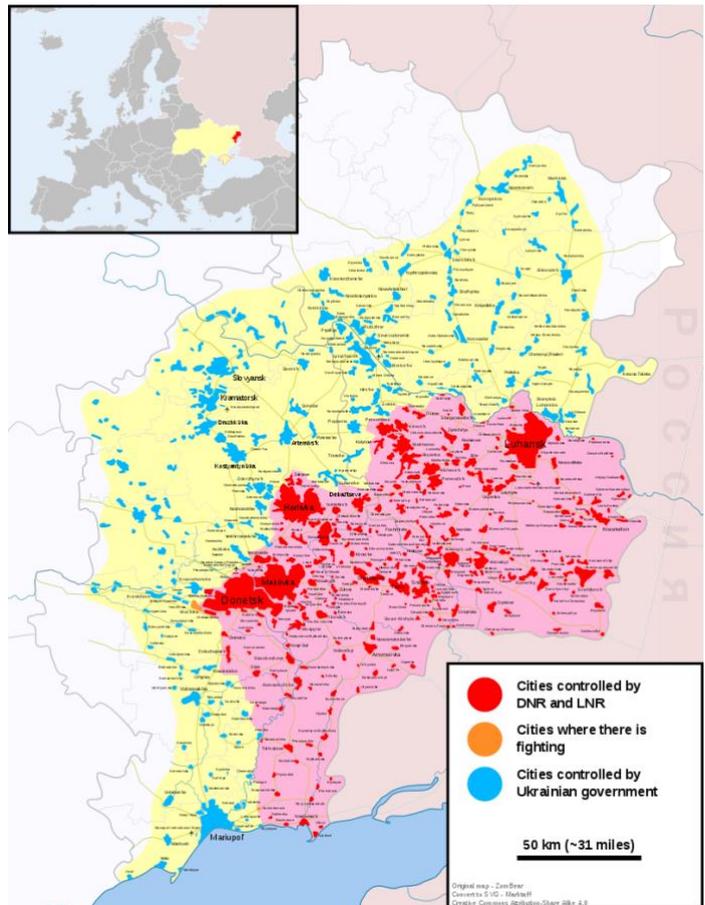


Issue: The question of the Donbass region in Ukraine
Forum: Security Council
Position: Deputy Chair
Name: Jan Hardonk

Introduction

“The understanding that a third world war could be the end of civilisation should restrain us from taking extreme steps on the international arena that are highly dangerous for modern civilisation.” - Vladimir Putin, the Russian president.

Ever since 2014, Ukraine has been in a long and tiring conflict with pro-Russian separatists. This separation has led to a lot of unrest among the Ukrainian people and their government. With Russia actively participating in the conflict, it seems that Ukraine is in a very risky position. This conflict, now soaring over the country for almost 5 years, does not have a positive outcome for any side. The Donbass region lies in ruins. 3318 Ukrainian and Russian civilians have died, 10500 soldiers were killed, with almost 25000 wounded. But the biggest problem of all this, is the over 2 million displaced Ukrainians, who had to flee from their homes because of the constant fighting in the streets they lived in. Entire villages and cities have been captured by separatists. Donbass is a warzone.



How have other, more western countries, looked at this issue? First off, the United States of America. The United States has stated that Russia’s actions are not spontaneous and that all efforts made by Russia to destabilize Ukraine must be ceased. It feels that Russia’s offers for peace are unreasonable: Russia claims territory, which will, according to them, stop the conflict. Trump ,however, does not agree with this. NATO points out other things than the United States. They focus more on Russia’s involvement in supporting separatist groups and the weapons being provided, which could potentially have devastating effects. Then there is the EU, seeing Ukraine as a new country to trade with. They are backing Ukraine

financially and humanitarian. They are also implementing heavy sanctions against Russia on an economic level, showing them it's serious business.

All in all, Ukraine is going down a very slippery slide, which everyone agrees on must be stopped, but words are not deeds. To make these words into deeds is probably the most impactful thing one can do at the moment. If there is a resolution which is beneficial for both parties, Ukraine and anti-Ukraine, there could be peace once again.



Definition of Key Terms

Separatist

A person who supports the separation of a particular group of people from a larger body on the basis of ethnicity, religion, or gender.¹

Donbass

The Donbass is a historical, cultural, and economic region in eastern Ukraine and southwestern Russia.²

Euromaidan

A wave of demonstrations and civil unrest in Ukraine, which began on the night of 21 November 2013 with public protests in Maidan Nezalezhnosti ("Independence Square") in Kiev. The protests were sparked by the Ukrainian government's decision to suspend the signing of an association agreement with the European Union, instead choosing closer ties to Russia and the Eurasian Economic Union.³

Insurgent

A person fighting against a government or invading force; a rebel or revolutionary.⁴

General Overview

The conflict started as the tension rose in the capital, Kiev, in 2013 with the protests against the decisions of the former Ukrainian president Yanukovich's decision of rejecting an economic plan with the European Union. The tension did not settle down after President Yanukovich fled the country but it rather rose with the Russian Federation's intervention of governance of Crimea after landing their troops. The questionable local referendum in Crimea showed that the inhabitants wanted to join Russia so Vladimir Putin said that they need to protect the Russians in the region and this caused an ethnic conflict to grow. In a couple of months, the pro-Russian protests in Donetsk and Luhansk carried the area to hold a referendum to declare independence. Most of the people still living in the regions soon fled to other parts of Ukraine or even to other countries. This, in the end, is the biggest problem. Innocent men, women and children, who are forcefully removed from their homes. In total, almost 2.5 million Ukrainian people have lost their homes and are displaced within or outside Ukraine. In 2015, 2.35% of the population was homeless. Now, in 2019, four years later, this number is expected to be even higher.

Since April 2014, many people lost their lives during the armed conflict between Russia-backed separatists and the Ukraine military. Almost 10.000 soldiers from both sides have lost their lives to this conflict, and a little more than 3.000 civilians have been killed as a result of the constant fighting going on in eastern Ukraine. Overall, there is also around 30.000 people wounded. Russia defends itself by denying the accusations claiming that they are supporting the separatists in the country. Nonetheless, Ukraine and NATO reported Russian military equipment and other related items near the conflicted zones.

¹ Google translate

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donbass>

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euromaidan>

⁴ Again, Google translate

The conflict transformed into an international issue when an Malaysia Airlines plane was downed by a Russian missile in Ukraine territory. In the aeroplane, flying from Amsterdam, were 193 Dutch passengers, who all died in the crash. The Netherlands quickly opened a deep investigation on the crash site. It was found that a BUK-missile was fired at the aeroplane by pro-Russian insurgents. This caused a lot of unrest in Europe and around the world. Now the rest of the world was directly involved. The European Union and the United States sided with Ukraine against Russia. The United States government continues to pressure Russia by imposing new sanctions and limitations to certain individuals and companies. In July 2018, with the final aid of 200 million dollars to Ukraine by the United States government, the total amount of aid coming from the United States adds up to 1 billion dollars since 2014. Lots of this aid is financial, but a big part of the aid is also lethal aid, including but not limited to armoured humvees and weaponry. Since Russia does the exact same thing, but to the insurgents, America feels their actions are justified. The situation show lots of similarities to the Vietnam War, or any war during the Cold War period. It's the east supporting anti-west, and the west supporting anti-east. This whole situation is the perfect opportunity to show that we have indeed learned from our mistakes of the past. It's up to the European Union to make sure there is a certain balance between the two blocs, since both Russia and the US will not take each other very seriously at all.

Physical attacks are not the only ones present in the conflict. Ukraine has been the victim of cyber-attacks varying from attacks that target the government system to the ones that target a whole city causing power outages leaving thousands in the dark multiple times since the conflict emerged in 2014. Ukraine is not at all prepared for these kinds of attacks, in which the Russian government is specialized. It is important for the Ukrainian government to balance their defences and focus further on these cyber-attacks, since they could make them very vulnerable.

At the international level, it raises concerns since it creates further disturbance between already conflicting the United States and Russia. Further, the actions of Russia are disturbing the other members of the European Union. Because of its aggressive attitude towards Ukraine, it creates concerns about the future of some other European states especially the ones who had been in close contact with former USSR.

A second Cold War is on the rise, both sides see it, and could be inevitable. To prevent this war from happening, you, delegates, need to get together and work together. Working together is the only thing ever helping us get forward.

Major Parties Involved

Russian Federation

Russia plays a big part in this issue by supporting pro-Russian separatists, who conflict with the Ukrainian government. In 2014, Russia also annexed the Crimean Peninsula, which escalated the conflict. This escalation worsened ties between Ukraine and Russia, which you can still see today. In the most recent escalation, when Russian warships rammed into Ukrainian vessels and seized all 3 of them. In the US's and Europe's eyes, Russia's behaviour towards Ukraine and NATO has been and is unacceptable, since they state it limits the chance of there being peace between the two parties. In Russia's eyes, though, all their actions are necessary to contain their power.



United States of America

The US has something to say about almost everything, so it is not a big surprise that they have something to say about this issue too. The United States' biggest problem is Russia's involvement in all of this, which they have responded to by sending help to Ukraine. The US has also stated the pro-Russian insurgents to be terrorists, which could mean these insurgents can turn into another target in their 'War on Terror'. The States' position as the most powerful player in the game of world politics is at risk, and it would do anything to keep this position.

Ukraine

Although not in the Security Council, Ukraine's significance in the conflict is enormous, because of it being completely within Ukraine's territory. Ukraine could be stated as being the biggest victim of all the fighting, especially its people, who are constantly on the move trying to run from the danger. Donbass is in ruins, and that is what worries the world the most. Ukraine's in the middle of a humanitarian crisis, and it needs both the west and the east on their side to ever resolve the issue they face.

Timeline of Key Events

When?	What?
18-20 February 2014	Violence around Euromaidan protest peaks
6 March 2014	Crimean government votes to secede from Ukraine and join Russia
20 March 2014	The USA and EU announce additional sanctions on Russia, including new economic and trade sanctions
3 April 2014	Russia withdraws its ambassador to NATO
17 April 2014	Geneva talks
20 May 2014	Medvedev: 'USA's policies are pushing Russia and US to second Cold War'
25 May 2014	Poroshenko wins Ukrainian presidency
16 July 2014	Obama and EU ministers announce and convene to discuss new sanctions on Russia
17 July 2014	Flight MH17 shot down in Eastern Ukraine
26 July 2014	Ukraine launches offensive to retake Donetsk region from insurgents
5 September - 23 October 2014	Ceasefire in Ukraine -> Minsk 1
26 - 27 October 2014	Ukraine elects a new parliament
2 February 2015	US considers lethal aid to Ukraine, like armoured humvees and anti-armour missiles
12 February 2015	Minsk 2 agreement signed
2016	Economy returns to fragile growth
1 September 2017	Ukraine's association agreement with the European Union comes into force

November 2018

President Poroshenko declares martial law in ten regions and bans the entry of most Russian adult males, fearing invasion after Moscow seizes the crew of three Ukrainian boats off Crimea

Previous attempts to resolve the issue

There have been lots upon lots of sanctions made and announced by the United States and the EU. All of these sanctions targeted at the Russian government. These sanctions are all financial sanctions. The amount of export and import in Russia to the US and EU is limited. Russia, though, states that these sanctions will only worsen the situation. Russia has even gone so far to warn the west for a possible 'World War 3' scenario. Sanctions are clearly not the right solution to the crisis.

There also have been several ceasefires and peace deals, which have not led to long-lasting peace at all. The insurgents do not seem to take these deals too seriously. After a few days or weeks, history has shown that eventually one of both parties starts shooting at each other again.

Sanctions, deals and generally words have not worked so far. Is it time for action, or should we have more patience and faith, in the parties' governments, to finally come to an agreement?

Possible Solutions

Now, I will not just give you plain possibilities, but would rather like you to think of something yourself. I know this section is meant for you to get inspired and all, so here's a little inspiration, but I would like you to do your own research and not base your information completely on this report. I'm not perfect, the media isn't either, but at least their facts are based on more sources I can ever imagine. Anyways, inspiration:

What the delegate should focus on more, is action. Our two biggest players, Russia and the United States, are both 'men of action', so to say. If not seeing any progress or change, these two will not bow. Of course, sanctions are actions, but apparently not enough. First, there should be some clarification about the Crimea area, annexed by Russia. What should happen to it? The resolution should have at least a couple of clauses answering this question. Another thing is if Ukraine should stay one country, or if it should split up in two different countries. This would create a sort of West- and East-Germany situation. All of this is already very comparable to the Cold War, so why not create a second one?

Dear delegates, we do not want a second Cold War. That's why we're here. It's time for radical change, and you're here to make this change. Go out and solve this problem.

Appendix/Appendices

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_in_Donbass#cite_note-Denied-5
- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/nov/26/forget-brexit-ukraine-europe-russia>
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26919928>
- <https://www.rt.com/news/crimea-resolution-independence-ukraine-346/>
- <https://liveuamap.com/en/2019/31-january-ukrainian-jccc-reports-that-russian-forces-shelled>
- https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/russia-ukraine-war-putin-leaders-crimea-militia-recognise-kremlin-kiev-diplomacy-nato-us-trump-a8501301.html
- www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker?marker=26#!/conflict/conflict-in-ukraine
- <http://ukraine.csis.org/>

Bibliography

“War in Donbass.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 1 Feb. 2019, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_in_Donbass#cite_note-Denied-5.

Jenkins, Simon. “Forget Brexit, War in Ukraine Is the Biggest Threat to Europe | Simon Jenkins.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 26 Nov. 2018, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/nov/26/forget-brexit-ukraine-europe-russia.

Rosenberg, Steve. “Ukraine Crisis: Protesters Declare Donetsk 'Republic'.” *BBC News*, BBC, 7 Apr. 2014, www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26919928.

“Global Conflict Tracker.” *Council on Foreign Relations*, Council on Foreign Relations, www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker?marker=26#!/conflict/conflict-in-ukraine.

“Resolution 'On the Independence of Crimea' (DOCUMENT).” *RT International*, RT, www.rt.com/news/crimea-resolution-independence-ukraine-346/.

“Ukrainian JCCC Reports That Russian Forces Shelled Donetsk Water Treatment Plant.” *Ukraine Interactive Map - Ukraine Latest News on Live Map - Liveuamap.com*, 31 Jan. 2019, liveuamap.com/en/2019/31-january-ukrainian-jccc-reports-that-russian-forces-shelled.

Inozemtsev, Vladislav. “There'll Be No End to the War between Russia and Ukraine While It Suits Their Political Elites to Keep Fighting.” *The Independent*, Independent Digital News and Media, 6 Sept. 2018, www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/russia-ukraine-war-putin-leaders-crimea-militia-recognise-kremlin-kiev-diplomacy-nato-us-trump-a8501301.html.

“The Ukraine Crisis Timeline.” *The Ukraine Crisis Timeline*, ukraine.csis.org/.