the Black Sea, from Ukraine and tensions have been high between the two countries since then.

Ukraine

Ukraine is the other major player in the situation. Ukraine has been drifting towards the west, particularly the European Union and NATO since the 2000s. This has been a primary concern for Russia and from time to time Russia has warned NATO against the consequences of accepting Ukraine into NATO. This bid for membership in NATO was only strengthened after the Russian annexation of Crimea. Ukraine, like many other countries, sees Crimea as being under the illegal occupation of Russia.

NATO

Formed in 1949 with the signing of the Washington Treaty, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a security alliance of 30 countries from North America and Europe. NATO's fundamental goal is to safeguard the Allies' freedom and security by political and military means. NATO remains the principal security instrument of the transatlantic community and expression of its common democratic values. It is the practical means through which the security of North America and Europe are permanently tied together. Article 5 of the Washington Treaty — that an attack against one Ally is an attack against all — is at the core of the Alliance, a promise of collective defense. Article 4 of the treaty ensures consultations among Allies on security matters of common interest. Relations between NATO and Ukraine date back to the early 1990s and have since developed into one of the most substantial of NATO's partnerships. Since

2014, in the wake of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, cooperation has been intensified in critical areas. The Allies condemn and will not recognize Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea. They have equally condemned Russia's continued aggression and destabilizing activities in eastern Ukraine and the Black Sea region since 2014. Since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, NATO and Allies have provided unprecedented levels of support to Ukraine. In summary, Russia is against Ukraine joining NATO as it sees eastern Europe as a part of its sphere of influence and wants to insulate it from western influence.

Wagner group and its history

Wagner was first identified in 2014, when it started backing pro-Russian separatist forces in eastern Ukraine. It is thought to have helped Russia annex Crimea in the same year. Wagner forces have also been active in Africa and the Middle East.

Before the war in Ukraine, it is thought it had about 5,000 fighters - mostly veterans of Russia's elite regiments and special forces. Since 2015, Wagner mercenaries have been in Syria, fighting alongside pro-government forces and guarding oilfields. It also has troops in Libya, supporting the forces loyal to General Khalifa Haftar. The Central African Republic (CAR) uses Wagner to guard diamond mine. The group is also thought to protect gold mines in Sudan. The government of Mali, in West Africa, uses the group against Islamic militant groups.

Although mercenary forces are technically illegal in Russia, Wagner registered as a "private military company" in 2022. The US said it would designate the group a "transnational criminal organisation" in January 2023. Wagner is closely, often directly, connected to the Russian state. There is evidence indicating that the Wagner Group was subordinated to the Russian military in Ukraine. Wagner extensively relies on Russian military infrastructure, from using a shared base to being transported by Russian military aircraft to using military health care services. The Russian state is also documented supporting the Wagner Group with passports and, as implied by the recent events in Belarus, even by presidential-level political intervention.

The Contemporary Situation

On February 24 Vladimir Putin in a televised address announced a special military campaign against Ukraine. On the same day blasts were heard in several parts of Ukraine, including Kyiv, Kharkiv and Mariupol. A Russian warship attacks Snake Island with Ukrainian Soldiers bravely refusing to surrender. Since the full scale attack by Russia there have been several human rights violations in Ukraine.

The war has left the people of Ukraine in a grave situation. A few satellite images showed a 40-mile convoy of Russian tanks and troops outside the capital city of Kyiv before the Ukrainians fought back and pushed the advancing Russians back eastwards. Human Rights Watch reported that Russians are using cluster bombs against civilians. There have been reports of Russia bombing Hospitals, Schools, and Residential apartments among many other places that the civilians were using as safe houses. Although Russia has agreed to ceasefire and allow humanitarian corridors for the civilians to pass there have been accusations of Russian soldiers blocking humanitarian aid and bombing humanitarian corridors.

Russia's act of invading Ukraine has received wide criticism from the international community, with many countries like the United States, the EU, and the United Kingdom imposing sanctions. Further, the EU banned Russian civilian aircraft from EU airspace. State-owned media Sputnik and Russia Today (RT), along with their subsidiaries, have been banned from EU airwaves and the internet.

Many cities in Ukraine like Mariupol have been completely destroyed in the war. The escalation of conflict in Ukraine has caused civilian casualties and destruction of civilian infrastructure, forcing people to flee their homes seeking safety, protection and assistance. More than 11 million people are believed to have fled their homes in Ukraine since the conflict began, according to the United Nations. Over 5.5 million have left for neighboring countries and another 6.5 million people are thought to be displaced inside the war-torn country itself.

Russian forces pressed their attack on a crucial energy-producing Ukrainian city by shelling Europe's largest nuclear plant, sparking a fire and raising fears that radiation could leak from the damaged power station. This act led an outrage from the international community as it poses a grave threat to the world if a nuclear disaster unfolds.

Both parties involved have been accused of multiple war crimes, which include mass killings, sexual harassment etc. Human Rights Watch has documented several cases of Russian military forces committing laws- of-war violations against civilians in occupied areas of the Chernihiv, Kharkiv, and Kyiv regions of Ukraine. These include a case of repeated rape, cases of summary execution and other cases of unlawful violence and threats against civilians. Soldiers were also implicated in looting civilian property, including food, clothing, and firewood.

The Wagner Mutiny

The Wagner group's mutiny was a result of the longstanding strife between the leadership of the private military organization and Russia's defense leadership. The Wagner group's leader Yevgeny Prigozhin expressed his disapproval of the Russian defense ministry's strategies since his troops were forced to fight in Ukraine with low ammunition and supplies resulting in several casualties. He was especially unhappy with Russian defense minister Sergei Shoigu and set out on a march to Moscow on 23rd June demanding the resignation of Shoigu and the rest of Russia's military leadership. However, the Wagner advance was stopped half-way as Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko negotiated a deal with Prigozhin to grant him exile in Belarus and have charges of treason against his fighters dropped. Although not having any real consequences, the Wagner mutiny severely blemished Putin's image of power and absolute control over Russia. It was an unprecedented challenge to his authority catching him and the international community off-guard.

War crimes

In addition to the rapes, killings and torture, Moscow could be responsible for other crimes against humanity - notably the wave of Russian attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure that began last October.nMass burial sites have been found in several parts of Ukraine previously occupied by Russian troops, including some holding civilian bodies showing signs of torture.

In April 2022, more than 400 bodies of civilians were found in Bucha, a town on the outskirts of Kyiv. In September 2022, 450 bodies - mostly of civilians - were found in mass graves in Izium, in Kharkiv region. In March 2022, Russian forces carried out an air strike on a theatre in Mariupol which was being used as a refuge for children. Ukraine is not completely innocent with respect to war crimes. Several videos circulating on social media since March 27th 2022, filmed by Ukrainian soldiers, show them inflicting wounds on and executing Russian prisoners of war. Both parties involved have committed or at least have been accused of war crimes and violating Article 8 of the Geneva Conventions

Global economic situation in light of the war

The conflict caused a significant shock to the world economy, particularly to the oil and food markets, which resulted in a supply shortage and record-high prices. The euro area has been more exposed to the economic effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine as compared to other economic zones. This is mostly due to the euro area's heavy reliance on energy imports, which in 2020 accounted for more than half of the region's energy consumption. Additionally, before the conflict, Russia was a significant energy supplier to the euro zone. Prior to the commencement of Russia's invasion, imports of food and fertilizer into the eurozone were heavily influenced by Russia and Ukraine. In general, the extremely open economy of the euro area renders it susceptible to interruptions in international value chains and marketplaces. The economic resilience of the euro region to the consequences of the conflict has exceeded expectations.

Targeted policy efforts and actions, including as the UN-mediated Black Sea Grain Initiative, have helped to lessen some of the consequences of the war. Nevertheless, there will probably still be problems with the food supply in 2023 due to uncertainties over the length and severity of the fight as well as probable export limits in nations that export food. Because supply chains have been disrupted, nations have also taken action to ensure the importation of necessities.

At the beginning of last year, the Eurosystem and the majority of analysts predicted that the euro area economy would decrease; but, in the fourth quarter of 2022, real GDP actually increased by 0.1% quarter over quarter. According to estimates, growth will be slow but positive in the near

future, helped by decreased energy prices and fiscal initiatives designed to lessen the effects of high real income inflation. Strong labor markets in the euro region continue to be a positive. The unemployment rate decreased to its lowest point since the EMU's inception, falling to 6.6% in December 2022, in keeping with the general economy's impressive resiliency to the consequences of the conflict. The euro area economy is supported by the labor market's robust performance, which may also aid expand work prospects for many Ukrainian refugees in the region's labor markets.

Discussions in the UNSC

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has widely been discussed on the international level. Both the Security Council and regional organizations like the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe have extensively discussed the topic on multiple occasions.

Since the military offensive by Russia this February, the UNSC has discussed the situation on multiple occasions with multiple documents being introduced by both sides. A few recent documents have been mentioned below

1.   S/2019/163 (https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2019_163.pdf)

19th   February   2019

This was a letter from Russia to the Security Council on the fourth anniversary of the signing of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements.

2.   S/2022/155   (https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/271/07/PDF/N2227107.pdf?OpenElement)

25th   February   2022

This Security Council draft resolution authored by Albania and the US, co-sponsored by 81 member states, deploring Russia's aggression against Ukraine in violation of Article 2 (4) of the UN Charter. The draft resolution failed to be adopted because of a veto cast by Russia. Eleven members voted in favor, one against (Russia) and three members abstained (China, India and the United Arab Emirates).

3.   S/2022/231 (https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2022_231.pdf)

23rd   March   2022

This was a Security Council draft resolution on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine drafted by Russia and co-sponsored by Belarus, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Syria. The resolution failed to be adopted because it did not garner the requisite support, receiving two votes in favor (China and Russia) and 13 abstentions.

4.   UNSCR-2202

(https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2202.pdf)

17th   February   2015

This was a Security Council resolution calling on all parties to fully implement the "Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements", adopted on 12 February 2015 in   Minsk,   Belarus.

5.   UNGA-68/262   (https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/455/17/PDF/N1345517.pdf?OpenElement)

27th   March   2014

This was a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly condemning Russia's annexation of Crimea. It reaffirmed the importance of maintaining Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and underscored that the 2014 Crimean referendum be considered invalid.

Questions to Seek Answers to

1.   What are effective ways that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) can utilize funds and resources to provide aid to those whose basic human rights are being violated?

2.   Are economic sanctions effective or are they inadvertently financially crippling to innocent civilians within Russia who may not support the conflict and are there any better solutions?

3.   Should the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) consider doing away with the Permanent Five members and the Veto Power with regards to the Russia-Ukraine conflict?

4.   What actions should be taken to address the alleged war crimes and gross human right violations committed during the conflict?

5.   How can the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) work with pre-existing international bodies, such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to take a holistic approach to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

6.   What past actions were taken by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) regarding the conflict and how effective have they been?

7.   What is the role of disinformation and propaganda in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and how can they potentially further worsen the conflict?

8.   How can the annexation of Crimea be resolved within the status of the Russia-Ukraine conflict?

9.   Could the Russia-Ukraine conflict give rise to the activity of violent non-state actors (VNSA) and violent non-state actor (VNSA) organizations?

10.   What is the balance between self-determination and territorial integrity with regards to the Russia-Ukraine conflict?

11.   What is the role of international law, existing treaties, conventions, frameworks, guidelines and initiatives in coming to a peaceful resolution and holding those responsible for violations of laws accountable?

Further Research

This background guide is aimed as your first point of reference to get a general idea about the agenda. You will need to do a lot more research to ensure you are contributing and adding value to the committee. To that end, we expect you to research from well-recognized and reputable sources to gain access to accurate information. You should look at the following sources to prepare well:

1.   CIA World Factbook - this gives you access to a variety of data on countries and topics around the world.

2.   The World Bank Group - this is an accurate source for global economic data and monetary facts and figures on specific countries.

3.   UN Charter - this is like a constitution to the United Nations. Referring to certain articles always adds value to your talking points.

4.   International treaties and agreements - these will give you an idea about different countries' international legal obligations and the standards set by the international community.

5.   Reputed news websites like Reuters - these will give you short and specific answers to particular questions and latest happenings in the international community.

6.   UNSC meetings records - these will give you a very unique insight into different countries' stances on different aspects on the agenda. **You can literally see what a country's representative said word-for-word in the UNSC on any agenda.**

7.   Previous UN resolutions - these set precedent and are an important reference point for past UN decisions on relevant topics.