



Impact Of Russo- Ukrainian War On India- West Relationship

Divyajaiswal

Date of Submission: 10-12-2022

Date of Acceptance: 24-12-2022

ABSTRACT

The Russia-Ukraine War has not only affected the participating states but has affected the entire world as a whole. India too is not left untouched by its impact. The war does not seem to end in the near future. Having allies on both sides of the aisle, New Delhi has taken a decision by analyzing the situation in totality. The US and its European allies have a direct influence on the war. This paper attempts to explain the stance of India and the West in the ongoing War. Abandoning the dialogue and diplomatic processes has not only proved to be catastrophic but also makes the return to it difficult.

KEYWORDS: *Ukraine, NATO, Russia, India, West.*

I. INTRODUCTION

John J. Mearsheimer¹ describes the war in Ukraine as a multifaceted disaster, that is only going to grow worst in the near future. He lays the onus on the United States for the present crisis in Ukraine, because of the former's obsession with bringing Ukraine into NATO and making it as the Western fortification on Russia's border. These policies for Ukraine, supported by its allies and directed against Russia are considered as an existential threat by the Russian leadership. Although, by doing so he does exempt the Russians from their responsibility for the military occupation.

Addressing the people of the Russian Federation on February 24, 2022, President Vladimir Putin² stated that the biggest threat and

¹ Speech, John J. Mearsheimer, Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago "The Causes and Consequences of the Ukraine War", *European Union Institute*, June 16, 2022. <https://www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-summer-2022-issue-no.21/the-causes-and-consequences-of-the-ukraine-war>

² Address by the President of the Russian Federation, Russia, *available at*: <https://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67843>

concern for Russia is the eastward expansion of NATO, which brings and employs its military infrastructure closer to the border of Russia. He mentioned in relation to the attempt that was made to reach at an agreement with the US and its allies on European Security and NATO's non-expansion in December 2021, which eventually went into vain. The US and its allies attempt to contain Russia, which is considered as a matter of life and death and the historical future as a nation. In the same address, he did not shy away from flaunting the nuclear power and arsenal of Russia.

He stated that the purpose of this military operation is to protect the people of the People's Republic of Donbass, who have suffered humiliation and genocide for the past 8 years, perpetrated by Ukraine. He also seeks to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine.

His address can be summed in to:

- No eastward expansion of NATO.
- Ukraine should not join the alliance and shall have a neutral status.
- Ukraine should not aspire to be a Nuclear Weapon State.
- The US and its allies should respect and consider the legitimate security concerns of Russia.
- Russian sovereignty over Crimea.

Four days later, in a telephonic conversation with the French counterpart³, he reiterated the same and was open to dialogue if the settlement leads to achieving it.

INDIA'S DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

India and Russia

India and USSR started to have a positive relationship, with the coming of Nikita Khrushchev in power. Subsequently, after the 1962 conflict, the Soviets gave an aggressive push to the defense ties, initiating defense diplomacy. Later in the same

³Telephone Conversation with President of France Emmanuel Macron, Russia, *available at*: <https://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67880>



decade, India appreciated the Soviets for their role during the mediation through the Tashkent Declaration. The Indian- Soviet Treaty of Peace and Friendship (1971) provided India with strategic support and deterred the Chinese or American intervention during the 1971 War. In 1974, India conducted the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion known as Pokhran- I (Operation Smiling Buddha). The West (America and Canada) in its opposition halted the supply of heavy water, necessary for the program. The Soviets not only supported India but also supplied the heavy water. India not only received diplomatic support but also material support from the Soviets. Due to this, India emerged as a latent power.

Russia is the closest ally of India in the Security Council. It has time and again used its Veto Power to block any resolution directed against India. In 1961, it vetoed the US-led resolution to reverse the liberation of Goa. Next year it again vetoed the resolution moved by Ireland, seeking selective implementation of the UN Resolution on Kashmir. Then in 1971, during the war USSR vetoed three resolutions against India. During the liberation of Bangladesh, it held that the ceasefire and withdrawal of forces should only take place after the political agreement has been achieved. It was in consonance with India's stance. India had abstained from voting in the General Assembly on the Crimea issue in 2014. In light of the ongoing war, India has abstained from voting whenever any resolution has been moved against Russia's Military Action in the Ukrainian territory. In the latest resolution tabled by the US and Albania on "Illegal so-called Referenda in Ukraine"⁴, India abstained from voting again. This resolution was in response to the treaties signed by President Putin to annex Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia. India has reiterated that escalation is in no one's interest and both parties should return to dialogue. India abstained to vote, viewing the developments in totality. India has always maintained that both sides should solve the problem through dialogue and diplomacy and has urged every state to demonstrate its commitment towards the United Nations Charter,

⁴India abstains on draft UNSC resolution that condemns Russia's 'illegal referenda' and annexation of 4 Ukrainian territories, India, *available at*: <https://www.ptinews.com/news/international/india-abstains-on-draft-uns-c-resolution-that-condemns-russias-illegal-referenda-and-annexation-of-4-ukrainian-territories/427130.html> (visited on Oct 04, 2022)

International Law, and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state.

Erstwhile USSR, at crucial junctions, had used its Veto in the favor of India and the same has been done by India by abstaining from Russia. If USSR vetoed for India, in the case of Goa, Kashmir, and the 1971 War and protected the interests of India, the same has been done by India by abstaining against resolutions against Russia in the case of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Crimea, and Ukraine.

India imports from Russia more than its exports. From April 2020 to March 2021⁵, India's import from Russia is \$5.83 billion and exports are \$3.48 billion.

India and Ukraine

India's government recognized the Republic of Ukraine⁶ as a sovereign nation in December 1991, and diplomatic ties were established in January 1992. In May 1992, the Indian Embassy in Kiev first opened its doors. (There was an Indian Consulate in Odessa; it was open from 1962 till it closed in March 1999.) In February 1993, the first in Asia, Ukraine established its Mission in Delhi. The two nations' bilateral commerce increased dramatically over the past 25 years, reaching over US\$ 2.8 billion in 2018–19. India is Ukraine's top Asian-Pacific export market and its fifth-largest global export market.

India imports items like agricultural products, metallurgical products, plastics and polymers, etcetera while pharmaceuticals, machinery, chemicals, food products, etcetera are exported to Ukraine. Indian companies like Ranbaxy, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Sun Group, etc. have their representative offices in Ukraine. 'Indian Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association has been set up in Ukraine, by the representatives of these companies.

Because of the war, India had to evacuate its nationals stuck in Ukraine. Most of them being students were evacuated and unfortunately, one student died while waiting in the queue. Ukraine is one of the favored destinations for aspiring medical, dentistry and engineering students because of the relaxed criteria for admission as compared to that of India and the reasonable fees. There are nearly 18,000 students in Ukraine who had to return due to the ongoing war.

⁵<http://www.indianembassy-moscow.gov.in/>

⁶India- Ukraine Relations, India, *available at*: https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India_Ukraine_Jun_2020.pdf (visited on Oct 03, 2022)



India provided⁷ around 70 tonnes of aid in the form of medicines and consumables, tents, surgical gloves, protective goggles, tarpaulin, blankets, solar lamps, dignity kits, and sleeping mats to the Government of Ukraine during the war.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a telephonic conversation⁸ with President Volodymyr Zelensky on October 4 and called for early cessation of hostility and advocated for a diplomatic solution to the conflict. He is of the opinion that the present conflict cannot be solved through military engagements.

IMPACT OF WAR ON INDIA- WEST RELATIONS

India has politely but firmly defended its national interest and did not shy away from mentioning its close and old ties with the Russians. The External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar, has vehemently explained and defended the position of India during the Russia- Ukraine War. The gist of his argument is, since, every state has the right to follow and pursue its national interest, India too has the same right to follow its own. Speaking at Globsec 2022 forum, he has very explicitly refused to accept that Europe's problems are the world's problems.⁹ India had not been supported by the West against Pakistan and on the issue of Kashmir. On the question of the world is divided into two camps, the minister replied that India is in no one's camp, which simply means that India would not be dictated on its foreign policy and it is free to pursue its interest. The 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue¹⁰ between the US Secretaries of State and Defense is a premier dialogue mechanism between

⁷Question No.1349 'Stand of India on Ukraine Crisis, India, available at:

<https://mea.gov.in/rajyasabha.htm?dtl/35558/QUESTION+NO1349+STAND+OF+INDIA+ON+UKRAINE+CRISIS>

⁸Telephone Conversation between PM and President of Ukraine, India, available at:

https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/teleph-one-conversation-between-pm-and-president-of-ukraine/

⁹Sourav Roy Barman, "Europe has to grow out of mindset that its problems are world's problems: Jaishankar", *Indian Express*, June 04, 2022

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/europe-has-to-grow-out-of-mindset-that-its-problems-are-worlds-problems-jaishankar-7951895/>

¹⁰US relations with India, USA, available at:<https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-india/> (last updated on July 18, 2022)

the two countries. The last one was attended in April 2022 and hosted by the US.

WESTERN DILEMMA AND REMEDIES

The escalators approach adopted by Washington in the Russia- Ukraine war is going to prolong the war. All the things which are non-negotiable to the Kremlin, have not only been openly said but in a manner that undermines the concerns of Russia. The US which is committed to the Monroe Doctrine¹¹ should also respect and understand the same for Russia. But the narrative in the west is aimed towards distorting and inflating the threat in order to enable and ensure the hard-line approach of the western governments towards Russia. The threat of inflation is a foreign policy tool that deliberately misrepresents information and manipulates public perception. This enables the government to adopt an aggressive stance. The US aid¹² to Ukraine has surpassed \$53 billion since February 24. The counter to the belief that prolonging the war will degrade Russia's capability is that it will have a huge repercussion on Ukraine and will negatively affect the global economy as a whole, which just started to cope after the Covid. There were accusations levelled against Russia that they want to erase Ukraine from the world map or to install a puppet government in Kyiv, which have been proven wrong for the time being. The west also initiated deterrence by punishment and deterrence by denial¹³. In the former, a range of sanctions has been inflicted upon Russia as a punishment for its unjust war on Ukraine. Deterrence by denial is centered around manipulation and creating a perception that Russia cannot win this war or the aims it seeks to achieve are beyond its capabilities. Both, deterrence by punishment and deterrence by denials have been proved to be ineffective on Russia as Europe has heavily relied upon the energy exports from Russia and in the latter case, without employing the US or the NATO forces it is not operable. Doing so will escalate, prolong and

¹¹Monroe Doctrine (1823), available at:<https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/monroe-doctrine>

¹² US aid to Ukraine, USA, available at:<https://www.usatoday.com/web-stories/us-aid-ukraine-53-billion-congress/>

¹³Ramzy Mardini, "Course Correcting Toward Diplomacy in the Ukraine Crisis", *The National Interest*, Aug 12, 2022 <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/course-correcting-toward-diplomacy-ukraine-crisis-204171>



intensify the conflict. The US is adamant about its policy because the withdrawal of US from the Afghanistan and the coming of the Taliban into power has led to a dent in the image of the present administration. By backing off in the ongoing war, it would be perceived as a sign of weakness in the US. On the other hand, it will also embolden China toward Taiwan. Both China and Russia are the principal challenger to the US and any response which is perceived as weak in the US constituents will affect the Biden Administration.

GLOBAL INTEREST VS NATIONAL INTEREST

The realist school of international politics explains world politics in terms of power. They believed that the states in the environment of international anarchy act for their self-interest by pursuing their national interest and trying to maximize their power and autonomy. The same is being done by Russia, the West, and India. Ukraine on the other hand either has to rely on the west or has to accept the terms of Russia. The states amicably respect the global interest if they are aligned with their national interest. By doing so they are not only able to fulfill their national interest but also serve the larger world. It becomes difficult when the national interests are not aligned with the global ones. All the governments are liable to their citizens and as per the charter they have sovereignty to decide their domestic matters. But it is not as easy, as it seems. In pursuing their national interest, they might deviate from the global ones. This could attract a lot of criticism in general and in the worst case may lead to sanctions and other means of punishment.

II. CONCLUSION

The Russia- Ukraine war has stretched into tenmonths and it seems to continue in the future. The impact of war has been catastrophic. From 24 February to 2 October 2022, OHCHR recorded 15,246 civilian casualties in Ukraine: 6,114 killed and 9,132 injured¹⁴. More than 14 million people have been displaced. The World Bank¹⁵ has

¹⁴Ukraine: civilian casualty update 3 October 2022, Geneva, available at:<https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2022/10/ukraine-civilian-casualty-update-3-october2022#> (visited on Oct 05, 2022)

¹⁵World Bank, Report: *Social Protection for Recovery*, World Bank ECA Economic Update Fall 2022

forecasted that the collective GDP in the Europe and Central Asia region is expected to contract by 0.2% in 2022, Russia's economy is to contract by 4.5% in 2022, and Ukraine's economy to shrink by 35% in 2022.

Irrespective of who claims to win the war, there are no winners in the war. The ongoing crisis should be solved through dialogue and diplomatic processes. But the statement made by President Biden that Putin is a war criminal and should face a war crime trial or the one by President Zelensky that they will hold dialogue with Russia, but with a different President or the stance of Putin that the dialogue should lead to what Russia wants, gives the sense that the dialogue and diplomacy are not being given any priority. Use of force is not the solution, it will only escalate the situation. Attempts should be made to contain the impact of war and prevent further escalation. The US and its allies have to abandon the escalatory approach and Russia too has to respect the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine.

In the present crisis, India refused to be dictated by the state and pursued its national interest. It not only was able to pursue it but defended its stance whenever asked. It has been able to save itself from any labelling by the western media.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- [1]. RumkiBasu (ed.), "International Politics: Concept, Theories and Issues" (SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 1stedn., 2012).
- [2]. Pavneet Singh, "International relations" (Mc Graw Hill Education India Pvt Ltd, Chennai, 3rdedn., 2021)

Articles/ Journals

- [3]. Dr. B. Nagarjuna, "Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: Impact on Indian Economy-Strategies to Mitigate and Sustain", 8 IJMR 204 (March, 2022), <http://eprajournals.net/index.php/IJMR/article/view/203>
- [4]. World Bank, Report: Social Protection for Recovery , World Bank ECA Economic Update Fall 2022
- [5]. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/38098/FullReport.pdf>

Websites

- [6]. Speech, John J. Mearsheimer, Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago "The Causes and Consequences of the Ukraine War", European Union Institute, June 16, 2022. <https://www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-summer-2022-issue-no.21/the-causes-and-consequences-of-the-ukraine-war>
- [7]. Address by the President of the Russian Federation, Russia, available at: <https://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67843>
- [8]. Telephone Conversation with President of France Emmanuel Macron, Russia, available at:
- [9]. <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67880>
- [10]. India abstains on draft UNSC resolution that condemns Russia's 'illegal referenda' and annexation of 4 Ukrainian territories, India, available at:
- [11]. <https://www.ptinews.com/news/international/india-abstains-on-draft-uns-resolutions-that-condemns-russias-illegal-referenda-and-annexation-of-4-ukrainian-territories/427130.html> (visited on Oct 04, 2022)
- [12]. <http://www.indianembassy-moscow.gov.in/>
- [13]. India- Ukraine Relations, India, available at:
- [14]. https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India_Ukraine_Jun_2020.pdf(visited on Oct 03, 2022)
- [15]. QUESTION NO.1349 'STAND OF INDIA ON UKRAINE CRISIS, India, available at:
- [16]. <https://mea.gov.in/rajyasabha.htm?dtl/35558/QUESTION+NO1349+STAND+OF+INDIA+ON+UKRAINE+CRISIS>
- [17]. Telephone Conversation between PM and President of Ukraine, India, available at:
- [18]. https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/telephone-conversation-between-pm-and-president-of-ukraine/
- [19]. Sourav Roy Barman, "Europe has to grow out of mindset that its problems are world's problems: Jaishankar", Indian Express, June 04, 2022
- [20]. <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/europe-has-to-grow-out-of-mindset-that-its-problems-are-worlds-problems-jaishankar-7951895/>
- [21]. US relations with India, USA, available at:
- [22]. <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-india/>(last updated on July 18, 2022)
- [23]. Monroe Doctrine (1823), available at:
- [24]. <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/monroe-doctrine>
- [25]. US aid to Ukraine, USA, available at:
- [26]. <https://www.usatoday.com/web-stories/us-aid-ukraine-53-billion-congress/>
- [27]. RamzyMardini, "Course Correcting Toward Diplomacy in the Ukraine Crisis", The National Interest, Aug 12, 2022
- [28]. <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/course-correcting-toward-diplomacy-ukraine-crisis-204171>
- [29]. Ukraine: civilian casualty update 3 October 2022, Geneva, available at:<https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2022/10/ukraine-civilian-casualty-update-3-october2022#:~:text=Total%20civilian%20casualties%20from%2024%20February%20to%2022,and%201%20C711%20adults%20whose%20sex%20is%20yet%20unknown%29> (visited on Oct 05, 2022)