

# Conflict Weekly

An initiative by NIAS-IPRI and KAS India Office

*A brief review of conflict and peace processes across the world*

13 April 2022, Vol.3, No.2

## Violence in Nigeria, and Russia's new military strategy in Ukraine

Apoorva Sudhakar and Rishma Banerjee



The recent surge in attacks by armed groups in different parts of Nigeria has raised security concerns. (Image Source: Al Jazeera)

### Nigeria: Over 100 killed in another gunmen attack

#### In the news

On 12 April, the Associated Press reported that gunmen had killed over 100 people across four villages in Plateau state, in central Nigeria, on 10 April. The death toll has not been confirmed; witnesses said nearly 130 had died as the gunmen ransacked and set fire to homes. The news report quoted a government statement wherein the state governor promised: “to make it difficult for terrorists and other criminals to set their bases in any part of the state.”

On the same day, the BBC reported mass burials conducted in the villages. The BBC estimated the death toll at 150 and said most victims were men and children; several residents are still fleeing to neighbouring villages. The news report quoted survivors who said security forces arrived nearly a day after the attacks.



### Issues at large

First, Nigeria's gunmen problem. The gunmen, also known as bandits, have been operating in northwestern parts of Nigeria. They carry out frequent attacks and raids across villages; often, these raids are accompanied by mass killings or kidnapping for ransom. Several bandit groups are speculated to be linked to Boko Haram or the Islamic State West Africa Province.

Second, poverty and resource conflict as a cause. The Centre of Democracy and Development (CDD) for West Africa estimates hundreds of bandit groups from the Hausa and Fulani communities working with militants in the northwest. The CDD outlines that poverty in northwestern states is higher than the national average, and therefore, several community members turn to kidnappings and related activities as it is a source of easy money. Further, such attacks have also been linked to the larger conflict over resources between Hausa and Fulani communities in northwestern. These are farmer and cattle herder communities, respectively and therefore, clash over water and land resources.

Third, the government's response. In January, the Nigerian government classified the activities of bandits as "acts of terrorism and illegality." Security forces were directed to conduct air raids to target these groups. However, such actions have failed to quell the attacks. Instead, bandit groups seem to outnumber and outwit security forces. On several occasions, the government officials have negotiated with bandits for the release of victims. Details of such negotiations have not been made public, thereby raising questions of transparency and accountability.

Fourth, the human cost of banditry. In January 2022, The East African referred to data collected by the Council on Foreign Affairs, which revealed that Nigeria witnessed 10,938 deaths in 2021. Of this, 4,835 were civilian deaths, and the rest were security personnel bandits (including kidnappers) and terrorists. Similarly, several schools were shut after bandits conducted mass abductions of school children over 2021; close to 1,500 children were kidnapped in 2021 during different attacks.

### In perspective

First, the increasing frequency of attacks shows that the government response has been inadequate. Government measures like air raids and labelling bandits as terrorists do not address the root problem of the conflict. Instead, it provides only short-term solutions.

Second, the issue is spreading now from the northwest to other regions. The activities of bandits in central Nigerian states indicate that bandits are expanding their bases.

Third, poverty and competition over resources have manifested into violent crimes, indiscriminate killings and abductions. These criminal activities have led to insecurities, like the closure of schools, hindering socio-economic development in the northwest. Therefore, the region is stuck in a cycle wherein poverty has led to conflict resulting in a lack of development and vice versa.

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## Russia: The strategic shift from Kyiv to the Donbas

### In the news

On 6 April, the Russian forces after trying to capture Kyiv, started withdrawing, amidst allegations of war crimes, torture, and mass killing. Earlier, the Defence Ministry spokesperson, Sergei Rudskoy mentioned Russia's refocus of its military offensive. He said: "The main aims of the first phase of the operation have been fulfilled. The military capacities of Ukraine's armed forces have been significantly decreased, which allows efforts to be focused on achieving our main aim: liberating Donbas."

On 11 April, the Pentagon spokesperson, John Kirby said: "We have seen some early indications that the Russians are in fact trying to resupply and reinforce their efforts in the Donbas." On 12 April, a UK Ministry of Defence released a statement: "Russian attacks remain focused on Ukrainian positions near Donetsk and Luhansk with further fighting around Kherson and Mykolaiv and a renewed push towards Kramatorsk. Fighting in eastern Ukraine will intensify over the next two to three weeks as Russia continues to refocus its efforts in Ukraine."

On 12 April, the TASS reported on the state of people in the DPR region. As per the report, due to continuous attacks from Ukraine's military, the people in the region had been sustained without water, food, heating and gas. According to the Donetsk separatists group, immediate measures to repair the damages were being carried out. Apart from them, it reported on how the Ukraine military had destroyed homes, social infrastructure, and bridges in the area.

### Issues at large

First, the withdrawal from Kyiv. While the withdrawal of troops was hopeful, it has left several areas in and around Kyiv in devastation. Images from Bucha indicate the killings of civilians by the Russian troops. Mass graves and killings have been discovered in many places in Kyiv like the suburban areas of Irpin and Hostome. Ukraine has accused Russia of war crimes and claim 5,600 alleged cases of war crimes.

Second, the Russian offensive in the east. The partial blockade of Kharkiv continued amidst the use of rockets and grenades by Russian forces in the residential areas. Units of Russia's 1st Guards Tank Army and the 20th Combined Arms Army have been deployed to Izyum. The UK's defence ministry also reported that Russian troops in Belarus have been posted in Donbas. Artillery attacks have increased in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions. Heavy fighting continued in Mariupol, which has been under siege from 24 February. Marines posted there complained about fatigue, and lack of stocks and ammunition and are reportedly close to surrendering.

Third, the humanitarian crisis and loss of property. According to the UNHRC report, about 4.5 million Ukrainians have fled the country, and 4335 civilians have been killed. There has been a significant loss of property and infrastructure. Even though foreign aid keeps pouring in for Ukraine, how long they will be able to mobilize their people and maintain this steady retaliation against all odds?



### In perspective

First, Russia's failure in capturing Kyiv. Several factors possibly contributed to Russia's inability to capture Kyiv. The most important factor was the grit and resistance from the Ukrainians. While Russia has made several advances in the south, along the Black sea coast, it could not breach the defence and take over the capital.

Second, Russia's plans for the Donbas region. Donbas is strategically important; the region rich in coal and steel, and has Russian-speaking and Russian sympathizers. NATO expects Russia to try and connect Donbas and Crimea via a land bridge. Control over this area, and the accompanying part of the Dnieper basin is also likely to facilitate a better-functioning trade hinterland. The Russian offensive at Mariupol has thus been kept at a constant high, as this port city is of great strategic importance to establish better control in the eastern region of Ukraine.

## **Also, from around the world**

By Padmashree Anandhan, Sejal Sharma, Vijay Anand Panigrahi, and Lavanya Ravi

### East and Southeast Asia

#### **Taiwan: Handbook for people on civil defence**

On 12 April, Taiwan's military published a guidance handbook for people on civil defence in case of a war. The idea of the book is to provide survival instructions on how Taiwan must respond to China under the Ukraine war circumstances. So far, China has increased its military in the area near Taiwan but has not mentioned using force to bring Taiwan under control. In the handbook, details about spotting bomb shelters, water and food supplies, and information on making first-aid kits are given. According to a representative from the All-out Defence Mobilization unit: "(We) are providing information on how Taiwanese should react in a military crisis and possible disasters to come."

#### **Japan: Signs treaty with the Philippines for joint exercise to deal with South China Sea issue**

On 9 April, for the first time, Japan and the Philippines held two plus two talks to discuss the increasing threat in the East and South China Seas. The talks were held due to China's "unilateral attempts to change the status quo." Both countries signed a deal to conduct joint exercises and assured mutual visits of each other forces, to counter China's assertiveness in claiming sovereignty of regional water of the neighboring countries. Japan looks at military and cooperative mechanisms as ways to tighten measures against China's assertiveness in the region. Numerous factors make the Philippines to be cautious in dealing with China over the South China Sea issue.

#### **Australia: Report finds alleged senior officers not penalized for war crimes**

On 12 April, Tolo news reported that several senior officials of Australia who allegedly committed war crimes during their deployment in Afghanistan, but they are yet to face any penalties. In the report, it observed that Australian troops committed war crimes in Afghanistan, including the killing of civilians during their deployment from 2005 to 2016. According to Tolo news, the 21 senior officials were told to "learn from experiences" while 17 lower-ranked soldiers were terminated from service for failing to meet Australian Defence Forces (ADF) expectations and values. Around 40,000 troops were deployed by Australia under the US-NATO-led mission in Afghanistan.

### Myanmar: Clash between military and Thailand ethnic rebels

On 10 April, Myanmar's military launched airstrikes on ethnic rebels near the Thailand border. A fight broke out between both countries on deciding who will control the town of Lay Kay Kaw in the border area. The residents have left the place in December 2021 since the Myanmar army took control. The start point of the clash was when the Karen National Union (KNU) tried to push the army forces back into Myanmar, to which the military responded with airstrikes.

### South Asia

#### India: New Delhi condemns Russia for Bucha massacre at the UNSC

On 5 April, India condemned the killings in Bucha at the United Nations Security Council meeting through its strongest statement against Russia. India's permanent representative to the United Nations, TS Tirumurti expressed his concerns over the deteriorating security situation in Ukraine and its humanitarian consequences. He also supported the calls for an independent investigation on the recent killings in Bucha following the disturbing reports that surfaced regarding the same.

#### Sri Lanka: USD 51 billion external debt under default

On 12 April, Sri Lanka defaulted on its USD 51 billion external debt, calling it a "last resort" as it battles its worst economic turmoil since its independence. The country suspended its external debts as it is running out of foreign exchange for imports and wishes to spend it on essentials like fuel. The country's forex reserves took a major hit owing to the tax cuts introduced by the government and the wrath inflicted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The country awaits a recovery program assisted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) from whom it has sought help to keep the economic situation from deteriorating further.

#### Sri Lanka: Surgeries cancelled due to shortage in drugs and supplies.

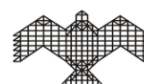
On 12 April, Sri Lankan hospitals suspended surgeries as the government was unable to import essential drugs and supplies. Along with this, prolonged power cuts have added to the gradual collapse of healthcare. The government hospitals are only performing emergency, casualty, and malignancy surgeries with minimal surgical supplies. Reportedly, out of the 1,325 state-provided drugs, three life-saving ones are completely exhausted while another 140 essential ones are in really short supply. The Sri Lanka Medical Association warned Rajapaksa in a letter pointed out that the emergency treatments are at risk to be stopped soon, as the economic situation worsens.

#### Pakistan: 26/11 mastermind Hafiz Saeed sentenced to 33 years

On 8 April, the Mumbai terror attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed was given a combined sentence of 33 years in jail by a Pakistani anti-terrorism court. Judge Ejaz Ahmed Buttar gave the verdict on two cases of terror financing registered by the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) against Saeed. A fine of PKR 340,000 has also been imposed on Saeed for the two cases. 41 cases have been registered in different cities by the Counter-Terrorism Department against the Jamat-ud-Dawa leaders, while only 27 have been decided by the trial courts so far.

#### Pakistan: Five terrorists were killed

On 10 April, five militants were killed while several escaped during a heated exchange of fire with the police in the Bannu district of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. According to the police officials, Bannu Police and the Counter-Terrorism Department jointly raided a house in the Zandi Falaksher area where the terrorists were hiding. Three AK-47s, one 9mm pistol, one TT pistol, cartridges, and a motorcycle planted with explosives were recovered from the house. The Police claim that the militants belonged to Akhtar Muhammad alias Khalil and Zar Gul groups.





### **Afghanistan: Protests in Kabul against the treatment of refugees in Iran**

On 11 April, protests were held in front of Iran's embassy in Kabul by in response to the abusive treatment of Afghan refugees in Iran. The protestors demanded Iran stops forced deportation of Afghan refugees. There were similar protests also in Khost.. The protestors urged the UNHRC to review the matter urgently and take necessary steps to help the refugees.

### **Central Asia, Middle East and Africa**

#### **Tajikistan: Tensions over a border a shoot-out**

On 12 April, a shooting broke out along the Kyrgyz-Tajik border in the Leilek district. The shootouts took place initially between the Kyrgyz and Tajik border guards, and later during the talks to stabilize the situation. A Kyrgyz border guard is reportedly wounded and is critical. Guards have withdrawn from the area where the shooting broke out. The situation is now stable after the heads of the border services held talks at the Ovchi-Kalacha checkpoint in Tajikistan.

#### **Syria: Israeli missiles target Iranian forces in Syria**

On 9 April, Israel launched air raids in Masyaf province in western Syria. The Syrian Observatory for Human Watch noted that the missiles targeted areas where the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and Hezbollah militias are positioned. This marks the eighth attack by Israel carried out in Syria this year, the most recent being the attack near Damascus airport in early March. Israel rarely acknowledges these attacks and so far, no statement has been made about the recent air raids.

#### **Iran: Afghan envoy summoned over attacks on the Consulate**

On 11 April, protestors in Afghanistan pelted Iran's Herat consulate Herat. The outrage is caused by the circulation of videos that show Afghan refugees being beaten in Iran, which Iran claims to be unverified. In Kabul, where protests occurred, slogans such as "death to Iran" was chanted outside the Iranian embassy. Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh made a statement dismissing the videos. He said the purpose of these videos were to create fear and ruin the historic ties that Iran and Afghanistan share. To resolve this, Iran summoned the Afghanistan envoy to hold talks and clear any misunderstandings.

#### **Turkey: Defence equipment exports soar due to Ukraine war**

On 6 April, a report published by the Turkish Exporters' Assembly indicated that Turkey's defence exports to Ukraine soared in the first quarter of 2022. Ukraine has obtained Bayraktar TB2 armed drones, and MILGEM-class corvettes from Turkey. An agreement to establish a production facility for TB2 drones in Ukraine was also signed in early February, rendering Ukraine a major defence partner for Turkey. Exports during the said quarter amounted to USD 59.8 million while it was only USD 1.9 million in 2021 for the same period. The TB2 drones play an important role in the Ukraine-Russia war, helping Ukraine push back the invasion. Turkey maintains its neutral position in the war, dealing in arms with Ukraine as well as Russia.

#### **Iraq: Water crisis endangers the lives of the people**

On 12 April, the chronic water shortage in Iraq has upset people's lives and led to unprecedented challenges. The rivers Tigris and Euphrates supply 98 per cent of Iraq's surface water, however, water levels have dropped. Supply of freshwater has been restricted at their sources by dams built in Turkey, which has blocked the flow of water into Iraq and Syria. In 2008, the UN classified Iraq as fifth in the World in terms of countries that are vulnerable to climate change. Studies show that about 40 per cent of the country is now desert lands that do not accommodate agriculture.

### **Sudan: Protests over Bashir regime**

On 11 April, protestors gathered in Khartoum and other cities to mark the third anniversary of ousting of former leader Omar al-Bashir. Protestors blocked main roads, burned tires, banged drums, and chanted revolutionary slogans. Bashir was overthrown in a coup by his top generals after three years of unpopular rule, and the new government was formed through a power-sharing agreement between the generals. The arrangement lapsed on 25 October when the military leaders staged a coup, and the country stepped into chaos.

### **Sudan: Agreement to end the civil war**

On 13 April, South Sudan President Salva Kiir ordered the unification of military officers to the vice-president, Riek Machar into the army as a unified force. The decision is seen as a peace process taken towards the Horn of Africa. Kiir and Machar's arm forces signed an agreement in 2018 to bring the civil war to an end. But due to lag in the peace process and clash between opponents forces over the problem of power-sharing. On 8 April, two leaders met to submit the list of military officers to be included in the security services. The spokesperson of the SPLM-IO party called it a positive step to stop the ceasefire violations.

### **Mali: Russia blocks the UNSC plan to investigate Moura massacre**

On 8 April, the UNSC proposal to investigate into Moura massacre in Mali was blocked by Russia and China. The statement of the UNSC, it pointed out the concerns raised by the member countries on human rights violations and abuses taking place in Mali. It called for an independent investigation to track those responsible for such violations, but with Russia and China opposing the move, the proposal was called off. The Mali officials claimed that 203 jihadists had been neutralized, which is now being demanded by the UNSC for enquiry.

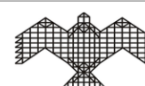
### **Democratic Republic of Congo: 20 civilians killed in an attack in Ituri**

On 11 April, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported on the killing of 20 civilians by assaulters (M-23 group rebels). The assaulters were responsible for looting homes and shops. According to OCHA, taking the recent killings into count, the total number of civilians killed in the past week was 40. Due to the violence, displacement of people is constant, and the workers from the aid organizations have become the targets. To help the displaced, UNHCR has been providing shelter facilities and non-food items for their basic survival. The M-23 group announced its withdrawal from the villages of DRC after clashes with the government troops.

### **Europe and the Americas**

#### **Mexico: Lawsuit filed against US gun manufacturers**

On 12 April, the Mexican government filed a lawsuit in a federal court in Massachusetts against US gun makers and wholesalers, claiming USD 10 billion in damages. The lawsuit alleges private companies trading arms with drug cartels and violent groups. A rogue shooting incident targeting then city security head Omar Garcia Harfuch in June 2021, was the driving force behind the lawsuit among other several such incidents. Heavily gunmen ambushed Harfuch and opened fire. Three people died while Harfuch was shot thrice. The weapons recovered after the incident were found to be produced and sold by US-based manufacturers. The lawsuit addressed the larger problem of arms smuggling across the US-Mexico border. Oral arguments by both sides are scheduled to be held this week in the court.



### Colombia: Supreme Court approves extradition of kingpin Otoniel to the US

On 7 April, the leader of the Gulf Clan cartel Dairo Antonio Úsuga, largely known as Otoniel was approved to be extradited to the US on drug trafficking charges. The Gulf Clan has extensive operations within and beyond Latin America, with about 1800 armed members- most with a far-right paramilitary background. It has engaged in human and drug trafficking, illegal gold mining and extortion. The approval puts an end to Otoniel's attempts at halting his extradition by requesting an alternate sentence for giving up information. The legal team claimed that the drug lord was willing to provide the government with details of alliances between central government officials and armed groups during the FARC conflict.

### Chile: Water rationing plan announced amidst prolonged drought conditions

On 11 April, the governor of Santiago announced a four-tier alert system as part of its water rationing plan for the capital city as the drought enters its 13th year. The plan featuring the alert system is based on the water levels of the Mapocho and Maipo rivers, which have been dwindling. It categorizes warning levels starting with public service announcements, and moving on to restricting water pressure and eventually rotating water cuts. The water cuts constitute the last stage of the plan and would be applied only in one sector of the city every 12, six, or four days. Availability of the country's water is expected to drop by another 50 percent by 2060, from its current drop of 37 percent owing to climate change.

### Puerto Rico: Anti-abortion bill introduced

On 8 April, a Puerto Rican State Committee approved a bill that would prohibit abortions at 22 weeks or if the fetus is medically determined as viable, the only exception being if the woman's life is in danger. The bill was approved with a 9-3 conservative majority vote despite objections from the health and justice departments. It requires maintaining a government registry of those who choose to abort and the reasons behind it, subsequently undermining the patient's right to privacy. Civil and feminist groups have criticized the move and the rushed process that followed. The Committee is expected to hold hearings this month after which it will be passed onto the Senate for a vote.

### The US: Venezuelans form a majority of migrants crossing the Darien Gap

On 12 April, Panama's National Migration Service reported the increase in migrants crossing the dangerous Darien Gap that links Colombia to Panama. The number of migrants more than doubled in the first quarter of this year, as compared to last year. Venezuelan migrants formed 31 per cent of the total numbers crossing the Darien, on account of the ongoing economic crisis in the country. Likewise, Haitians, Senegalese, and Cubans constitute the remaining population.

### The US: Aftermath of the Brooklyn subway shooting

On 12 April, an unidentified man released a smoke bomb in a subway station and opened fire at the passengers in Brooklyn, New York. Sixteen people were injured in the travesty, out of which ten suffered gunshot wounds while the rest suffered from smoke inhalation and shrapnel wounds. The attacker was identified as a black male, wearing a green construction vest and a grey sweatshirt, along with a gas mask. However, the shooting is not being investigated as an act of terrorism, and heavy police vigilance is being maintained in and around the area of the incident.

### The US: First all-private crew space mission to the ISS launched

On 9 April, a four-man crew of astronauts called the Axiom-1 left for the International Space Station (ISS) on a SpaceX Falcon rocket. Axiom is a commercial spaceflight company founded in 2016, that facilitates in-space research and several outreach projects. The crew will be



onboard the ISS for eight days, after their capsule Endeavour docks at the station on Saturday. Former NASA astronaut will command the probe, flying alongside the all-civilian crew. The launch counts as the second private spaceflight facilitated by American rocket and capsule supplier SpaceX. In the future, the firm plans to launch a similar project later in 2022 or early 2023, named Axiom-2.

### **The US: The Senate confirms the first black female to serve on the Supreme Court**

On 8 April, Ketanji Brown Jackson was appointed as a judge to the top court by a vote of 50 to 47, a first in US history. The appointment overseen by vice president Kamala Harris fulfills the Biden administration's campaign promise of having a black woman on the court. Justice Jackson would replace Justice Stephen Breyer upon his retirement in June. The confirmation of Justice Jackson remains slightly contentious amidst the 6-3 conservative to a liberal majority in the court, however, the decision is being applauded as one that would bring in a diverse legal experience.

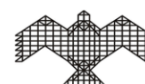
### **The US: Inflation rate hits a 40-year-old high after fuel prices soar**

On 12 April, fuel prices reached a record high following the import ban on energy resources from Russia, last month. Energy prices saw a 32 per cent increase in the first quarter of the year, while consumer prices surged by 8.5 per cent. Additionally, food prices also saw a sharp increase on account of the Russia-Ukraine conflict as both countries are export leaders for wheat and sunflower oil. The soaring inflation rate compelled the Federal Reserve to lift its key interest rate, which is bound to rise several times this year. A wave of international sanctions on Russia has affected the global economy by worsening the supply chain problems.

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### **About the authors**

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6 April 2022, Vol.3, No.1

## Political Crises in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Tunisia; Ceasefire in Yemen; and the Battle for Mariupol

Chrishari de Alwis Gunasekare, Abigail Miriam Fernandez, Apoorva Sudhakar, Lavanya Ravi, and Sruthi Sadasivam



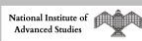
Photo Source: REUTERS/Dinuka Liyanawatte

### Sri Lanka: The economic woes spiral into a political crisis

[In the news](#)

On 1 April 2021, Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa declared a state of emergency following protests over the economic crisis. In his address, he said: "At this crucial juncture the country needs stability to weather the current financial crisis and difficulties."

On 5 April, the government lost its majority in the Parliament, following a series of resignations by the Parliamentarians, from the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) and its alliance partner, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). Earlier, the Cabinet ministers also handed over their resignations, and most of the political parties withdrew their support to the ruling party to remain independent within the Parliament.



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30 March 2022, Vol.2, No.53

## 30 days of War in Ukraine

Padmashree Anandhan



Source: Institute for the Study of War (21:00 GMT, 31 March)

Photo Source: BBC/Institute for the Study of War

### 30 days of Ukraine war: Developments, trends and perspective

[In the news](#)

On 24 February, Russia's President Vladimir Putin began the invasion in Ukraine, launching troops into Ukraine. The launch marked the start of the war in Europe since World War II.

On 27 February, the EU announced a ban on airspace to prevent Russian aircrafts from entering its space. The EU and its allies agreed to cut down Russian banks from SWIFT along with the US. It is the most relied financial telecommunication system of Russia used in oil and gas exports.



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23 March 2022, Vol.2, No.52

## Sri Lanka's worsening economic crisis

Chrishari de Alwis Gunasekare



Besides the economic crisis, there is also a serious energy crisis in Sri Lanka, people are standing in long queues in front of the oil stations. (Image Source: REUTERS/DINUKA LIYANAWATTE)

### The worsening economic crisis in Sri Lanka

[In the news](#)

On 17 March, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa addressing the nation, on the current economic crisis claimed: "This crisis was not created by me. When those who contributed to the creation of this crisis are criticizing the government in front of the people today, I am attempting to immediately resolve this crisis and provide relief to the people... The root cause of current issues is our foreign exchange crisis."

[Issues at large](#)

First, a brief note on the current economic crisis. Sri Lanka's economy was hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is currently facing the most severe economic and energy crisis recorded in recent history due to the ongoing foreign exchange shortage. The prices of essential



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## The end of Denmark's Inuit experiment

Apoorva Sudhakar



Danish PM meets and apologizes to survivors of the 1950s' little Danes experiment. (Image Source: peopledispatch.org | Aaja Chemnitz Larsen MP)

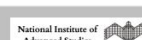
### Denmark: PM apologizes to survivors of "little Danes" experiment

[In the news](#)

On 9 March, Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen apologized to the victims of a social experiment in the 1950s wherein 22 Inuit children were separated from their families and taken to Denmark to "re-educate" and integrate them into the Danish society.

On the same day, the PM met with six survivors; The Guardian quoted Frederiksen: "What you were subjected to was terrible. It was inhumane. And it was heartless... We can take responsibility and do the only thing that is fair, in my eyes: to say sorry to you for what happened." CTV News quoted Greenland Prime Minister Mute Egede: "This is part of our common history... The truth has emerged and it is a truth which hurts to look back on."

On 9 March, CTV News quoted one of the survivors: "Our parents said yes to the trip but were hardly aware of what they agreed to."





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09 March 2022, Vol.2, No.50

## International Women's Day: Gap between policies and realities on gender equality

Mallika Joseph

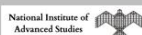


International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March 2022 across the world. (Image Source: UN Women)

## International Women's Day: Gap between policies and realities on gender equality

[In the news](#)

On 8 March, the world celebrated International Women's Day (IWD). The UN's theme for International Women's Day 2022 was "gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow," with a special emphasis on climate change. It was aligned with the priority theme of the 66th meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held in March every year. This year's priority theme is "achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes." In his statement on IWD, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres pointed out that women primarily bear the brunt of climate change and environmental degradation. Further, he acknowledged that the clock on women's rights was moving backwards in many areas, particularly due to the pandemic, and called for bold action and massive investment to address gender inequality.



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2 March 2022, Vol.2, No.49

## Russia's Ukraine Invasion: One Week Later

D Suba Chandran



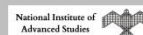
Photo Source: news.un.org

## Russia's Ukraine Invasion: One Week Later

[In the news](#)

On 26 February, a group of leaders across the US, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the European Commission, came together to "condemn Putin's war of choice and attacks on the sovereign nation and people of Ukraine." The joint statement underlined their resolve to "continue imposing costs on Russia that will further isolate Russia from the international financial system and our economies" and undertake the following measures: to ensure that "selected Russian banks are removed from the SWIFT messaging system" thereby disconnecting these banks from their global operation; to impose, "restrictive measures that will prevent the Russian Central Bank from deploying its international reserves," so that the international sanctions are not undermined by Russia; to act "against the people and entities who facilitate the war in Ukraine and the harmful activities of the Russian government," addressing wealthy Russians linked with the Russian government; to launch "a transatlantic task force that will ensure the effective implementation" of the sanctions; and, to coordinate "against disinformation and other forms of hybrid warfare."

On 26 February, the Russian news agency TASS reported the Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov saying: "Immediate measures are certainly being taken in order to mitigate the damage from sanctions and ensure the unhindered operation of all economic sectors and systems. ... (Russia) has every possibility and potential to do that. ... Analysis will be required to determine the retaliatory measures that would best serve our interests."



# Conflict Weekly

An initiative by NIAS-IPRI and KAS India Office

A brief review of conflict and peace processes across the world

23 February 2022, Vol.2, No.48

## Russia's Ukraine salami slicing and Canada's freedom convoy protests

D Suba Chandran & Sarasi Ganguly

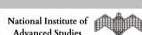


Russian President recognizing the two separatist regions of Ukraine on 21 February, is followed by a "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance" between Russia and the two "new republics" - Luhansk and Donetsk. (Image Source: kremlin.ru)

## Russia's Ukraine salami slicing

[In the news](#)

On 21 February, Russian President Putin signed an executive order recognizing "Donetsk People's Republic" and "Luhansk People's Republic" - two regions in eastern Ukraine, that were waging a separatist war with Kyiv. Two separatist leaders Denis Pushilin (Donetsk), and Leonid Pasechnik (Luhansk) were with Putin in Moscow for the event. On the same occasion, Putin also signed two separate agreements - "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance" with the "Donetsk People's Republic" and the "Luhansk People's Republic." The treaty "reaffirms the policy of the Russian Federation to develop comprehensive, forward-looking cooperation" "provides for broad cooperation in the political, economic, social, military and humanitarian areas" with the two regions. On 22 February, the Duma ratified the order.



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## Unfreezing the Afghan assets, Tunisia's judicial crisis and Libya's new political deadlock

Abigail Miriam Fernandez, Poulomi Mondal, and Harshita Rathore

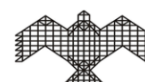


An executive order signed by President Biden on Afghanistan says the US administration "will seek to facilitate access to \$3.5 billion of those assets for the benefit of the Afghan people and Afghanistan's future pending a judicial decision." (Image Source: Reuters-Stringer)

## Afghanistan: President Biden signs order to split USD seven billion in frozen Afghan assets

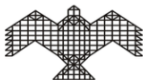
[In the news](#)

On 11 February, President Biden signed an Executive Order to help enable certain US-based assets belonging to Afghanistan's central bank, Da Afghanistan Bank. The order claimed that "this is one step forward in the United States' effort to authorize the transfer of a significant portion of the funds to meet the needs of the Afghan people."





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### About NIAS-International Peace Research Initiative (IPRI)

The International Peace Research Initiative (IPRI), initiated in 2018 at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), is a part of the Conflict Resolution and Peace Research Programme at the School of Conflict and Security Studies.

IPRI undertakes research on various issues relating to peace with special emphasis on radicalisation, sustainable peace, gender roles in peacebuilding and global protest movements. IPRI research are published as briefs, reports and commentary.



### About Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a political foundation. Established in 1955 as “Society for Christian-Democratic Civic Education”, in 1964, the Foundation proudly took on the name of Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. With 16 regional offices in Germany and over 120 offices abroad, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is committed to achieving and maintaining peace, freedom and justice through political education. KAS promotes and preserves free democracy, social market economy, and the development and consolidation of the value consensus. KAS also focus on consolidating democracy, the unification of Europe and the strengthening of transatlantic relations, as well as on development cooperation.

KAS cooperates with governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organizations, building strong partnerships along the way. In particular, KAS seeks to intensify political cooperation in the area of development cooperation on the foundations of its objectives and values. Together with the partners, KAS makes a significant contribution to the creation of a global order that empowers every country to determine its own developmental priorities and destiny in an internationally responsible

### About Conflict Weekly

The Conflict Weekly an academic endeavour to bring every Wednesday/Thursday a weekly analysis of the conflict and peace processes in the world; aiming to look at the larger peace picture. It is published by the NIAS-IPRI in collaboration with the KAS India Office.



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