JOURNAL OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE
ISSN Print: 2992-2763 – ISSN Online: 2992-4618 | Vol. 2, Issue 3, No. 1 / September 2024
https://www.jopd.com.ng

THIRD PARTY INTERVENTION IN INTERNATIONAL MILITARY CAMPAIGN: THE ROLE OF AFRICAN UNION IN RUSSIAN-UKRANIAN WAR

Ogele, Eziho Promise
Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences
Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo,
Port Harcourt
eziho.ogele1@ust.edu.ng
ORCID no: 0000-0002-7721-3413

Abstract

The paper examined the role of the African Union as a third party in conflict resolution in Russian -Ukraine war. Over the past years, the Russia–Ukraine war has become one of the deadliest conflicts seen in Europe since the end of the Second World War. The war has increased human security challenge such as forced migration, displacement, destruction of lives and properties, ecological damage, and shortage of food supply, among others. Consequently, there have been third party interventions from state-actors and non-state actors to end the war through negotiation and dialogue. For instance, the African Union intervened in the Russia–Ukraine war through mediation to end the war but to no avail. The paper adopted realism and liberal institutionalism as its theoretical construct. The paper relied on secondary methods of data gathering technique. The paper unravels that the involvement of respected international bodies like the United Nations, European Union, and regional organizations such as Africa Union has provided a platform for dialogue and negotiation, little or no progress have been achieved. The paper recommends that state actors and supranational organizations impose sanctions against key individuals, entities, and sectors linked to the conflict.

Keywords: security, third party, peace, African Union, Russian, Ukraine

Introduction

Throughout the course of human evolution, conflicts have persistently posed as a challenge to societal stability and security and have remained an inevitable aspect of human existence. These challenges manifest across various levels encompassing individuals, groups, communities, societies, nations, and even the global stage. Individuals, communities and nations, over the years, have clashed over scarce resources, ideological differences, power struggles and territorial boundaries, leaving devastation, resentment and suffering in their wake. Among all forms of conflicts, international conflicts unquestionably hold the utmost significance. It is against this backdrop that the critical role of third-party intervention in global security challenges becomes evident.

Third-party intervention plays a critical role in addressing global security challenges by mediating conflicts, promoting peace building efforts, and mitigating violence between conflicting parties. This can be done by providing a neutral forum for negotiations, by offering incentives for compromise, or by using force to coerce the parties to comply with a peace agreement. It is also important to note that, 'whether third parties are private individuals or representatives of states or organizations, their intervention alters the character of a conflict. A third party can affect the conditions of conflict management interactions as well as the process of conflict management interactions' (Bercovitch, 2019).

Given the above, the paper aims to analyze the role of third-party intervention, focusing on the case study of the African Union's involvement in the Russia-Ukraine war. The paper will explore the motivations, strategies, and outcomes of the African Union's intervention, as well as its implications for global security dynamics. By examining this specific case, we can gain insights into the effectiveness and limitations of third-party interventions in complex international conflicts.

Conceptual Review

Third Party Intervention:
A third party intervention occurs when an external entity (an individual, group, organization or country) becomes involved in a situation between two other parties. The third party assists in improving communication, providing support, resources or information and facilitating the conflicting parties in reaching a consensus or delivering a verdict on their behalf. It is a typical response to destructive and persistent social conflict and comes in a number of different forms including conciliation, mediation, arbitration, consultation, facilitation, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, among others. Third parties require the requisite knowledge and skill to properly fulfill their role, which is a thorough understanding of the parties; the substantive issues that divide them, the negotiation process itself, and the wider system in which it is embedded (Fisher, 2001).

However, "it has been difficult to ascertain the initial proponents of the Third Party's Intervention in dispute settlement in the field of peace and conflict management or the year it was propounded. However, from the historical point of view, the third-party invention in dispute settlement is as old as dispute settlement itself... [and] neutral parties have always been involved in resolving issues from time immemorial."(Ogele, 2020a, p.187). Third-party intervention on the international level refers to the participation of external entities or individuals who are not directly involved in a conflict, dispute, or security challenge between different nations or international actors. This involvement is aimed at mediating, facilitating communication, and aiding in the resolution of the issue at hand. Third-party interventions on the international level can take various forms, such as diplomatic negotiations, mediation by international organizations, peacekeeping missions, humanitarian assistance, and economic incentives. The goal of such interventions is to promote peace, stability, and cooperation among nations by offering a neutral perspective, expertise, and resources to help address complex global security challenges.

Third party intervention in global security challenges

Third Party Intervention in global security challenges refers to any form of involvement by an individual or group that is not a party to the conflict but seeks to influence and help resolve the outcome (Mahr, 2022). Thirty party intervention in the global security is legitimate because global security is "institutionalized and governed by the law" (Ogele, 2020b, p. 1760). Third party interventions can take many forms including mediation, facilitation, conciliation, arbitration and even diplomatic efforts, with the aim of preventing further escalation, promoting cooperation, and fostering a peaceful and mutually acceptable outcome among the conflicting parties on an international scale.

The continuous change in global security from the characters of threats, to the tools, techniques and approaches required in addressing these threats, the nature of conflicts and their political and social implications all emphasize the need for third party intervention in global security challenges. According to Knopp (2014), third party intervention is not a

recent development; rather, it is an established instrument in the diplomatic tool boxes of many foreign services and governments around the world.

Yılmaz (2006) explains that when international disputes arise, the initial inclination might be to expect the conflicting parties to resolve the issue on their own, given that it directly pertains to them. However, owing to the inherent attributes of conflict - such as heightened hostility, diminished trust, mutual suspicion, impulse to secrecy, skewed communication, lack of bi-lateral thinking, and more – involved parties often find themselves ill-prepared to formulate a resolution by themselves. Consequently, external intervention by a third party often emerges as an essential requirement in the pursuit of effectively resolving international conflicts.

The role of a third party on the international level is played by international organizations such as the United Nations, continental organizations such as the European Union, African Union, regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), nations or governments, Court of Justice or Tribunal or even groups and individuals of credible and respected personalities such as Thabo Mbeki of Sudan or Kofi Annan of West Africa (Knoop, 2014).

Roles/Importance of Third Parties in Global Security Challenges

The role of third parties in managing global conflicts are important for so many reasons such as; helping to reduce tensions and prevent violence or armed conflict, providing an effective method for improving communication between the conflicting parties, finding creative solutions to problems and building trust especially after an armistice or truce has been reached. A neutral third party can provide a more objective perspective to help the parties resolve their differences in an efficient and timely manner.

Types of Third Party Interventions on the International Level

As earlier established, third party interventions on an international level refer to the involvement of external actors, typically international organizations or states in conflicts or disputes between two or more parties. These interventions can take different forms, depending on the nature of the conflict, positions and goals of the conflicting parties and whether or not the parties are willing to provide consent to intervention. Some of the common types of third party intervention mechanisms include;

i. **Peace Mediation:** The United Nations (UN) Guidance for Effective Mediation describes mediation as a voluntary process "whereby a third party assists two or more parties, with their consent, to prevent, manage or resolve a conflict by helping them to develop mutually acceptable agreements." The term, Peace Mediation according to the Initiative Mediation Support Deutschland (IMSD) (2016) comprises the entire structured process of supporting negotiations, from initial contact between mediators and conflict parties to ceasefire negotiations and the implementation of peace agreements. Peace Mediation is an instrument for addressing and resolving conflicts in a constructive and non-violent manner throughout the whole conflict cycle. The mediator's role is to encourage dialogue and promote compromise between the conflicting parties.
ii. **Arbitration:** Arbitration is a process in which parties to a dispute agree to have a neutral person or panel reach a binding decision that settles their dispute based on previously agreed-upon norms and rules (Shonk 2023). In international arbitration, a dispute is referred to an impartial tribunal or panel for a binding decision, often on the principles of international law. In inter-state arbitrations, nation states through their governments, resolve their disputes through arbitration.

This method however, is most often overlooked and forgotten at the bottom of the dispute settlement toolbox (Shonk, 2023).

iii. **Peacekeeping:** According to the American Heritage Dictionary, "Peacekeeping relates with the preservation of peace, especially the supervision by international forces of a truce between hostile nations." The main focus of the United Nations, the body in charge of the maintenance of world peace and security is peacekeeping. It has proven to be one of the most effective tools available to assist states navigate the difficult path from conflict to peace. According to the UN, The United Nations Peacekeeping is guided by three basic principles; Consent of the Parties, Impartiality, and Non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate. Their major focus is the maintenance of peace and security, protection of civilians, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, promotion of human rights and restoration of the rule of law. Continental organizations such as the African Union and European Union are also responsible for peacekeeping within their spheres of influence.

iv. **Peace Enforcement**: According to the Encyclopedia Princetoniensis, Peace Enforcement refers to the use of military assets to enforce peace against the will of the parties to a conflict when, for instance, a ceasefire has failed. Peace enforcement often exceeds the capacity of peacekeeping forces and is thus better executed by more heavily armed forces.

v. **Peace Building:** Peace building seeks to address the underlying causes of conflict, helping people to resolve their differences peacefully and lay the foundations to prevent future violence. It involves reforming institutions, repairing relationships and fostering friendships between formerly conflicting parties. For a lasting peace, everyone involved in the conflict have to be involved in the peace building process.

Effectiveness of Third Party Interventions

Third party interventions have the potential to transform conflicts. By adopting techniques such as dialogue and negotiation, they create pathways to reconciliation and common ground and at the same time steering conflicting parties away from violence and armed conflicts. Through the application of impartiality, expertise and resources, mediators, facilitators, diplomats, nation states and international organizations assume the roles of peacekeepers, peacemakers and peace builders.

One of the primary strengths of third-party interventions is their capacity to provide a neutral platform. Due to the fact that they do not have any stake in the conflict, a third party can help facilitate communication and understanding, bring new ideas and perspectives to the table which can be essential for resolving the conflict.

In situations of grave humanitarian concern, these interventions can provide vital aid, relief, and protection to the vulnerable populations caught in the crossfire, portraying the altruistic nature of third-party involvement.

Limitations of Third Party Interventions

The landscape of third-party interventions is filled with intricate obstacles that can limit their effectiveness. One of the major tenets of the United Nations and other international organizations is the respect for the sovereignty of all nation states. Sovereignty emerges as a fundamental concern, as interventions can be perceived as infringements on national autonomy. Also, the impartiality of third-party interveners might be questioned due to perceived biases or hidden agendas. This can erode trust and compromise the credibility of the mediation process.

Some conflicts have deep-rooted historical, ethnic, or religious complexities that are not easily understood or addressed by external interveners. Oversimplification can exacerbate issues rather than resolve them. In the Russian-Ukraine War, the issue at hand did not begin at Russia's first strike in February, 2022 but is deeply rooted in the Cold War Era as Russia views Ukraine as part of its territory that was lost during the break down of the Soviet Union in 1991. As such, the delicate art of balancing the diverse interests and priorities of various stakeholders in a conflict can challenge even the most skilled of mediators.

The effectiveness and limitations of third-party interventions in international conflicts are inextricably entwined in a complex dance. While these interventions hold the potential to steer conflicts toward resolution and peace, their success hinges on the delicate interplay of impartiality, cultural understanding, and diplomatic finesse.

Military Campaign

A military campaign is defined as "military activity in which the commander of a theatre of war or theatre of operations coordinates, employs, and sustains available resources in a series of joint actions across a regional expanse of air, land, and sea to achieve strategic objectives" (Mendel and Banks,1988,p. 45). It is serials of major operations that intend to bring about needed results. In them vein, Dupuy (1992) defined the military campaign stage of a war that involves a series of operations associated with time and aim, targeted towards a single, specific, strategic goal in the war. The term was derived from the 'plain of Campania, a place of annual wartime operations by the armies of the Roman Republic. A campaign might include a single battle but often involves several battles over a protracted period inside a single theatre. The impact of joint operations in the military campaign is to establish an operational advantage that makes the enemy position untenable. The key feature of a military campaign is the commander's premeditated harmonization of land, sea, and air determination to attain his strategic goal. The campaigns are usually conducted during the theatre of war, which usually might involve military operations. The "theatre of war campaign combines deployment, employment, sustainment, and theatre of operations supporting campaigns into a coherent whole" (Mendel and Banks, 1988,p. 45). A military campaign is usually executed by either a single Army Service or a joint service campaign. The campaign is aimed at achieving a desired resolution through national and/or alliance strategic goals using military conflict to achieve these strategic objectives. Usually, known impediments to achieving these objectives are resources, geography and season.

African Union (AU)

The African Union (AU) is a continental organization comprising the 55 member states encompassing the nations within the African Continent. Established in 2002, it formally succeeded the Organization of African Unity (OAU) 1963-1999. The main objectives of the OAU were to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonization and apartheid; to promote unity and solidarity amongst African States; to coordinate and intensify cooperation for development; to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and to promote international cooperation. The decision to re-launch the pan-African institution in Africa resulted from a collective agreement among African leaders. They recognized that unlocking Africa's potential required shifting the focus away from the OAU's emphasis on decolonization and ending apartheid. Instead, the priority became enhancing collaboration and integration among African nations to propel the continent's economic progress and development.

The African Union as expressed some concern as the war has had negative impacts on the economies of Africa, leading to the escalation of food and energy prices, alongside disturbances in trade and investment on the continent.

Theoretical Underpinning

Realism:
The study adopted realist theory as one its theoretical construction. Realist theory in international politics stresses competitive and conflicts among nations-states (Korab-Karpowicz, 2018). Scholars have made contributions towards the development of the theory of realism include Niccolo Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Hans J. Morgenthau. Realism can be referred to as a strategy or security doctrine, often associated with the strategies of containment or military preparedness for war which in turn, corresponds to devise an actor's general plan for action. (Guzzini, 2017). In other words, Realism is a way of thinking about how countries act or take decisions. Realists argued that states, who are the primary actors in the international system, constantly struggling for power and security, will use whatever means necessary to achieve their goals, including violence and coercion. The theory also suggests that states sometimes go to war in order to achieve their national interests. Russia has long seen Ukraine as part of its sphere of influence, and it may have felt that the country was slipping away from its control. The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine finds its origins in events dating back to 2014, following Russia's annexation of Crimea, and even earlier, prior to the beginning of the 21st century (MacKay, 2022). These origins can be attributed to the end of the Cold War and the subsequent breakdown of the security arrangements established in the Post-Cold War era. The end of the Cold War triggered the eastward expansion of NATO, a development that Russia perceived as a threat to its security.

Given Russia's historical perspective, Ukraine has traditionally been within its sphere of influence, and there might have been concerns about losing control over the country. In this context, Russia's military intervention in Ukraine could have been driven by the aim to prevent Ukraine from gaining membership in NATO. Realism in politics attempt to resolve crises and international conflicts by implementing countermeasures that protect their borders and general "sphere of influence" in neighboring countries. Ukraine and Russia have an extremely intertwined, complex history that dates back hundreds of years. Ukraine has struggled to maintain its independence for centuries but did finally manage to obtain full sovereignty following the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1991. Ukraine as a democratic nation striving to attain NATO membership, only goes against the realist perspective preferred by Putin who has been outspoken against the enlargement and growth of NATO since 1991 (MacKay, 2022)

Realism offers an effective structure for comprehending the incentives driving the two nations in question. Russia remains steadfast in its objective to safeguard its sphere of influence from the United States and NATO, while Ukraine is striving to attain NATO membership to shield itself against potential future aggression from Russia. This theoretical perspective implies that the conflict stems from the pursuit of power and national interests.

Liberal Institutionalism:
Liberal Institutionalism as a theory highlights the role of domestic, continental and international institutions in facilitating cooperation between states. It argues that international cooperation between states is feasible and sustainable, and that such cooperation can reduce conflict and competition. Liberal Institutionalism presumes that these institutions play vital roles in facilitating cooperation and peace between nation-states (Johnson and Heiss, 2018).

International Organizations provide a forum for states to discuss their differences and work together to proffer solutions to problems. This builds trust and cooperation between states and creates a sense of shared identity and purpose and by extension, regulating the behavior of states. Organizations such as the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), African Union (AU) have been instrumental in fostering cooperation and resolving disputes in in the international system and their continents respectfully.

In the case of the Russian-Ukrainian War, it is clear that international organizations have played a role in trying to resolve the conflict. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the war has unveiled the constraints of international interventions in comparison to states' genuine determination to safeguard their own national concerns. This situation draws parallels with historical instances such as Japan's refusal to comply with the League of Nations during the Manchurian Crisis of 1963. The demise of the League of Nations primarily resulted from states' incapacity to adhere to its resolutions. There is the potential for institutions to be ineffective when faced with power disparities among states, as dominant countries might manipulate or disregard rules to serve their interests. Also, the assumption that shared norms will always lead to cooperation might not hold true in cases where divergent interests and values persist, just as in the case of Russia and Ukraine.

Methodology

The paper adopted a secondary method of data gathering techniques. It is a form of documentary research design that involves systematic collection, examination, and analysis of existing documents and records that pertain to the Russian/Ukraine war. Documentary research design was used to allow a comprehensive examination of documents and data, offering insights into the role of third party in conflict resolution.

Brief historical background of the Russian-Ukrainian War

The armed war in Eastern Ukraine has its roots in a sequence of protests and civil tensions the political rapport between Ukraine and the EU as opposed to Russia. In December 2013, hundreds of demonstrators took to the streets to protest then President Yanukovych's selection no longer to signal the Association Agreement with the EU and to search for nearer financial ties with Russia instead (Shveda and Park, 2015; Docherty and Boer, 2017). When the government violently suppressed the persevering demonstrations on Maidan Square in February 2014, the protest movement – called the 'Euromaidan' – developed into a mass movement of a country-wide scope towards the prevailing strength' (Shveda and Park, 2015, p. 85). From Kyiv, civil unrest speedy unfolded to the east and south, and through April 2014 had escalated into armed war inside the Crimea and the Donbass regions, the latter encompassing the oblasts (administrative regions) of Donetsk and Luhansk (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2014; Docherty and Boer, 2017).

President Yanukovych's flight from Ukraine in February 2014 created a strength vacuum inside the Crimea and Donbas regions: Anti-maiden, pro-Russian armed agencies seized the possibility to take over territory, and declared the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts impartial People's Republics in April 2014; a circulated now no longer recognized through the UN (Docherty and Boer, 2017). Ukraine replied with army force, mainly to armed war (Docherty and Boer, 2017). Fighting has been particularly acute across the so-called 'touchline', marking the border between authorities and non-authorities-managed regions, where – despite the so-called 'Minsk agreements' peace deal attempts – preventing by no means ceased completely (Docherty and Boer, 2017). By now, the scenario has in large part

stabilized right into a stalemate however occasional flare-ups are common still (BBC, 2020). The tremendous use of explosive guns has been a function of the war, with the opposing events launching explosives into populated regions on each aspect of the touch line (BBC, 2020). According to the NGO Action on Armed Violence, between 2011 and 2015 alone, explosive guns had led to 3,435 deaths and accidents in Ukraine, at least 1/2 of of which worried civilian casualties (Overton, Craig and Perkins, 2016). On February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, a surprise to the Ukrainian people and the international community. Although the invasion was unexpected by many, the underlying tensions between Russia and Ukraine had been building for years. In order to fully understand the nature of the conflict, it is important to understand the historical background of the conflict.

Retrospectively, the Russia and Ukraine share a tumultuous history that dates back to 1922 when the Soviet Union absorbed Ukraine under the leadership of Stalin (Gutta, Tatipalli and Kaur, 2022). Stalin's goal was to unify the disparate elements of the USSR into one political and economic whole. In the early 1990's following the disintegration of the USSR and the end of the Cold War due to reasons such as economic and political challenges faced by the Soviet Union, spread of globalization which in turn led to the spread of anti-communist sentiment and various coups, protests and elections, Ukraine finally declared their independence from USSR in August 1991. Throughout the late 1990's and early 2000's Ukraine experienced a geo-political tug-of-war between its former master, Russia and the Capitalist West (Gutta, Tatipalli and Kaur, 2022).

A notable event is Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014. Crimea is a part of Ukraine which shares historical connections with Russia primarily because it was originally a part of Russia from 1783-1954. In 1954, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev transferred the Crimean Peninsula to Ukraine in order to secure greater allegiance from the Ukrainian region. The unlawful annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 was primarily driven by this historical precedent. Since then, thousands of Ukrainians have vacated the region and Russians have moved in. The annexation of Crimea has further solidified the presence of Russia in Ukraine which in turn, has further contributed to the current situation between the two countries as well. Analyzing the historical background of the conflict between the countries provides insight towards the causes of the war and the rationale behind their firm positions.

African Union's Role in Global Security Challenges

The African Union (AU) is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent. It was formally established in 2002 as a successor to the Organization of African Unity (OAU, 1963-1999). One of its key objectives is to promote peace, security, and stability on the continent. This has made the organization become actively involved in conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts across Africa through mediation and diplomacy, peacekeeping operations, arbitration and partnerships with other international organizations such as the United Nations. The primary African Union body responsible for advancing peace and security across the continent is the Peace & Security Council (PSC). This council serves as the permanent decision-making organ within the AU, focusing on preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts.

The African Union focuses on addressing conflicts and promoting stability within the African continent. However, there are instances where the AU has engaged in third-party interventions outside of Africa, often in collaboration with international partners, to address global challenges. For example, the AU's participation and contribution to UN peacekeeping missions in Darfur, Mali and Somalia (Williams and Boutellis, 2014).

The AU, through its specialized agencies and partnerships, provides humanitarian aid and development assistance to countries outside Africa that are facing crises or challenges. This assistance can include resources, expertise, and capacity-building support. The Constitutive Act of the AU emphasizes human rights. This indicates an inclusive approach towards the protection of human rights by the organization (Negm, 2022).

The African Union actively participates in diplomatic and third-party endeavors to confront global challenges that impact Africa or align with the organization's goals. In this context, the AU has undertaken efforts to mediate between Russia and Ukraine, given that the ongoing conflict has repercussions on the cost of food imports to the African continent (Sacko and Mayaki, 2022).

African Union's Intervention in the Russian-Ukraine War

Russia and Ukraine hold economic significance for Africa in different ways due to their roles as trading partners and suppliers of key commodities. Russia is a significant global supplier of various commodities, including oil, natural gas, and fertilizers while Ukraine is a major exporter of agricultural products, particularly grains such as wheat, corn, and barley. Many African countries import fertilizers from Russia to support their agricultural production and also depend heavily on Ukrainian grain imports to meet their food and livestock feed requirements.

The war between the countries has led to a shortage of grain and fertilizers and has led to a spike in prices, food insecurity and negative impact on agricultural productivity in many African countries that import these commodities from them. This underscores the rationale behind the African Union's vested interest in seeking a resolution to the cessation of hostilities.

In June 2023, a delegation from Africa, led by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, and including leaders and representatives from seven African nations, convened with President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. The purpose of this diplomatic mission was to contribute towards the cessation of the conflict, which had significantly impacted the economies of numerous African countries (BBC, 2023)

The African contingent from South Africa, Egypt, Senegal, Congo-Brazzaville, Comoros, Zambia, and Uganda put forward a 10-point proposal which included aspects such as acknowledging the sovereignty of both Russia and Ukraine and continued unhindered grain exports. However, both parties declined to participate in the peace negotiations with Ukraine displaying a tepid response to the talks and Putin dismissing substantial portions of the proposal as he has been issuing threats about the potential non-renewal of an agreement to let Ukrainian grain ships headed for Africa pass through Russian-controlled ports situated along the Black Sea which will be devastating for African countries (BBC, 2023).

While certain African nations have expressed stronger opposition to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, others have chosen to remain reticent due to Russia's establishment of military alliances with governments in African states grappling with either insurgent uprisings or political instability. These alliances encompass countries such as Libya, Mali, Sudan, the Central African Republic, and Mozambique (Smith, 2022).

South Africa also has close trade and historical ties with Russia. Being a member of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) alongside Russia, South Africa has not openly condemned its invasion of Ukraine. In fact, South Africa was accused by its United States ambassador, Reuben Brigety of violating neutrality and supplying weapons to Russia,

violating its non-aligned status. This was denied by South Africa. The African Union (AU) has taken steps to provide humanitarian aid to individuals impacted by the war. In April 2022, the AU officially announced its dedication to providing $1 million in humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Even though the delegation led by Mr. Ramaphosa was unsuccessful in reconciling the conflicting parties, he asserts that the delegation's efforts have paved the way for potential future negotiations. It is crucial to recognize that Africa is not a country, rather, it is a continent comprised of diverse countries, each driven by distinct motivations concerning Russia. Consequently, the concept of a unified 'African stance' holds limited coherence (Cocks, 2022).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Russian-Ukrainian War serves as a sobering reminder of the complexities inherent in international disputes and the dire consequences of armed conflicts. The role of third-party intervention in such conflicts cannot be underestimated. While the conflict has proven resistant to conventional diplomatic efforts, a multifaceted approach involving international organizations, economic incentives, and humanitarian aid remains imperative.

The involvement of respected international bodies like the United Nations, European Union, and regional organizations has provided a platform for dialogue and negotiation, even if progress has been limited. Economic incentives and targeted sanctions have demonstrated the potential to influence the behavior of involved parties. However, the unique dynamics of this conflict underscore the need for creative solutions that go beyond traditional diplomacy such as employing the expertise of professional mediators and extreme measures such as heavy economic sanctions and imposition of war crimes on Putin and Russia.

Although the African Union stepping in to help with the Russia-Ukraine issue could bring a new outlook and ways to talk, it's important to handle it with careful thinking and really understanding the problem. The African Union has experience in peacekeeping and diplomacy, which could be useful. But for it to work well, everyone has to work together and make sure they are planning everything carefully. The key to success would be a well-organized and open effort that focuses on finding a peaceful solution while still respecting the rights and independence of all the different groups involved.

Ultimately, putting an end to the Russia-Ukraine conflict needs all the stakeholders involved to work together. The lessons learned from past conflicts and successful interventions underscore the importance of sustained, patient, and innovative approaches. While there are no quick fixes, the collective commitment of the global community, combined with fresh perspectives becomes imperative to achieving lasting peace and stability in the region.

Recommendations

Bringing an end to a war between two countries like Russia and Ukraine is an extremely complex and sensitive task that involves diplomatic, political, economic, and humanitarian considerations. So far, international organizations such as the United Nations, European Union, and African Union, NATO and nations either individually or collectively, have managed to kick start dialogue attempts. Regrettably, these negotiations have faced considerable obstacles and not produced desired outcomes. In addition, substantial sanctions imposed on Russia by these bodies have significantly impacted its economy. Though, these measures have not yet reached the threshold to compel Russia to withdraw from Ukraine.

Involvment of Peace Mediation Experts:

Currently, the discussions between Russia and Ukraine follow the traditional path of diplomatic negotiations involving government officials, with a focus on political mediation who only have their national interests at heart. Professional peace mediators are not currently participating in these talks. This situation presents a notable drawback and has played a role in the advancement of the conflict, as Russia has disregarded these efforts, labeling them as 'aligned with Western interests'.

The novel viewpoints and inventive concepts brought forth by mediation specialists have the potential to contribute significantly to the discovery of innovative resolutions that may genuinely bring about the cessation of hostilities.

Escalation of Economic Sanctions:

If diplomatic channels prove inadequate, considerations have to be made towards gradually increasing targeted sanctions against key individuals, entities, and sectors linked to the conflict. Clear communication about the conditions for sanctions' lifting can provide an off-ramp for Russia.

Intervention of the International Court of Justice:

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) holds the potential to invoke international legal principles against a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. Even though the Court does not have an independent enforcement mechanism, a verdict from the ICJ declaring Russia's invasion as an unlawful application of force could hold significance, particularly if accompanied by a resolution from the United Nations General Assembly. Such a verdict might heighten the repercussions of the conflict for Russia (Gusky, 2022). Furthermore, the prospect of prosecuting Putin for war crimes becomes more pertinent due to his role as the overseer of Ukraine's actions, as it is the military that bears the primary burden of the conflict by engaging in combat and facing casualties.

References

BBC News (2023). “Africa's Ukraine-Russia peace mission: What was achieved?” https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-65951350

BBC News (2020, February 18). Ukraine conflict: Deadly flare-up on eastern front line. BBC News

Bercovitch, J. (2019). “Social Conflicts and Third Parties: Strategies of Conflict Resolution.” New York. Routledge Press.

Cocks,T. (2022). “Why African nations' support for UN action on Russia/Ukraine is so mixed.” https://www.reuters.com/world/why-african-nations-support-un-action-russiaukraine-is- so-mixed-2022-04-13/

Docherty, B., & Boer, R. (2017). Operating under Fire: The Effects of Explosive Weapons on Health Care in the East of Ukraine [Report]. Harvard University, Harvard Law School International Human Rights Clinic & PAX

Dupuy, T.N. (1992). Understanding war: History and Theory of Combat. London. Leo Cooper Pub.

Gusky, M. (2022) “The ICJ’s ability to hold Russia accountable for Invading Ukraine.” https://studentbriefs.law.gwu.edu/ilpb/2022/10/03/the-icjs-ability-to-hold-russia-accountable-for-invading-ukraine/

Gutta,S., Tatipalli, S.andKaur,T. (2022).“The Historical Background Behind the Russia and Ukraine Conflict” https://thebirdfeed.org/21543/news/the-historical-background-behind- the-russia-and-ukraine-conflict/African Union Official Website https://au.int/en

Guzzini, S. (2017) “Realist Theories and Practice”, Danish Institute for International Studies, DIIS

Fisher, R.J. (2001).Bergdorf Handbook of Conflict Transformation: Methods of Third-Party Intervention. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/71735677.pdf

Initiative Mediation Support Deutschland (IMSD) (2016). Basics of Mediation: Concepts and Definitions. Fact Sheet Series: Peace Mediation and Mediation Support. Berlin.

Johnson,T. and Heiss,A.(2017). "Liberal Institutionalism," Chapter 8 in International Organization and Global Governance. https://www.andrewheiss.com/research/chapters/johnson-heiss- 2018/2018-johnson-heiss-liberal-institutionalism.pdf

Knoop,C.D. (2014). “The Third Party in Conflict Resolution: As Facilitator, Mediator or Arbitrator.” ISPSW Strategy Series: Focus on Defense and International Security. No. 295

Korab-Karpowicz, J. W.(2018). "Political Realism in International Relations", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/realism-intl-relations.

MacKay,M. (2022) “A Realist Perspective: Russia and Ukraine”, the Geopolitics https://thegeopolitics.com/a-realist-perspective-russia-and-ukraine/

Mahr, N. (2022) Third Party Conflict Resolution: Overview and Examples https://study.com/learn/lesson/third-party-conflict-resolution-strategies-advantages-disadvantages.html

Mendel, W.W. and Banks, F.T. (1988). Campaign Planning: Getting It Straight. Parameters. Journal of the US Army War College, Quarterly. Vol. XVIII. (1). March.

Negm, N.(2022) “The African Union's humanitarian policies: A closer look at Africa's regional institutions and practice.” International Review on the Red Cross. https://international- review.icrc.org/articles/the-african-unions-humanitarian-policies-920

Ogele, E.P.(2020a). Exploring indigenous methods of alternative dispute settlement in Nigeria: A study of the Ikwerre traditional arbitration. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)* IV (IV).

Ogele, E.P. (2020b). Climate Change and Human Security in Rivers State, Nigeria. 6(2). 1757- 1769

Overton, I., Craig, I. and Perkins, R., (2016). ‘Wide-area impact: investigating the wide-area effect of explosive weapons’, Action on Armed Violence, Feb. pp. 19–2

Sacko,J. and Mayaki,I. (2022) “How the Russia-Ukraine conflict impacts Africa. An opportunity to build resilient, inclusive Food Systems in Africa” https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/may-2022/how-russia-ukraine-conflict%C2%A0impacts-africa

Shonk,K. (2023).“International Arbitration: What it is and how it Works.” https://www.pon.harvard.edu/daily/international-negotiation-daily/international-arbitration-what-it-is-and-how-it-works/

Shveda, Y., & Park, J. H. (2015). Ukraine’s revolution of dignity: The dynamics of Euromaidan. Journal of Eurasian Studies, 7(1), 85-91

Smith, E. (2022). “WORLD POLITICS: African leaders condemn Russia, but some remain silent as Moscow’s influence hits home.” https://www.cnbc.com/2022/03/03/ukraine-african- leaders-condemn-russia-invasion-but-some-remain-silent.html

Williams,P.D. and Boutellis,A. (2014) "Partnership peacekeeping: Challenges and opportunities in the United Nations–African Union Relationship." African Affairs, Volume 113, Issue 451, April 2014, Pages 254–278, https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adu021

Yılmaz, M. E. (2006). "Third-Party Intervention in International Conflicts: Peacekeeping and Peacemaking in the Post-Cold War Era", UluslararasıİlişkiIer, 3 (11) 25-44.