

The Blueprint Of Russia's Invasion

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Introduction

Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, the 'Sobchak's fixer' as history will call him seemed to have thrown the world into a certain distractive moment. Putin's Russia has successfully invaded what will come to be known as the sovereign state producing the world's second largest wheat for consumption. Russia has taken a step to fulfil what others term a destiny rebuild at the expense of innocent lives, and to understand whether such actions are justified or grounded in international law and politics, the following article will try to explain. Then again, it is important to ascertain the effects of same on economies across the globe and Africa to be precise.

For beginners who would wish to understand this current situation well and help situate the discussion in a perspective that will enhance conversations, Vladimir Putin is a Soviet born trained foreign Intelligence officer with a rank of Lieutenant-Colonel having served in East Europe and run intelligence campaign across the world. The man is a KGB agent who retired to venture into an academia and political life. History is suggestive that he has always had the intent of reuniting Russia and its 'lost province' and further protect the gains, territories and interests of the old bloc called Soviet Union.

It must be of interest to any international relations and security student to know that, after the World War II, America and other countries like France, Germany, UK etc joined hands or forces to form the NATO; which has the tendency of protecting the interest of member states against aggressive oppressors, and as well trade amongst themselves. Some of its members are scattered around Europe and to be firm, several times, other sovereign countries have joined. To further understand this better, there are going to be about three thematic areas for which this will be discussed under and they span from international law, international security, human rights and trade economics.

International Law

Under the International Law, the growth of recognition is bonded by treaties signed and understood by all nations across the world. International Law outlines what should be called a state and the requirements it must meet to pass as a state. The Montevideo Convention of 1933 suggested that, before a territory is recognised as a state, it must pass these tests of population, territory, government and a capacity to enter into relations with other states, which in effect will mean the independence of a state. According to the idealistic undertone of the United Nations Charter which became an international law precedence in 1945, states must not use military force against other states (except defensively or otherwise authorised by the UN Security Council) In 2014, around February, Viktor Yanukovych was overthrown after months of sustained protests, which led to his flee to Russia for cover. Putin had become the President of Russia for the third time technically. In his refusal to recognise the interim government of Ukraine, he sought parliamentary approval for troops to be sent to Ukraine to protect Russia's interest. In March, troops had invaded Ukraine, with almost all its East side predominantly Russian. Donetsk and Luhansk were annexed to become republics on its own although same month as the invasion, Crimea voted in a referendum to become part of Ukraine.

Situating this in a proper perspective, this modern day annexation of territories, declaring them as republics just to have power over further territories by Super Powers is buttressed by history. In 1903, to build a canal in Colombia, the United States began recognising part of Colombia as a new state of Panama. The north east part of China was recognised as a republic by Japan as Manchukuo. The 1945 UN Charter opened up a new chapter for state recognition which has been stated as not using military force against another state. This further gives credence to the fact that, the military invasion to protect the interests of Russia as done in 2014 had no basis whatsoever in international law. Russia has further argued that, in 2003, US breached international law when it invaded Iraq and that has become forever illegal. What this proposes is that, in the realms of super powers, there are few checks and balances and so international law becomes a failed attempt to encourage conversations. In dealing such countries like Russia, US, UK etc, what becomes of the process is history and facts. Which is why it is absolutely important to understand the rising tension between the NATO members and Russia (in this regard, the former Soviet Union). Several treaties and agreements have been signed to in time to make both

the US and Russia stay off each other's territories as far as possible. Unfortunately, there has been subtle serialised measures to get more close to the borders of Russia by NATO as possible through persuasion of some sovereign states to join the NATO. Poland, Hungary, etc who were within the main territories of Soviet Union have become members of the West. It created the fear to the Russians that, while they have respected the agreement of not advancing to the West, NATO and its allies are busily advancing to the East and it has been so since the 90s. In his speech to declare the Special Operation as he termed it, he sought to establish the fact that, it was time to protect the interest and descent of Russia as was what Hitler mentioned before his unfortunate campaign. Russia rather sees this as historic and facts campaign than a breach on international law.

Ordinarily, the argument of Responsibility to Protect moniker as R2P would suffice looking at the breach of international law by the Russians. The argument is that, NATO can activate same and use that to protect its allies, but the most vibrant member of the NATO may not risk that especially when it will not wish to have to sever ties with an enemy that operates a nuclear weapon than wage into a war between same enemy and another ally. But then, in affirming the principles of R2P, according to Crush (2013), R2P currently faces serious challenges to its political influence, which it must overcome. First is the perception that it does entail changes to international law, particularly regarding the prohibition of the use of force found in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. Second is the damage that failures in the application of R2P have done to the concept, focusing on lack of action in Darfur and Syria, and R2P's use in Libya.

In effect, Russia may be justified with much fixation on geopolitics, facts and the history.

International Security

Again, it is important to understand that, Russia is a super power the West may not wish to acknowledge. In the world of security, the country is seen to possess the power of a heavy army to withstand any forms of attacks. The Russian-Ukrainian security impasse became intensified in 2014, when Moscow then engineered the rise of new separatist movements in eastern Ukraine (the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, collectively known as the Donbas, with a population of about 6.6 million in 2014). Militants forcibly took power in several cities and towns, announced the establishment of two separatist entities (the so-called Donetsk People's Republic, or DPR, and

Luhansk People's Republic, or LPR), and gradually expanded their control in the two regions. Ukrainian government and volunteer forces fought back, restoring state control over a portion of each region but suffering some major defeats, including in battles in which regular Russian forces reportedly participated.⁶⁸ In 2019, one study estimated that about half the pre-conflict population of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (or 3.2 million people) were living under the control of Russian proxies.

In recent situation, Russia has risen to become the chairperson of the UN Security Council, and in effecting a vote against the actions of the security breach of Ukraine's sovereignty, with the exception of three member states voting absentia, all voted against the invasion, and Russia vetoed their votes. This was what could have become the basis for the UN to initiate a conversation on the possible end to this unfortunate situation. Again, the geopolitics, facts and history outlined above play a vital role in this current situation. The NATO Joint Forces for the first time since its formation became operational, to support its allies in safeguarding their interests. This serves quite a dying experience for the exploits of war especially when Russia has opened up its special alerts on their nuclear weapons. It must be established that, The Republic of Belarus shares borders with both Russia and Ukraine, reports suggest that, four ballistic missiles were launched from Belarus to Ukraine. It begs further answers to know why the President of Russia would want a peace talk with Ukrainian President in same jurisdiction. The maximum interest therefore is that, it is time for the UN to begin a process to change the composition and powers rendered to its supposed super powers, in that, at the brink of breakage, one country can veto away the power of close to 190 countries, something that spells functional disorder for international security. There are those who subscribe to the idea that, Putin may be writing or as it may building up the Soviet order again, and as a hybrid of both worlds, that speculation may not be far from right. If this speculation is given established grounds to build, the security of the world is in effect jeopardised into a war stage for ancient order to be established.

Human Rights and Trade Economies

The first important measure to identify with under this subtopic is the breach of the sovereignty of another country. This has always been the essence of the 1945 UN Charter, where no country

is expected to invade or enter into another with military might. If that charter is breached, it opens the door for other important aspects of humanity to be breached. The vulnerable in the city of Kyiv and its neighbouring cities will have to endure the trauma of freedom been taken away from them. Women, children and the youth have been displaced by this unfortunate situation. It has become necessary in Ukraine as per the order of the president that, men (young ones alike) are given guns to stand and fight for their country's freedom. This will come off after the psychological distract they may have endured with the period they find themselves in.

As of importance, same are these individuals whose livelihood will become null and void due to the current impasse. Russia and Ukraine are the first and second highest exporters of wheat. Africa happens to be importing close to 37% of same with Nigeria leading the chart. What this spells for our African economies is that, such importations may either stop or become overly expensive, and in this case stop outrightly. As and when it begins, these commodities will become overly expensive to purchase, Brent oil already has hit an all-time high on the world market, because Russia is an oil producer and exporter. Unfortunately, for its negligence in the affairs of invading the Ukrainian borders, the world sanctions are to stop trading with them except for China who is a good ally to the Russian country.

Conflict Resolution and Conclusion

The Minsk Agreement is one of the most important tools to revisit. In achieving the 12 point protocol mentioned in the agreement, the need to restructure it and review same is important. While at that, it is important the West and for that matter NATO seek to respect the agreements signed with the Russian Federal Government.

Below is the Minsk Agreement;

Minsk Agreements

The Minsk agreements were signed in September 2014 and February 2015. The 2014 agreements included the 12- point Minsk Protocol, signed days after Russia-led forces defeated Ukrainian government and volunteer forces in a major battle, and a follow-up memorandum outlining measures for a cease-fire and international monitoring mission. The Minsk Protocol failed to end fighting or prompt a political resolution to the conflict. Leaders from Ukraine and Russia, as well

as from France and Germany, met again in February 2015, amid another major battle, to develop a more detailed “package of measures” known as Minsk-2. Although Minsk-2 established a specific timeline and/or sequencing for several of its measures, the sequencing of some key measures was ambiguous. Many of the measures in Minsk-2 remain unfulfilled to date. A summary of Minsk-2 measures is as follows:

1. Immediate and comprehensive cease-fire.
2. Withdrawal of heavy weapons from defined security zones.
3. OSCE monitoring and verification of the cease-fire regime and withdrawal of heavy weapons.
4. Dialogue on (1) modalities of local elections in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and (2) the future status of “certain areas” in Donetsk and Luhansk and specification of the areas in eastern Ukraine to which this status applies.
5. Amnesty via a law forbidding persecution and punishment of persons “in connection with the events” that took place in certain areas in Donetsk and Luhansk.
6. Release and exchange of all hostages and other illegally detained people based on a principle of “all for all.”
7. Safe access and delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need, on the basis of an international mechanism.
8. Determining modalities for fully restoring social and economic links with nongovernment-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine, including pensions and taxes (and, consequently, functioning of the Ukrainian banking system in those areas).
9. Restoration of full Ukrainian control over its border with Russia, beginning from the first day after local elections and ending after a comprehensive political settlement, following the introduction of a new constitution and permanent legislation on the special status of certain areas in Donetsk and Luhansk.
10. Withdrawal of all foreign armed groups, weapons, and mercenaries from Ukrainian territory and disarmament of all illegal groups.
11. Constitutional reform, including on decentralization, and permanent legislation on the special status of certain areas in Donetsk and Luhansk, in agreement with representatives of nongovernment-controlled areas.
12. Local elections to be held in certain areas in Donetsk and Luhansk, in agreement with representatives of those districts and in accordance with OSCE standards.

13. Intensification of the work of the Trilateral Contact Group, including through working groups on implementation of the Minsk agreements.

Sources: “Protocol on the Outcome of Consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group on Joint Steps Aimed at the Implementation of the Peace Plan of the President of Ukraine, P. Poroshenko, and the Initiatives of the President of the Russian Federation, V. Putin,” September 5, 2014; “Memorandum on the Implementation of the Provisions of the Protocol [...],” September 19, 2014; and “Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements,” February 12, 2015.

Reference:

Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States, opened for signature 26 December 1933, 165 LNTS 19 (Entered 28th February, 2022)

Charter of the United Nations art 4(1) ('UN Charter').

Crush J. (2013), *The Responsibility to Protect in International Law; A Critical Analysis of the Status and Implementation of the Responsibility to Protect in International Law*, (Entered 28th February, 2022)

Congressional Research Service, <http://crsreports.congress.gov>, (2021)