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Implications of the Russia-Ukraine War on the Emergence of the Second Cold War

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Abstract

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 marks the most violent interstate conflict since the US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan in 2001 and 2003, respectively. This study seeks to examine the implications of the Russian-Ukraine War on the emergence of the Second Cold War. The data for this study were obtained from secondary sources, namely textbooks, journals, and internet sources. Moreover, qualitative content analysis was used to analyse data collected. This study revealed that the Second Cold War brought turmoil and created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty among the weak and insecure countries of the world. Again, the Russia-Ukraine War is likewise a proxy war for the Western alliance. The study further revealed that if Russia wins, it would destabilise the rules-based global order and send a signal that revisionist countries—or any power—may attack another sovereign state or violate international law with little repercussions. Also, a Russian victory would let Putin continue his expansionist agenda into Georgia, Moldova, Poland, and Belarus, presumably leading to the expansion of European and global defence capabilities. It might potentially spark a second arms race, incentivising non-nuclear governments to develop their own programs. In sum, a Russian triumph would destroy the rules-based order and usher in an unpredictable future. Finally, this study recommended that the United Nations General Assembly should put more pressure on both Russia and Ukraine for a permanent cease-fire.

Keywords: War, Russia, Ukraine, United States, Cold War.

Introduction

The outbreak of World War II (1939-1945) remains one of the wars fought at the global level that brought European nations into global war. During the war, countries such as the US, Britain, France, Germany, and Russia were the drivers of this war due to their expansionist quest to polarise Europe and other parts of the world under their control, domination, and influence. It is important to note, however, that WWII equally brought a massive, large-scale military campaign or offensive in the history of Western nations. The United States emerged as the first nuclear nation in the world in 1945. In July 1945, the Americans experimentally exploded the first atomic bomb in the history

of mankind in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which forced Japan to surrender and eventually led to the end of WWII (Hartman, 1967).

The aftermath of this development led to the emergence of the United States as a superpower. The political and strategic implication of this development was that it deprived the Soviet Union of nearly all the postwar settlement in Eastern Europe. The end of WW II set the pace for the Cold War. Some dominant features of the Cold War era were the advent of nuclear weapons in the balance of power politics and the hostility that characterised the relationship between the US and Soviet Union. These features represent a critical component of the Cold War politics that influence the relationship between the Eastern and Western blocs. World War II provided a chance for the United States and the Soviet Union to become prominent global players; the development of nuclear weapons cemented their status as superpowers. Each superpower used the development of its nuclear weapons to prevent the other from expanding hostilities and to impose its global supremacy. Not surprisingly, the United States and Soviet Union's potential to produce a nuclear disaster created a worldwide climate of nuclear instability and heralded a tense future (Federation of American Scientists, 2022).

The Potsdam Conference was shaped by the United States' first nuclear test in July 1945, but it was the meeting between Stalin and Truman that augured the Cold War and engendered enduring distrust and escalating tensions between the 20th century's two global superpowers. During this conversation, Truman informed Stalin that the United States had successfully developed "a new weapon of unusual destructive force," unaware that Stalin already knew about it (US Department of Energy, 2023; Atomic Heritage Foundation, 2014).

On August 6, 1945, the United States unleashed an atomic bomb designated "Little Boy" on Hiroshima and "Fat Boy" on Nagasaki three days later. The bombings killed more than 200,000 people and wounded many more. Radiation side effects produced a variety of malignancies and illnesses among survivors. The immediate and extensive devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki astonished and frightened the world, establishing a great reluctance to use nuclear bombs again (Asia Society, 2023; ICAN, 2023; Tannenwald, 1999). The Allied forces hailed Japan's eventual unconditional surrender and the end of World War II, but the world community grew deeply concerned about the future of nuclear weapons.

The United Nations General Assembly passed its first resolution in 1946, creating a commission to handle the implications of nuclear energy discoveries, setting the groundwork for decades of

non-proliferation and nuclear policy. The Soviet Union feared that the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had upset the balance of international authority and that the US would use its hegemonic possession of nuclear weapons to push other states into supporting the US' global agenda (Wong, 2015; Gaddis, 2005). In August 1949, the Soviet Union surprised the United States by testing its first atomic weapon three years sooner than expected by American intelligence. This signalled an exponential increase in the nuclear weapons race (US Department of Energy, 2023).

On August 24, 1991, the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet proclaimed its independence. An overwhelming majority of voters supported the decision in a public referendum that was held on December 1, 1991. Ninety percent of voters were in favour of Ukraine's independence (the word "the" is omitted since independent Ukraine is viewed as a state rather than a geographical area). With 61.6% of the vote, Leonid Kravchuk—a long-time opponent of Rukh and the ideological secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party—became the country's first president after the concurrently conducted presidential election. A few days after the official declaration of Ukrainian independence, on December 8, 1991, the leaders of Ukraine, Belarus, and the Russian Federation decided to establish a "Commonwealth of Independent States," which effectively put a stop to the USSR's disintegration (Lough, 2022).

Moreover, the Cold War between the US and Soviet Union never degenerated into a trial of military strength between the two blocs. It can be argued that one of the reasons for this was that twenty-five arms control treaties signed between the US and Russia were signed in the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis that would have brought the world to a catastrophic state for the first time when nuclear war would be fought. This started with the 1963 Hot Line Agreement, which set the pace for direct radio and telegraph communication between the US and Russia. This further set the pace for modest agreements aimed at stabilising the military balance and reducing the risk of war. To this end, the agreement between the US and Russia reduced the tensions between the two nations and equally helped in building some level of trust that set the stage for further negotiation between the US and Russia. Besides, the vital treaties signed between the US and Russia include the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) of 1972 and 1979, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty of 1987, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) of 1991, 1993, and 1997, and the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) of 2002, as well as New START of 2010. The first two treaties stabilised the nuclear arms race between the US and Russia. It remains treaties that reduced arms proliferation in the US and Russia inventories.

Nevertheless, the Cold War ended in 1991 following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The United States had more than nine thousand five hundred nuclear warheads, and Russia had about eight thousand nuclear warheads. It is important to note that after decades of rivalry between the US and Russia that led to nuclear proliferation, the US and Russia reached a climax in the history of disarmament that reduced the number of new nuclear warheads in their stockpiles since 1986 when both countries reached their peak. However, the proliferation of nuclear weapons by both the US and Russia reduced to nearly 90 percent in the aftermath of the Cold War and further declined by 2012 following the signing of the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty in 2002. The implication of the reduction in the US and Russia nuclear stockpiles is that it equally led to the reduction in other nuclear nations stockpiles, and threatened states are equally discouraged from engaging in nuclear stockpiles.

Today, the fear that nuclear disarmament may not continue has become a concern to the international community. This also has implications for the nations that have already acquired nuclear weapons that should, in case they destroyed their nuclear weapons, what happens if countries like Iran and North Korea, which are insisting on acquiring more nuclear weapons, acquire more? Today, the US and Russia would rather store rather than destroy their remaining Cold War warheads and will continue to develop their “Star Wars” missile defence system from outer space. In August 2008, Russia successfully tested its new long-range nuclear missile that has the capacity to dislodge air defence systems known as the Topol Intercontinental Stealth Rocket that has a range of 6,125 miles. This further depicts the level of compliance with the various nuclear treaties signed between the US and Russia and the difficulties associated with their compliance.

In recent years, there has been a shift in Russian foreign policy toward North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member countries. But one question to ask is what caused this shift? First of all, there was a change in what the Soviets used to call “the correlation of forces.” This is best summed up by a formulation often used nowadays by Russian interlocutors: “Russia up, America down, and Europe out.” Russia is up because of the price of oil, America down due to the consequences of its Iraq adventure, and Europe out because of the defeat of the EU Constitution, the failure to get its act together on energy matters, and the influence of new member states (like Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic republics) that Russia considers both hostile and contemptible (Hassner, 2008). Second, by warning against external dangers and enemies, Putin helps to inspire

a “fortress” mentality in Russia and gives himself a pretext for branding any domestic opposition as treason and for calling upon everyone to rally behind the leader. But while the first reason explains what made the change possible and the second what makes it useful for the transition to autocracy, Russia’s foreign policy cannot be fully understood without taking into account the postimperial humiliation and resentment of the Russian people and the neoimperial ambition of its leaders.

Two quotations sum up the role of these sentiments. The first was stated by Andrei Kozyrev, Russia’s most pro-Western foreign minister, in 1995: “Two things will kill the democratic experiment here, a major economic catastrophe and NATO enlargement.” Both, of course, came to pass. So it was very easy to convince the Russian public that both were engineered by the West, that the advice of Western economic experts, like the admission of former Soviet allies like Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia, among others, into NATO, was part of a great conspiracy against Russia. The second statement was made by Vladimir Putin himself a number of times, most conspicuously, if in condensed form, in May 2005 in Germany. The complete text, as quoted by the British historian Geoffrey Hosking, is as follows: “He who does not regret the break-up of the Soviet Union has no heart; he who wants to revive it in its previous form has no head” (Hosking, 2006). Together these two statements point to the twin problems of resentment and revanchism on the part of post-imperial powers and to the effects of these passions upon the prospects for democracy. Zbigniew Brzezinski has suggested that it was in Russia’s interest to lose Ukraine, because Russia can either be an empire or a democracy, but it cannot be both. With Ukraine, Russia is an empire; without Ukraine, it is not an empire and thus can become a democracy.

This is gradually becoming true. Russia has begun to perceive that Ukraine is planning to join NATO, but in the short term, losing an empire is not the most promising prelude to the task of building democracy. If you have lost an empire and not found a role, as Dean Acheson once said about Britain, what can you do? One solution, adopted in various ways by Germany, France, Britain, Austria, and Turkey, is to try to adapt to the new situation. You may do this by abandoning imperial ambitions, or by trying to transfer them to a larger whole like Europe, or by becoming the junior partner of a bigger power, as Britain has done with the United States (Hassner, 2008). It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia.

Conceptual Review: Security and Cold War

Security is a hotly debated topic, with little consensus on its definition (Crawford et al., 2016). The idea of security literally means "a state of being free from danger or threat" (Oxford Dictionary cited in Meerts, 2018:1-3). This is a wide meaning; therefore, the term "security" is used differently in different settings. It may refer to a condition of being free from a variety of hazards and threats (such as war, unemployment, disease, or accidents). Some scholars have recognised the fact that when the term "security" is employed in this wide sense, it actually refers to insecurity. In this context, it is vital to distinguish between "security from" (protection against damage) and "security to" (allowing individuals to achieve their goals) (Crawford et al. 2016). In layman's terms, security refers to measures used to keep a person, building, or country secure from harm or crime (Longman Dictionary).

Security is a type of security that separates assets from threats (ISECOM, 2014). These 'assets' can be anything, including a person, home, community, object, nation, or organisation. According to Arnold Wolfers, security is "the absence of threats to acquired values" (Baldwin, 1997). This concept seems unclear to Baldwin, particularly the part about "absence of threats." Without much altering Wolfers' concept, Baldwin reworded this as "a low probability of damage to acquired values," which permits the inclusion of occurrences like earthquakes as "threats" to security (Baldwin, 1997). This updated definition places more emphasis on maintaining learnt values than it does on whether risks are there or not. Additionally, it implies that "security" might be characterised in two distinct ways: security for whom? What values does security serve? (Baldwin, 1997).

Therefore, security might be for the state, the individual, or the international system (whom), and it could be for autonomy, economic well-being, or bodily safety. However, there is no universally acceptable definition of Cold War." Writers and scholars have given it various definitions. Some call it the 'opposite of 'hot' war.' Others say it is a way 'without bloodshed.' Naidu says it is a 'phenomenon that is marked by tensions, hostilities, power struggles, propaganda, small armed conflicts, and so on, short of a direct military confrontation developing into a total war' (Naidu, 1974).

On the other hand, Human defines a cold war as a 'tense struggle between East and West, waged on a number of levels—economic, psychological, and political—and over a number of basically distinct issues whose exact outlines were frequently blurred in the heat of the ideological exchange.' The important thing to note in the concept of the Cold War is that it was an aspect of

the balance of power politics that emerged after the end of World War II in 1945. It was an ideological, strategic, and arms struggle for supremacy and advantage of one (East and West over the other) in the post-1945 world politics.

Characteristics of the Cold War

One of the characteristics of the Cold War was the arms race. The era witnessed a monumental arms race built up by the two superpowers and their allies. This development in itself became unacceptable to world opinion as the tread of unprecedented arms race between the East and West could lead to global holocaust should there be an outbreak of another world war. It was in response to the thread posed to by reckless armament by the East and West that led to the SALT conferences on arms control and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In fact, the Cold War period witnessed the development and production of the deadliest nuclear weapons of mass destruction ever known to mankind. To this extent, fears of mutual destruction equally gripped both the superpowers and the 'least powers' in the global community. This was because of the similar fear that irrational use of such deadly weapons could reduce the entire world to the state of extinction in a matter of minutes, if not seconds. Men suddenly became the architect of his own demise.

Another feature is the formation of alliances and counter-alliances in world politics; NATO and the Warsaw Pact are good examples of these antagonistic alliances. Blocks were formed to put the members of each alliance in a position of collective strength. One of the principles behind allied formation is the understanding that an attack on any of the members is considered as an attack on all the members, which calls for a collective response by the allied group. Another guiding principle is the collective perception of the potential perception of a potential enemy or enemies in the system. So, the alliance is often targeted against a 'perceived' enemy. The formation of the non-aligned movement by the Third World State was 'targeted against the East and West in the heat of the cold war political environment in world politics. The non-alignment is, after all, an alignment in a way. We will not go into any further details on this here, as we shall treat this issue in a separate lecture.

The third characteristic is diplomatic blackmail and political manoeuvring involving the two superpowers, with each trying to gain diplomatic, strategic, and political advantage over the other. Propaganda is the main instrument. The use of mass media establishments, texts, pamphlets, and technical aid to the developing states; 'sponsoring proxy' wars campaigns at the United Nations;

and diplomatic tactics of wooing other states have been variously employed by both the Soviet Union and the United States in this direction. The next is subversion and intervention. American takes the lead in this strategy. It has endless records of subversion and interventionist activities in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and Africa, respectively. At a time, this earned the United States of America the nickname of 'the world policeman.' Subversion and intervention were carried out by the West on the claim that it is preserving or preventing Western democracy from 'communist contamination.' Intervention and subversion assumed magnified dimensions under the cold war of the post-1945 world politics.

On the whole, the Cold War era was primarily characterised by nuclear blackmail, massive military build-up, military and financial 'aid,' proxy wars, mutual suspicion (between the East and West), and intensive use of diplomatic and propaganda instruments.

Empirical Review

There is a growing number of research studies in the Russia-Ukraine war in international relations literature. However, there are few studies on how the Russia-Ukraine war will lead to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia. For instance, Demedziuk (2017) has been documenting the hybrid conflict in Ukraine since 2013 and seeks to bring out its unique characteristics. The current piece discusses Russia's relationship with Ukraine since its independence in 1991. Russians view Ukraine as a geopolitical mistake that contradicts the notion of "Russkiy Mir" (the Russian globe). Russia intends to preserve economic and political dominance in the area, as well as control over military capability. Russia is concerned about Ukraine's aspirations to join groups like the EU and NATO. The Maidan Revolution and Crimea annexation marked a significant breakthrough. The analysis of current source literature suggests that Russia's actions in Ukraine are typical of a hybrid war, which is constantly evolving and shaped by contemporary researchers. However, there is a gap in the literature on the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia.

Ochim et al. (2023) investigated the nature, causes, and repercussions of the war. To achieve the aims, we employed a qualitative data analysis approach with secondary sources. The study employs power theory to examine the nature of conflict and its causes, both remote and proximate. The paper identifies a hybrid war with remote and immediate causes, including Ukraine's sense of national identity, idiosyncratic leaders, and the status of Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk, as well as

international alliances, that led to Russia's occupation of Ukraine in February 2022. The study suggests that both nations should prioritise respecting a state's sovereignty as outlined in international law and the United Nations Charter. Additionally, a referendum on the status of Crimea should be considered. The article suggests promoting mutual tolerance and respect for international law to prevent catastrophic global catastrophes. Nevertheless, there is a gap in the literature on the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia.

According to Dodds (2023), Russia's full-scale invasion and partial takeover of Ukraine beginning in February 2022 is a tragedy first and primarily for the Ukrainian people. The invasion highlights the necessity of overlapping and diverse multidisciplinary viewpoints on geography, politics, and governance both inside and outside of Ukraine and Russia. Our commentary begins by addressing some of the invasion's more local and national implications. The attention then moves to the realignment of extraterritorial flows of people, money, and goods, including grain and oil. The territorialisation of agency by both states and non-state actors continues to evolve, presenting prospects for competitive or geopolitical benefit. Longer term, the diverse reactions to the Ukrainian crisis reflect both the possibility for unity and the challenges that await those pursuing climate and food justice. Yet, there is a gap in the literature on the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia. According to Kumar et al. (2023), the wave of the Russo-Ukraine conflict created a meandering international order, bringing the balance of power to a new turning point. The renewed power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union demonstrates their persisting desire to build a unipolar world, which is rooted in both histories. When World War II ended, the globe was divided along ideological lines into a capitalist and a communist half. The former was commanded by the USSR, while the latter by the USA. This leads to extraordinary hostility between the two, which is fuelled by deadly proxy wars, propaganda and surveillance, an arms race, and state control terrorism known as the Cold War. The Russian-Ukrainian warfare, which began eight years ago, has spawned a new type of hybrid war, the New Cold battle, which will be more violent. The New Cold War caused turbulence and fostered an environment of dread and uncertainty among the world's weak and fragile countries. In this research paper, we will look at the reasons for the Russo-Ukrainian conflict as well as its long-term implications. It will also showcase emerging methods of warfare that arose during the New Cold War. I also attempted to investigate how it will alter the

course of international relations. The New Cold War in Europe signalled a new "War of Economics" in Asia and Africa. Nigeria is also increasingly becoming a new location of the New Cold War. If not prevented, the new cold war sparked by the recent Russia-Ukraine conflict would undoubtedly extend to the Transatlantic and Indo-Pacific regions. This absorbed China, Japan, India, Israel, North Korea, and all other emerging powers in the multipolar globe. It is apparent that a new cold war is starting somewhere. Is the United States perceiving Russia as a weak power as a result of NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe? Is America provoking Russia into a conflict in order to weaken it? What action had Russia taken in the midst of the conflict? Nonetheless, there is a gap in the literature on the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia.

Lawrence's (2022) work compares the economies of Russia and Ukraine since the end of the Soviet Union and finds similarities in their economic structures and performance over the last three decades, as well as the dominance of their respective oligarchs. However, the war has had a greater impact on Ukraine than sanctions have on Russia. The report says that while Russia does not require Ukraine's natural resources, gaining control of the country would provide economic benefits. The invasion aims to prevent NATO from advancing to the Russian border, responding to US concerns about Europe's growing reliance on Russia for gas and challenging US hegemony beyond Europe. However, there is a gap in the literature on the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia.

Antwi-Boateng et al. (2023) argued that after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, most African countries opted for a wait-and-see approach to assess the impact on African households, energy security, and agriculture. This paper analyses how African nations responded to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its impact on the continent, utilising the link between world systems and dependence theories. The investigation involves a qualitative review of source data from independent international organisations, think tanks, and media houses. The study is supported by secondary sources, including media reporting and expert crisis analysis. This study suggests that while Africa and African women have been marginalised in decision-making during the war, they have nevertheless suffered detrimental consequences. The continent's lack of agency in global events has resulted in a disorganised response to the conflict, ignoring the voices and input of African women who are feeling the brunt of the global consequences. Africa, headed by patriarchal leadership through the African Union (AU), has failed to adhere to its continental charter ideals of

non-interference and nonalignment in foreign affairs. The continent's structural dependency on nations in the global core has not protected it from the harmful impact of the conflict. The war has further marginalised the continent's women owing to their lack of agency. The violence has resulted in increased energy costs, inflation, and food insecurity, disproportionately affecting African women. The situation in Ukraine has disturbed the academic lives of African students, especially women, who are more exposed to gender-based violence. The research suggests that African women should have more representation in decision-making at the AU, given they suffer the weight of global crises like conflict. However, there is a gap in the literature on the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia.

Bohlmann et al. (2024) investigate the transmission channels of the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on African economies and resilience, with a focus on Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, and Sudan, as well as Africa-wide studies that use econometric modelling techniques. The study contends that the international community should encourage specific country-level approaches to regional integration, social safety nets, and agricultural productivity. However, there is a gap in the literature on the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia.

Theoretical Framework

International relations scholars and researchers have developed a number of theories for the study of relationships between states, such as idealist, liberalist, and realist theory. In international relations, idealism refers to unrealistic ideas, goals, or practices. Eliminating nuclear weapons, covert diplomacy, delegating international security to the UN, establishing an African Union similar to the EU, and alleviating poverty and injustice are all considered utopian. These judgements are often based on a pessimistic view of human nature and the difficulties of accomplishing dramatic change through peaceful means.

International relations (IR) experts use the phrase in two contexts: wide and narrow. Idealism is a long-standing philosophy that has existed in independent political groups without a central authority. Idealism is an optimistic worldview that aims to build a more cosmopolitan and harmonious world order by overcoming international anarchy. Idealism is often associated with the interwar period (1919-1939) due to limited knowledge. The notion of interconnectedness and unity dominated early IR theory and was associated with the League of Nations' experiment in

internationalism. E. H. Carr's *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939) took a strong stance against it. There is no universal definition of idealism. Realist philosophers frequently use the phrase rhetorically to dismiss radical or reformist views.

Idealism has been used to refer to different systems and bodies of thinking, including cosmopolitanism, internationalism, and liberalism, despite their significant contrasts and diversity. Idealists believe that reason can overcome prejudice and oppose negative influences. They think that promoting education and democracy, especially democratic control over foreign policy, would strengthen global public opinion and make it a formidable force that no government can resist. War is viewed as a sickness that harms the world body politic, benefiting only a few privileged interests and unelected regimes. Arms manufacturers and dealers have often faced retaliation. Left-internationalists have criticised huge businesses for prioritising profit above human well-being. Idealists believe that universal organisations like the League and the United Nations play a crucial role in shaping global public opinion. They propose replacing national armies and fleets with science, reason, and discussion in international affairs to abolish the use of brute power. Idealists believe that despite opposing interests between nations and governments, there is a natural harmony of interests among all individuals.

Despite differences in conduct, cultural conventions, beliefs, habits, and interests, some argue that humans are basically uniform. Everyone, regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic background, culture, or religion, seeks security, welfare, recognition, and respect. Humans have a common morality based on basic human rights and the Kantian concept of respecting individuals as ends in themselves, rather than seeing them as mere tools. Mazzini believed that nationalism and internationalism are not inherently incompatible, which many idealists agree with. Nations naturally divide work. Each nation has a unique role to play in contributing to global well-being. If all nations acted in this way, international harmony would reign. This ideology inspired President Woodrow Wilson to prioritise national self-determination in the 1919 peace treaty (Wilson, 2003).

During the interwar period, many policy prescriptions aimed to restrict the power of sovereign nations by granting more political authority to international bodies. The anarchy of competing nation-states was viewed as the root cause of World War One. Some radical idealists advocated for the abolition of the principle of sovereignty and the balance of power to prevent a repeat of the disaster. Interwar idealists prioritised policies such as collective security, conflict resolution,

national disarmament, open diplomacy, and responsibility for international colonialism. Some advocated for a worldwide police force and full monitoring of weaponry manufacture (Long et al., 1995).

However, Carr criticised idealists for undervaluing force in international politics and overvaluing law, morality, and public opinion. He referred to them as 'utopians.' He criticised the concept that reason and discussion could replace armies and fleets. He argued that change did not happen via reason, at least not in the way utopians envisioned. Power plays a crucial role in all political situations, and eliminating it would be equivalent to eliminating politics. Power has a crucial role in international change, whether employed, threatened, or held in reserve. Change can only be brought about by those who wield it (Carr, 2001).

Realists sometimes critique the intellectual descendants of interwar idealists, who advocate for global government, cosmopolitan democracy, and more UN authority, on similar reasons. They disregard the strength and self-interest of independent nations, the use of 'abstract' reason in international politics, and the emotional attraction of national sovereignty. From the foregoing, liberalism prioritises protecting individuals' rights to life, liberty, and property as the ultimate objective of government. Liberals believe that individual well-being is the foundation of a just political order. A political system with unrestrained authority, such as a monarchy or dictatorship, cannot ensure individuals' safety and liberty.

Liberalism aims to restrict governmental power and defend individual freedom through institutions. Liberals value international relations (IR) because a state's actions abroad may significantly impact domestic liberty. Militant foreign policies are especially troubling for liberals. Liberalism strives to minimise governmental power and defend individual freedom through institutions. Liberals value international relations (IR) because a state's actions abroad may significantly impact domestic liberty. Militant foreign policies are especially troubling for liberals. The main problem is that conflict forces nations to increase military might. This authority can be used to battle foreign governments or oppress its own inhabitants. Liberal political regimes often limit military authority by assuring civilian control over the military.

Liberals are particularly concerned about territorial expansion, sometimes known as imperialism, as governments aim to establish empires by acquiring land elsewhere. Expansionist conflicts not only benefit the state but also necessitate long-term military occupation and political control over other territories and peoples. Large bureaucracies are necessary for occupying and controlling

foreign territories. Liberals seek a political framework that protects against external dangers without compromising individual liberty. Free and fair elections serve as the primary check on power in liberal democracies, allowing citizens to remove their rulers and regulate government activity. Political power is limited by its split among several institutions and levels of government, including parliament/congress, executive, and judicial systems. This enables checks and balances in the exercise of power. However, the liberal theory is not applicable for our understanding of the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia. It can be argued that during the Cold War era, the realist theoretical approach became increasingly popular. According to Levy (1998:146), the realism school has dominated the study of security and conflict since Thucydides and includes "Machiavellians, Hobbesians, classical balance of power theorists, Waltzian neorealists, and hegemonic transition theorists." Sovereign nations are the primary actors in world politics, acting logically to advance their security, power, and money in a conflicted international system that lacks legitimate political authority to manage conflicts or execute accords. Although realist theorists used varied ways to describe and anticipate the international system, they all shared a fundamental set of assumptions (Levy 1998:146).

During the Cold War, states, strategy, military force, and the status quo were the primary security variables (Williams 2013). From a typical realist perspective, for over 40 years, the majority of countries relied on a balance of power among states for their security. Wolfers (1952), on the other hand, presented a radically different view of security. Wolfers believed that states' priorities for security varied substantially (Baldwin, 1997). Again, security studies during most of the Cold War were largely focused on issues of control, threat, or use of force (Nye et al. 1988). As a result, it was assumed that the international system was basically state-centric, with states serving as both the major users of force and the primary targets of power. Arnold Wolfers' well-known article "National Security" as an Ambiguous Symbol provided a brief summary of the Cold War's primary opposing security ideas (Wolfers, 1952).

The classic security paradigm alludes to a realist conception of security in which the state serves as the referent object of security. The realism school of international relations theory addresses large-scale issues, including political and militaristic ones, in a setting where security and power, as measured by military prowess, are the primary forces guiding the global system. Wolfers (1952) contended that certain states may be so unsatisfied with their existing condition that they are more

interested in acquiring new values than in conserving their current ones. According to Wolfers, states are prone to having different perceptions of their so-called "acquired values," the level of danger they may be in, the extent to which they would seek to protect "core" and/or "marginal" values, and the means by which they would ensure security, which could range from alliances and an arms race to neutrality and the pacifist refrain from using force. Wolfers was a classical realist who challenged traditional philosophers' assumptions that security is an absolute ideal. In his landmark work, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Hans Morgenthau articulated the core ideas of classical realism and asserted that politicians make decisions based on what is best for their country, a process he referred to as power acquisition. Although it may be argued that it does not, Morgenthau argues that security is a byproduct of power because "(we) presume that statesmen think and act in terms of interests defined as power, and the evidence of history bears that assumption out" (Morgenthau 1993:3).

Assumptions of the Realist Theory

The basic premise of realism is that the nation-state (commonly shortened as 'state') is the primary player in international affairs. Other entities exist, such as persons and groups, but their influence is restricted. The state is a unified actor. National interests, particularly during wartime, need the state to speak and act in unison. Decision-makers are rational actors in the sense that making reasonable decisions results in the pursuit of national interests. It would be irrational to do acts that might weaken or expose your state.

Realism implies that all leaders, regardless of political affiliation, understand this as they endeavour to manage their country's affairs in order to thrive in a competitive world. Finally, nations exist in an anarchic setting, which means that no one is in power on an international scale. The frequently used example of having 'no one to call' in an international emergency serves to emphasise this idea. Within our own states, we usually have police forces, military, courts, and so forth. In an emergency, it is expected that these institutions will 'do something' to respond. Internationally, there is no clear expectation of anybody or anything 'doing something' because there is no set hierarchy.

As a result, governments may rely only on themselves. Realists argue that their theory best captures how statecraft practitioners perceive international politics. As a result, realism, more than any other IR theory, is frequently used in the realm of policymaking, mirroring Machiavelli's goal to provide

a guidebook for leaders. Critics of realism claim that realists might contribute to the continuation of the violent and combative society they represent.

Realists urge leaders to act on suspicion, power, and force by claiming that humans are uncooperative and egoistic and that there is no hierarchy in the state system. Realism might thus be interpreted as a self-fulfilling prophecy. More directly, realism is sometimes critiqued for being overly gloomy since it sees the international system as inherently hostile. Realists, on the other hand, believe that leaders face insurmountable obstacles and little prospects for collaboration, as in the case of the Russia-Ukraine war. As a result, they have no choice but to confront the realities of power politics. For a realist, confronting the realities of one's situation is not pessimism; rather, it is prudent. The realist view of international relations emphasises that the prospect of peaceful change, or any kind of change, is limited. It is foolish for a leader to rely on such an idealised outcome.

Many realism critics focus on one of its major strategies for managing global affairs, known as 'the balance of power.' This is a system in which governments are constantly making decisions to strengthen their own capabilities while degrading those of others. This creates a 'balance' of sorts since (theoretically) no state is allowed to become too dominant inside the international system. If a state tries to push its luck and expand too far, as Nazi Germany did in the 1930s, it will spark a war because other countries will create an alliance to try to fight it—that is, restore balance. This power-balancing system is one of the causes of anarchy in international affairs. No one state has been able to become a global power and bring the entire world under its direct authority. As a result, realism typically emphasises the significance of flexible relationships in order to ensure survival. These alliances are determined less by political or cultural commonalities among governments than by the necessity to recruit fair-weather allies, or 'enemies of my adversary.' This may assist to explain why the United States and the Soviet Union cooperated during World War II (1939-1945): both sensed a comparable danger from a growing Germany and wanted to counter it.

However, within a few years after the end of the war, the nations had become bitter foes, and the balance of power began to change again as new alliances were forged during what became known as the Cold War (1947–1991). While realists view the balance of power as a reasonable method for managing an unstable world, critics see it as a means of legitimising war and violence. However, perhaps because it is intended to explain repetition and a timeless pattern of behaviour,

realism forecasts or explains a significant recent upheaval of the international system: the conclusion of the Cold War between the United States of America (US) and the Soviet Union in 1991. When the Cold War ended, international politics shifted dramatically, heralding a new period of minimal competition among states and great potential for collaboration. Today, the face-off between Russia and the US on the war in Ukraine encouraged the creation of a pessimistic view of international politics that accepted realism as the 'new thinking.' It is against this background that this study adopted the realist theory to examine the extent to which the Russia-Ukraine war has led to the emergence of another Cold War between the United States and Russia.

The Russia-Ukraine War and the Emergence of the Second Cold War

Following the end of Europe's hegemony in World War II, the Cold War erupted, with the US and Soviet Union competing for global dominance for over 50 years. The competition between the US and Soviet Union over superpower status shaped global foreign policy. The US and Soviet Union used economic assistance, engagement in internal issues, and instigated battles to gain worldwide control. The bipolar international system existed until the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Cold War, which lasted from 1947 to 1991, was characterised by five factors that maintained and/or intensified the war. The Cold War was shaped by the growing bipolar international order following World War II. Ideological disagreements led the US and Soviet Union to fight for over five decades and across seven continents. Third, the two superpowers used proxy conflicts to participate in battle. Domestic paranoia fuelled popular support for ideologies in the US and Soviet Union, contributing to continued hostilities.

Finally, the use of nuclear weapons escalated the fight. The Cold War, a decades-long war between the US and the Soviet Union, disrupted global security.

The escalation of ideological tensions between the two superpowers influenced foreign policy and national security measures of other states, regardless of their status as allies, non-aligned, or proxy wars used by the US and Soviet Union to avoid direct confrontation. During this time, there was widespread fear of nuclear conflict between the two nuclear powers, leading to the repression of civil freedoms and paranoia in both countries. During the Cold War, the United States and Soviet Union alternated between negotiating treaties, publicly criticising each other, and growing their nuclear arsenals, fuelling fears of a nuclear assault. Russia has sought to create an environment of nuclear uncertainty in order to dissuade foreign action and help Ukraine.

However, while Russia's warnings have made the international community wary, they have not resulted in the same level of nuclear instability as during the Cold War, nor have they precluded further military backing for Ukraine. In recent years, available statistics has shown that both the United States and Russia has increased their military capabilities in various respect as shown in Table 1.1 below:

Table 1.1 Land Power Comparison between United States and Russia 2024

Military Capability	United States	Russia
Global Ranking	1	2
Population	339.66 Million	141.69 Million
Nuclear Weapons	5,550	6,257
Defence budget	\$ 831.78 billion	\$ 109.00 billion
Available Manpower	149.45 Million	69.43 Million
Fit-for-Service	123.97 Million	46.47 Million
Active Personnel	1,328,000	1,320,000
Reserved Personnel	799,500	2,000,000
Total Tank	4,657	14,777
Total Aircraft	13,209	4,255
Armored Vehicle	360,069	161,382
Towed Artillery	1,267	6,208

Source: www.globalfirepower.com

Table 1.1 shows a comparative analysis between the United States and Russia land power, which shows that the US has more defence budget, available manpower, fit-for-service, active personnel, and armoured vehicles, while Russia has more nuclear weapons, reserved personnel, total tanks, and towed artillery than the United States. From the above comparison, it shows that the United States has more land military capability than Russia. The implication of the above finding shows that each country has areas of their strengths and weaknesses in relation to their land power capability.

Table 1.2 Air Force Power Comparison between United States and Russia 2024

Military Capability	United States	Russia
Aircraft	13,209	4,255

Fighter Aircraft	1,854	809
Attack Aircraft	896	730
Transport Aircraft	957	453
Trainer Aircraft	2,648	552
Special Mission Aircraft	695	145
Aerial Tankers	606	19
Helicopters	5,737	1,547
Attack Helicopters	1,000	559

Source: www.globalfirepower.com

Table 1.2 shows a comparative analysis between the United States and Russian Air Force power, which shows that the US has more aircraft, fighter aircraft, attack aircraft, transport aircraft, trainer aircraft, special mission aircraft, aerial tankers, helicopters, and attack helicopters than Russia. Thus, it can be said that the US has more air capabilities than Russia. The implication of the above finding shows that each country has areas of their strengths and weaknesses in relation to their air force power capability.

Table 1.3 Naval Power Comparison between United States and Russia 2024

Military Capability	United States	Russia
Navy Fleet Strength	472	781
Aircraft Carriers	11	1
Helicopter Carriers	9	0
Destroyer Ship	75	14
Frigates	0	12
Corvettes	23	83
Patrol Vessels	5	83
Mine Warfare	8	47
Submarine	64	65

Source: www.globalfirepower.com

Table 1.3 shows a comparative analysis between the United States and Russia's naval power, which shows that the US has more aircraft carriers, helicopter carriers, and destroyer ships than Russia, while Russia has more navy fleet strength, corvettes, patrol vessels, mine warfare, and submarines than the US. The implication of the above finding shows that each country has areas of their

strengths and weaknesses in relation to their naval power capability. Similarly, Kumar et al. (2023) assert that the wave of the Russo-Ukraine war resulted in a meandering world order, which brought the balance of power to a new turning point. The new power tussle that arose between the U.S.A. and USSR shows their lingering ambition to create a unipolar world, which itself is embedded in their histories. When World War II ended, the world was divided on the basis of ideology, i.e., the capitalist and the communist half. The USA and the latter led the former by the USSR. This results in unprecedented antagonism between the two, which is driven by a dangerous proxy war, propaganda and surveillance, an arms race, and state-controlled terrorism known as the Cold War. However, the Russian-Ukrainian war, which befalls after ten years, again engineered a new method of hybrid war, which will be fiercer in the form of the New Cold War or Second Cold War. The Second Cold War brought turmoil and created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty among the weak and insecure countries of the world.

The New Cold War in Europe meant a new “War of Economics” in Asia and Africa. The new cold war that was engendered from the recent Russia-Ukraine war will definitely, if not stopped, spread its wings in the Transatlantic and Indo-Pacific regions. This engulfed China, Japan, India, Israel, North Korea, and all rising centres in the multipolar world. It is clearly giving an indication that somewhere, a new cold war is being born. Is the United States of America seeing Russia as a weak power due to the expansion of the NATO organisation in the eastern part of Europe? Is America provoking Russia to opt for the war in order to weaken Russia? What course had Russia taken in the midst of the confrontation? When assessing whether the Russia-Ukraine War marks the start of a second Cold War, it is crucial to recognise that drawing conclusions from a two-year fight is difficult when compared to the almost half-century Cold War. The low amount of information accessible about the Russia-Ukraine War is due to the conflict's short duration and shifting nature.

It is possible that the Russia-Ukraine War will become a Second Cold War: an ideological conflict between Western liberalism and Russian illiberalism; that the paranoia present in Russian security forces will permeate Russian and Western societies as the conflict progresses; and that the vast majority of non-aligned and uninvolved states will be forced to choose between Russia and the West. However, the Russia-Ukraine War fits the requirements for the second Cold War. The Russia-Ukraine War is motivated by Putin's desire to recover Russia's former superpower position, rather than an overt ideology like communism or even illiberalism. The Russia-Ukraine War is

likewise a proxy war for the Western alliance; it neither started nor intensified the conflict. The coalition merely supported Ukraine's right to protect its sovereignty.

The growing paranoia in Russian society is reminiscent of the Cold War Soviet Union, but it has not spread to the Western allies. It is pertinent to note that the Western coalition did not respond to Putin's surge in nuclear rhetoric and preparation. Instead, the Western coalition responded cautiously, refraining from using nuclear weapons or strengthening defence preparedness. While the Russia-Ukraine War is like the second Cold War. The Russo-Ukrainian war is difficult to resolve due to its geographical and multifaceted nature, interconnected issues, long socio-cultural history, and idiosyncrasies of leaders in both countries (Scholz, 2022). It is suggested in this study that both governments respect international law and order, as well as each other's territorial sovereignty. Besides, Ukraine, as a former USSR state, should retain friendly ties with Russia, as they did prior to the conflict, as the security of your neighbour is also your own. Parties involved in the battle should prioritise first-world interests over self-centredness. This provides relief to all members of the international community. The conflict is about more than just Ukraine; the world recognises that "Putin's appetite for expansion would not stop at the Ukrainian border." (Kimmage, 2023). If Ukraine wins, it will strengthen the rules-based global order. It would send a message to revisionist countries that the world would not accept attacks on other sovereign states or breaches of international law. A Ukrainian win would also be a setback for Putin's Russia. Russia would become a pariah state, presumably losing influence in international governing organisations and being scrutinised for years to come. The fall of Putin's rule would cause intrastate conflict in the search for new leadership, resulting in political and social turmoil. It would also have global consequences since Russia's influence in the Middle East, Asia, and Eastern Europe would decline. It would also allow Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine to apply for EU membership, as well as Belarus to remove its pro-Russian tyrant, Alexander Lukashenko, and organise free and fair elections (Mikovic, 2023). However, if Russia wins, it would destabilise the rules-based global order and send a signal that revisionist countries—or any power—may attack another sovereign state or violate international law with little repercussions. A Russian victory would let Putin continue his expansionist agenda into Georgia, Moldova, and Belarus, presumably leading to the expansion of European and global defence capabilities. It might potentially spark a second arms race, incentivising non-nuclear governments to develop their own programs. In sum, a Russian triumph would destroy the rules-based order and usher in an unpredictable future. The Russian

invasion of Ukraine caused an international reordering of relationships. Sweden and Finland, which have typically remained neutral in interstate wars, asked to join NATO (Mikovic, 2023). Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan have either adopted a neutral stance on the Russian invasion or begun to distance themselves from Russia. (Mikovic, 2023). Despite their "no limits" friendship, Chinese President Xi Jinping has blasted Russia's nuclear threats as intolerable (Mikovic, 2023). The Russia-Ukraine War also brought the EU and NATO together after a period of relative decline during the Cold War. Whereas Putin anticipated the invasion to split member nations and splinter coalitions, the two organisations have rallied to tackle the current danger with extraordinary power and solidarity. The Western coalition prohibited Russia from participating in SWIFT, an international banking network, and limited its ability to export gas and oil outside. Private multinational enterprises have permanently shuttered shop fronts and activities in Russia, severely diminishing the Russian economy's revenue. However, the Russia-Ukraine War has shown flaws in the new global order. The global order disproportionately benefits a limited number of governments and coalitions at the expense of emerging economic and demographic powers in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean (Scholz, 2022). These secondary nations rely on the rules-based global order to maintain their sovereignty, but they appear less ready or able to tackle challenges to the global system. This was seen in March 2022, when 45 countries refrained from voting to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine at the UN General Assembly (Scholz, 2022). Later that month, the Economist Intelligence Unit discovered that two-thirds of the global population lives in countries where the government has yet to denounce or impose sanctions on Russia (Green, 2022). Olaf Scholz, the German chancellor, said: "The world's democracies [and leaders] will need to work with these countries to defend and uphold a global order that binds power to rules and that confronts revisionist acts such as Russia's war of aggression." (Scholz, 2022). To expand the global order, the world's dominant powers must form alliances with historically less powerful states in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean. These collaborations must offer the less dominating governments actual positions of influence in international governing organisations. For instance, they should either remove the post of permanent member on the UN Security Council or guarantee equal regional representation among permanent members. Dominant nations must also address the actual economic and security concerns of less powerful governments. Finally, only with a stronger global order will the world be able to confront the mounting difficulties of climate change, global health crises, the

development of fascism, and abuses of sovereignty. If these less powerful governments are to invest in and protect the global order in the face of crises such as the Russia-Ukraine War, they must understand that the international community is equally concerned with their stability and sustainability.

Conclusion

Since the Cold War ended, worries regarding nuclear weapons have been centred on proliferation in North Korea and Iran, as well as the renewal of the SALT agreements between the United States and Russia. However, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has reignited fears that Russia may use nuclear weapons for the first time in decades, heightening the prospect of nuclear war. It is widely believed that a nuclear war is rare when two governments engage in direct military engagement, one of which is nuclear and the other is not. However, in order to dissuade international engagement and restrict support to Ukraine, Putin has attempted to foster an environment of global nuclear instability. Putin's nuclear posturing began hours after he authorised the Russian invasion. If Ukraine wins, it will strengthen the rules-based global order. It would send a message to revisionist countries that the world would not accept attacks on other sovereign states or breaches of international law. A Ukrainian win would also be a setback for Putin's Russia. Russia would become a pariah state, presumably losing influence in international governing organisations and being scrutinised for years to come. The fall of Putin's rule would cause intrastate conflict in the search for new leadership, resulting in political and social turmoil. It would also have global consequences since Russia's influence in the Middle East, Asia, and Eastern Europe would decline. It would also allow Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine to apply for EU membership, as well as Belarus to remove its pro-Russian tyrant, Alexander Lukashenko, and organise free and fair elections. However, if Russia wins, it would destabilise the rules-based global order and send a signal that revisionist countries—or any power—may attack another sovereign state or violate international law with little repercussions. A Russian victory would let Putin continue his expansionist agenda into Georgia, Moldova, and Belarus, presumably leading to the expansion of European and global defence capabilities. It might potentially spark a second arms race, incentivising non-nuclear governments to develop their own programs. In sum, a Russian triumph would destroy the rules-based order and usher in an unpredictable future.

Recommendations

First, the United Nations General Assembly should put more pressure on both Russia and Ukraine for a permanent cease-fire.

Second, the United Nations General Assembly should draw the attention of the United States and Russia to the implications of the face-off between them on international peace and security.

Third, the role of China and India as mediators is critical in bringing an end to the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. This is because Russia has some level of trust in China and India's role compared to countries like Germany and Turkey that previously made efforts to broker a deal among the belligerent states.

Also, the role of policymakers in both Russia and Ukraine is key in putting an end to the war. Hence, the policymakers in both countries should embrace peace to bring an end to the war considering the damages it has caused on both sides of the divide.

Finally, the role of the citizens and other stakeholders in both Russia and Ukraine is key in bringing the war to an end. For instance, the citizens should put more pressure on their respective governments by demanding a cease-fire and lasting peace.

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