

# Conflict Weekly

An initiative by NIAS-IPRI and KAS India Office

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

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.”

On 27 February, the TASS also reported a Russian defence ministry's note on casualties on its side. According to the news, the TASS quoted the defence ministry report saying: "Russian servicemen are showing courage and heroism during the special military operation. But, regrettably, there are killed and wounded among them." A Wall Street Journal report also claimed a Russian defence ministry source accepting "extensive losses in the seven days of war, saying that 498 Russian troops have been killed and 1,597 injured." The same WSJ report also mentioned Ukraine's version of the casualties, with the latter's military having killed 5,840 Russian troops and placing the civilian death toll at about 2,000.

On 27 February, the British oil company – BP announced its decision to leave Rosneft, the State-controlled big oil company in Russia. Rosneft is a global company that has operations in more than 20 countries; BP has invested close to 20 per cent in the same. According to a statement by the BP chairman: "It has led the BP board to conclude, after a thorough process, that our involvement with Rosneft, a state-owned enterprise, simply cannot continue." On 01 March, TotalEnergies, a global energy company of France, with a presence in more than 130 countries, made an official statement about not providing capital for any new projects in Russia. According to the statement: "TotalEnergies supports the scope and strength of the sanctions put in place by Europe and will implement them regardless of the consequences (currently being assessed) on its activities in Russia. TotalEnergies will no longer provide capital for new projects in Russia."

On 2 March, the UN General Assembly had an emergency meeting over Ukraine. The resolution (supported by 141 states and 35 abstaining) deplored "in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine in violation of Article 2 (4) of the Charter." It demanded, "that the Russian Federation immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine and to refrain from any further unlawful threat or use of force against any Member State." Only five countries voted against the resolution, including Russia, Belarus, Syria, North Korea and Eritrea. Earlier, on 27 February, the UN Security Council also met on the same question; it was decided to convene an emergency session of the UN General Assembly.

On 2 March, Kherson, a port city of the Black Sea, fell to the Russian forces invading from the south from Crimea. In the northeast, during the week, Russia has been bombarding Kharkiv and in north Kyiv, Ukraine's capital.

### Issues at large

First, the political objective of Russia's Ukraine war. One week after Russia having launched a military invasion, politically, the elected government of Ukraine led by President Zelenskyy has not been toppled. A primary political objective of Putin's war in Ukraine is to change the government, considered pro-Europe and pro-West. The first week of the Russian invasion has instead united the Ukrainians to rally behind their President.

Second, the international support for Ukraine and condemnation for Russia. This could be seen in the UN resolution and the individual statements from capitals worldwide. There is widespread criticism against Russia and more considerable political support for Ukraine. The emergency meeting of the UN General Assembly was categorical in its resolution. While the international support has been substantial in supporting Kyiv, its condemnation of Moscow is insufficient to prevent Russia from changing its course. The first week could be described as a political stalemate, with neither Russia achieving its primary objective nor Ukraine losing the case.

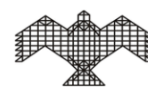
Third, the military stalemate in Ukraine. While Russia has captured a key port city in the Black Sea, and in Ukraine's south, and has been bombarding Kharkiv in the northeast, the first week of war has neither yielded success for the Russian advances, nor Ukraine's security forces collapsed, as the Kremlin could have wanted.

Fourth, the new refugee situation for Europe from Ukraine. The Russian attack has triggered a new wave of refugees from Ukraine into Europe, mainly through Poland. Besides facing the military invasion of Russia into Ukraine and preparing for a political and military response, the EU is now faced with addressing the refugee question.

Fifth, the supply chain disruptions. An analysis in the New York Times analysis looked into what the war in Ukraine and the sanctions on Russia would bring. For example, the automobile industry would suffer, as "Ukraine and Russia are both substantial sources for palladium and platinum, used in catalytic converters, as well as aluminum, steel and chrome." The NYT analysis also argues how the war and sanctions would affect other sectors: "Semiconductor manufacturers are warily eyeing global stocks of neon, xenon and palladium, necessary to manufacture their products. Makers of potato chips and cosmetics could face shortages of sunflower oil, the bulk of which is produced in Russia and Ukraine."

#### In perspective

First, the primary focus of the Russian invasion is in the south of Crimea. Perhaps Moscow's political objective is to control the entire Black Sea and aim to build a land corridor along the coast from eastern Ukraine. Second, the primary response from the US and its allies in Europe is aimed at imposing economic sanctions but avoiding a direct military confrontation with Russia over Ukraine. Third the rising humanitarian cost for the people of Ukraine. Besides the direct fallouts of war, a refugee situation is likely to increase and become a multi-year question to address.



## Also, from around the world

By Padmashree Anandhan

### Peace and Conflict from East and Southeast Asia

#### China: Report released on human rights violations in the US

On 28 February, the State Council Information Office of China released a report on human rights violations in the US in 2021. The key issues stated in the report were the COVID-19 deaths, increasing gun violence, losing the value of democracy, and rising discrimination. It also highlighted that the US was the “biggest destroyer” when dealing with its human rights violations and addressing them in other countries. A professor at the China Foreign Affairs University has remarked that the US must improve its lines of communication with other regions than imposing its standards.

#### North Korea: Pyongyang resumes missile launch

On 27 February, North Korea is suspected of having fired a ballistic missile near the east coast of Sunan, which is its first test in February since Pyongyang, where it conducted a record number of launches in January. The launch on 27 February was a medium-range ballistic missile that flew to a maximum height of 620 km. South Korea's National Security Council issued a statement convening an emergency meeting: "Launching a ballistic missile at a time when the world is making efforts to resolve the Ukraine war is never desirable for peace and stability in the world, the region and on the Korean Peninsula."

#### Australia: Rainfall induced floods in Brisbane

On 22 February, the UNHRC reported that Russia and China were found to be supplying fighter jets to the regime that is capable of being used on civilians. It urged the UNSC to help stop the transfer of weapons. Another report from a US Congressman said that Serbia was also amongst those which has been supplying weapons since the military takeover in Myanmar. So far, in Myanmar, the internal situation has been chaotic since the coup, leading to protests and numerous killings of civilians. In response, China's Foreign Ministry said: "China has always advocated that all parties and factions should proceed in the long-term interests of the country." According to Serbia's Foreign Minister: "examined the new situation very carefully and in March last year made a decision not to deliver weapons to this country either under previously concluded agreements or new export requests."

#### Myanmar: Military junta launches air attacks against rebel forces in Kayah

On 23 February, Myanmar's military junta launched fatal airstrikes and deployed forces in Nan Mei Khon village in Kayah. The attack triggered fear and caused thousands to flee the region. This move by the military junta came in response to the stubborn resistance from the Karenni National Defence Forces (NDKF). NDKF's founder David Eubank stated that two people were killed and three were wounded during the recent bombardment. NDKF is one of the many rebel militias in the country that has been challenging the junta rule since the coup in February 2021.

### Peace and Conflict from South Asia

#### India: Second defence dialogue with Africa scheduled

On 27 February, India and Africa agreed to hold the second defence dialogue on 12 March. With over 20 African defence ministers already confirmed to attend the meeting, the broad theme of this meeting will be 'India – Africa: Adopting Strategy for Synergizing and Strengthening Defence and Security Cooperation. As agreed at the first India Africa Defence Ministers Conclave (IADMC), the meeting will take place on the sidelines of DefExpo 2022

in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The DefExpo 2020 will be participated by around 70 countries and will take place from 10-14 March.

### **Nepal: Parliament ratifies MCC pact amid protests**

On 27 February, Nepal's house of representatives approved the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) pact, amidst heavy protests and weeks of quibbling among the political parties. A grant of USD 500 million was ratified with an "interpretative declaration" that clarifies the questions raised by the opposition. While the 12-point declaration stated that MCC Compact will not be above Nepal's constitution, and will be taken strictly as financial assistance. The declaration assured that the grant would be for infrastructural development and not harm Nepal's sovereignty. The US government's MCC signed the compact with Nepal's government in 2017, but its ratification was pending following constant opposition.

### **Sri Lanka: Indian fishermen arrested by Navy for illegal fishing**

On 27 February, Eight Indian fishermen were arrested by Sri Lankan Navy for illegal fishing into their waters. The Sri Lankan Navy also seized trawlers of Indian fishermen during a patrolling in the sea north of Talaimannar. The Sri Lankan Navy informed that nine Indian fishing vessels and 59 fishermen poaching in their waters had been taken on hold earlier in February. The Navy said that the local fishing community and the biodiversity of the marine environment are getting affected due to the foreign fishermen poaching into the Sri Lankan waters. To curb such illegal fishing and poaching activities of foreign fishermen, the Sri Lankan Navy is conducting regular patrols and operations.

### **Afghanistan: UN delegation in Kabul to ensure transparency in humanitarian aid**

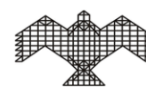
On 25 February, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Crisis (OCHA) director in the operations and advocacy division, Reena Ghelani, who is leading a nine-member delegation in Kabul to monitor the distribution of humanitarian aid, said that the organization had established a new system to ensure corruption-free and transparent aid process. She further urged the international community to support the people of Afghanistan. Reena Ghelani said that "Absolutely, the UN and its partners, we have asked for USD 4.4 billion, which we do not have yet, we need to raise this money because we need to urgently get assistance to people. We saw horrible nutrition. We saw children begging to go to school, both boys and girls."

### **Afghanistan: Gunmen kill health workers involved in polio vaccination**

On 24 February, it was reported that unidentified gunmen in the northern provinces of Takhar and Kunduz killed at least eight health workers, including four women in separate attacks. Local officials confirmed that seven workers in Kunduz capital city were providing polio vaccinations when they were attacked by some unidentified gunmen. Polio campaigns started due to the risk of Afghans contracting Polio from the absence of a full-scale vaccination of children and the remoteness of living areas. Qari Obaidullah Abidi, a spokesman for the Kunduz security department, said, "two perpetrators have been detained as suspects."

### **Afghanistan: Residents in Kabul panicked after house raids by security forces**

On 25 February, Kabul residents panicked by raiding homes and reported that the house-to-house searches caused panic among children and women. The Islamic Emirates has launched a clearing operation in some parts of Kabul and other neighbouring provinces to tighten security. However, some of the residents of Kabul criticized the house raids and claimed that the security forces should have a permit and there should be women among them to search the houses. While, the Islamic Emirate's spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, said: "We have already detected all the (spots) through intelligence, and after full detection, the operations were



launched, and criminals were detained. There will be searching—of course—if there is nothing no one will be harmed, but if the criminals are hiding anywhere, they will be detained.”

### **Afghanistan: Report says millions of children to be affected with malnutrition in 2022**

On 27 February, a UN delegation estimated that at least four million Afghan children will get affected with malnutrition in 2022, of whom 137,000 might also lose their lives. The delegation led by United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) director Reena Ghelani visited Kabul following many complaints made by the citizens about the unjust distribution of UN aid. As the economic situation in the country worsens, the delegation further added that at least 18 million Afghans face food insecurity and are in dire need of food. While addressing the matter, Ghelani said: “The time is currently. We have no time to wait. We have to get the economy going, and we need to give people hope today.”

### **Peace and Conflict from Central Asia, Middle East and Africa**

#### **Yemen: UNSC extends arms embargo to the Houthi rebel group**

On 28 February, the UN Security Council extended the arms embargo on all Houthi rebels after several attacks in Gulf countries. The resolution was put forth by the UAE was passed with 11 voting in favour, through the recent embargo, the restriction will now extend to the entire rebel group that targeted only a few Houthi leaders. The Emirati mission appreciated the resolution and said: “curtail the military capabilities of the Houthis & push toward stopping their escalation in Yemen & the region.” The UAE government has taken the initiative to push for the resolution due to increased attacks of the Houthi rebels on the UAE.

#### **Tunisia: Migrants bodies found dead after a boat capsized near coast**

On 1 February, Tunisian Defence Ministry informed that nine migrants were found dead after their boat capsized near its coast. The Tunisian coast guards recovered nine bodies while the Navy rescued nine other migrants from different African nations in critical condition. However, it is not clear how many peoples were there on the boat which sank near the port of Mahdia in the Tunisian central-east region from where many people cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. According to UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration, at least 1300 migrants either drowned or went missing in the Mediterranean Sea in 2021.

#### **Congo: Allied Democratic Forces suspected for recent attacks**

On 28 February, the northeastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was under attack, as reported by the President of a local activist organisation in the village of Kikura. Close to 20 civilians were killed in the attack, and houses were set on fire. The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) group is currently being suspected due to the group’s history of launching attacks and killing citizens. The unrest is continued to be seen in Congo since the 2013 launch of a joint operation by DRC and Ugandan troops opposing the ADF.

#### **South Africa: Government authorises hunting endangered black rhinos, leopards and elephants**

On 25 February, the government of South Africa authorised the hunting of 10 critically endangered black rhinos through their annual hunting and export licences. It also allowed the hunting of a similar number of leopards and 150 elephants. Although the International Union for Conservation of Nature classifies black rhinos as severely endangered, their number rose to more than 5000 in the last three decades. These hunting and export permits were granted by international regulations for trading endangered animals. The government stated that the hunting enterprise brought around ZAR 1.4 billion in 2019.

## Peace and Conflict from Europe and the Americas

### **Belarus: Voters reach consensus to give up non-nuclear status**

On 28 February, Belarusian voters approved constitutional reforms discarding the country's non-nuclear status. This amendment allows the country to host nuclear weapons and strengthen military ties with Russia. The referendum also included reforms that would enable the president to remain in power until 2035 and have lifetime immunity from prosecution. Russia, an essential ally of Belarus, recently deployed troops there under the pretext of military exercises and then entered Ukraine in the ongoing invasion. Speaking at the polling station on 27 February, Lukashenko also admitted that he could ask Russia to return their nuclear weapons.

### **Europe: IPCC report warns severity in living conditions of humans due to rising temperatures**

On 28 February, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report on factors contributing to climate change. The report stated that the current changes to the environment were pushing the limits of the survival of humans and nature to exist. It is expected that more than 40 per cent of the world population will be put under vulnerable climate conditions. The IPCC team hopes that if the increase in temperature is maintained at 1.5 Celsius, there might be lessening in the impact. According to Prof Debra Roberts, who is a co-chair of the IPCC: "Our report indicates that places where people live and work may cease to exist, that ecosystems and species that we've all grown up with and that are central to our cultures and inform our languages may disappear." The report will be the sixth assessment of the organisation, urging countries to go towards "Net Zero" emissions.

### **France: Russian cargo ship seized by authorities**

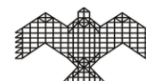
On 26 February, the French authorities seized a cargo ship called the 'Baltic Leader,' which was suspected to be operated by Russia and was running against the sanctions. It was blocked by France and redirected to Boulogne-sur-Mer, a port located in north of France. According to the US Treasury Department: "for operating or having operated in the defense and related materiel and financial services sectors of the Russian Federation economy." In response, the shipowner had denied the link of ships being under sanctions.

### **The US: Three ex-policemen found guilty in killing of George Floyd**

On 24 February, the jury found three ex-Minneapolis policemen guilty of the death of George Floyd. Tou Thao, aged 36, J Alexander Kueng, aged 28, and Thomas Lane, aged 38, appeared to defend in the trial stating they did not realise if Floyd needed assistance. Still, the court charged them under "deliberate indifference to [Mr Floyd's] serious medical needs." As per the video footage, the two officers, Kueng and Lane, were helping Derek Chauvin, who is serving his sentence, while Thao helped keep the onlookers away. The trio defended the argument saying they only listened to the senior officer. Despite that, the convicted officers will appear back in court in June to face the criminal charges for letting Chauvin carry out the act.

### **Colombia: Coal mine explosion kills civilians**

On 27 February, 11 people were killed and four missing in an explosion at a coal mine in Boyaca's province of Colombia. A build-up of methane gas caused the explosion at the coal mine, located in the Tasco municipality, Informed by the National Mining Agency (ANM). Colombia's mining industry operated by multinational companies has open pit and underground projects and hundreds of small and informal deposits. Accidents in mining happen regularly as many enterprises, some illegal, do not enforce proper safety measures. According to ANM, in 2021, 128 mining incidents occurred, which killed 148 people and in 2022 until now, 19 such incidents happened with 36 deaths.



### **Mexico: Migrants clash with police in protests**

On 24 February, more than 20 people were left injured in Tapachula in a clash between police and migrants caused due to violent protests on the southern border of Mexico. National Migration Institute informed that about 100 migrants from Cuba, Haiti, and other countries in Africa joined in the violent protests after stopping from jumping the queue for permits to continue their journey to the northern part. The immigration centre in Tapachula is the biggest one in Mexico, which has become the main bottleneck on migrant's journey. The UN refugee agency has urged the authorities to clear the backlog quickly. Rights activist Irineo Mujica said that the migrants were desperate to be given an appointment with the immigration authorities of Mexico after waiting for months.

### **El Salvador: Former president charged in 1989 Jesuit priests' massacre**

On 26 February, the prosecutors charged the former president of El Salvador Alfredo Cristiani in the 1989 massacre of six Jesuit priests that fuelled international outrage. Prosecutors announced a list of charges including murder, terrorism and conspiracy against former military officers and a dozen other convicts involved in the massacre. In January this year, the Supreme Court ordered to re-open the probe after the investigation had been put on hold for over the years on the appeal of the military officers in 2019. Attorney General Rodolfo Delgado tweeted: "The office is determined to go after those accused of ordering this regrettable and tragic event," before the charges were made against convicts in the 1989 massacre.

### **Trinidad and Tobago: 3 bodies recovered, one missing after pipeline incident**

On 28 February, the bodies of three welders were recovered by the rescuers in Trinidad and Tobago after five workers were sucked up into an underwater 30-inch U-shaped pipeline. While the company is searching for the body of another worker remains missing. The accident happened when five welders were working out for underwater maintenance in the pipeline at the project. One of them was rescued from inside the pipeline just four hours after the incident, which was yet to be specified how it occurred. In a statement, Prime Minister Keith Rowley said: "I want to give the assurance to the families that nothing will stand in the way of determining how this tragedy occurred."

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#### **About the authors**

D Suba Chandran is a Professor and Dean at the School of Conflict and Security Studies. Padmashree Anandhan is a Research Assistant at the School of Conflict and Security Studies, NIAS. Satyam Dubey are postgraduate scholars at Pondicherry University.



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16 February 2022, Vol.2, No.47

## 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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09 February 2022, Vol.2, No.46

## Freedom convoy protests in Canada, and a de-escalation over Ukraine

Sarasi Ganguly and Ashwin Immanuel Dhanabalan



Led by the truck drivers, the anti-COVID measures protest took a new turn in Canada with the use of heavy trucks to block roads and bridges. (Image Source: CNN)

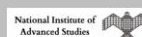
### Canada: Freedom convoys and a new wave of protests

[In the news](#)

On 8 February, thousands of truck drivers in Canada, with heavy vehicles and rigs, blocked the Ambassador Bridge, the busiest route connecting Detroit to Windsor, Canada. On 7 February, Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson declared a state of emergency in the city over the protests against vaccine mandates. Mayor Watson suggested that the emergency was needed for police to control the protestors who are being called "volatile." Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in a statement: "Canadians were shocked and frankly disgusted by the behaviour displayed by some people protesting in our nation's capital."

[Issues at large](#)

First, the state of COVID-19 protests in Canada. The protests started in January when the Canadian government imposed a vaccine mandate, compulsory covid testing and quarantine on truck drivers entering Canada through the US-Canada border. A convoy of truckers protested this move, calling it a violation of rights. Under the banner "Freedom Convoy," a



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02 February 2022, Vol.2, No.45

## One year of the coup in Myanmar, Taliban meetings in Oslo, and the Global hunger report

Aparupa Bhattacharjee, Abigail Fernandez, and Apoorva Sudhakar



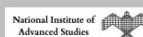
On 1 February, Myanmar completed one year of military rule, despite internal protests and external sanctions, the military regime remains strong. (Image Source: File Photo/REUTERS/Stringer)

### Myanmar: One year after the coup

[In the news](#)

On 1 February marked one year of the military coup in Myanmar that triggered a nationwide civil disobedience movement, political arrests, ethnic conflicts, and violence. On the first anniversary, while the protestors observed a "silent strike" for six hours, a few pro-military rallies were organized in Yangon, Mandalay, and Naypyitaw.

On the same day, the EU delegation to the UN in Geneva issued a joint statement expressing concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Myanmar and called for a "cessation of violence."



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26 January 2022, Vol.2, No.44

## Coup in Africa, Continuing violence in Yemen, and an ISIS attack in Syria

Mohamad Aseel Ummer, Rashmi BR, and Jeshil Samuel



The people of Burkina Faso celebrating the coup. (Image Source: AFP/BBC)

### Burkina Faso: Another coup in Africa

[In the news](#)

On 24 January, in a televised broadcast, a group of soldiers representing the Patriotic Movement for Safeguarding and Restoration (MPSR) informed that they had detained the President, citing the worsening insecurities in the country. The government has been dissolved and the constitution suspended, but the group assured that a constitutional order would be retained in "reasonable time". The whereabouts of the President and other members of the government have not been disclosed yet. The coup unravelled a week after the arrest of 11 soldiers accused of plotting to overthrow the government led by President Roch Marc Christian. The statement released by the coup leaders informs that the putsch had taken place "without any physical violence against those arrested, who are being held in a safe place, with respect for their dignity." The coup comes after days of tensions and public unrest in the capital - Ouagadougou. On 22 January, people gathered in large numbers to protest against the government and its failure to fight the growing threat of Islamist insurgency in the country.



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19 January 2022, Vol.2, No.43

## Threat of War over Ukraine, a Syrian trial in Germany, and Protests in France

D Suba Chandran, Ashwin Immanuel Dhanabalan, and Padmashree Anandhan

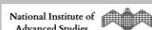


The US Secretary of State is in Europe and is meeting the Russian foreign minister over the threat of war in Ukraine. (Image Source: The Economist)

### Ukraine: Threat of Russian invasion

In the news

On 19 January, the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken reached Kyiv, as part of his three-day tour to Kyiv, Berlin and Geneva, to discuss what the US sees as an imminent threat of Russian invasion of Ukraine. He met with Ukraine's President; a US State Department release claimed: "Secretary Blinken emphasized again that if Russia chooses the path of further aggression against Ukraine, the United States, together with our Allies and partners, will impose crippling costs on Russia's economy, reinforce NATO's presence in frontline Allied states, and increase defensive assistance to Ukraine above and beyond what we are already providing."



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12 January 2022, Vol.2, No.42

## Unrest and crackdown in Kazakhstan, Another jail term for Aung San Suu Kyi, Two years after Qasem Soleimani, and Canada's reconciliation with the indigenous people

Abigail Miriam Fernandez, Vibha Venugopal, Ankit Singh and Sarasi Ganguly



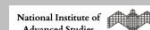
While the cases from Omicron have been increasing across the world, new reports on the nature of Omicron threat is cautious. (Image Source: WHO)

### Kazakhstan: Bloody unrest and a brutal crackdown

In the news

On 2 January, protests broke out in the western town of Zhanaozen after a sudden spike in fuel prices when the government lifted price caps for LPG. Protests spread to other parts of the country, including Almaty and quickly turned violent, resulting in the death of over 160 people and over 1000 injured. On 4 January, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev restored the price cap on fuel; however, protests continued. Demonstrators pulled down a statue of former President Nursultan Nazarbayev, burning buildings and vehicles.

On 5 January, Tokayev declared a state of emergency, issued a "shoot-to-kill" order targeting the protesters as "bandits and terrorists." He also called for Russian assistance to curb unrest. The following day, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) deployed over 2500



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23 December 2021, Vol.2, No.38

## New reports on the Omicron threat, and lifting sanctions on humanitarian aid to Afghanistan

Akriti Sharma and Ashwin Immanuel Dhanabalan



While the cases from Omicron have been increasing across the world, new reports on the nature of Omicron threat is cautious. (Image Source: WHO)

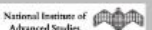
### COVID-19: Omicron rapidly spreads across countries

In the news

On 22 December, the UK reported 1,06,122 cases recording the highest number of daily cases reported. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Omicron has spread to 106 countries.

On 22 December, according to the New York Times, a South African study highlighted that risk of hospitalization was 70 per cent lesser among people infected with Omicron as compared to other variants. On the same day, according to CNBC, a Scottish study suggested that the Omicron is two-thirds less likely to result in hospitalization in comparison to the Delta. Additionally, a study from England shows that omicron infection was 15 to 20 per cent less likely to lead to hospitalization than Delta.

On 20 December, the WHO said that Omicron cases doubled in one to one-and-a-half days, making it more transmissible than the Delta variant of COVID-19. It added that Omicron is



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28 October 2021, Vol.2, No.30

## Coup in Sudan, Pressure on Myanmar's military regime, and the Migrant game by Belarus

Mohammad Aseel Ummer, Aparupa Bhattacharjee, and Joana Cera Matthews



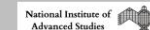
Military dissolves civilian leaderships of the transitional government in Sudan. (Image Source: The Guardian/Mohammed Abu Obaid/EPA)

### Sudan: Tensions flare-up as the military dissolves the civilian government

In the news

On 25 October, General Abdel Fattah Burhan, head of Sudan's armed forces, in a televised broadcast announced that the civilian leadership of the transitional government has been dissolved due to political infighting which can lead to a civil war. Prior to the announcement, various news sources reported heavy deployment of security forces in the capital - Khartoum and key civilian leaders like Prime Minister Abdella Hamdock being detained from their residences.

Government supporters who had been demonstrating since last week as a response to a call for a military coup took to the streets in Khartoum and other major cities demanding an immediate release of detained leaders and reinstating the civilian government back to power. The armed



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A brief review of conflict and peace processes across the world

21 October 2021, Vol.2, No.29

## One year after Samuel Paty's killing, Kidnapping in Haiti, and Instability in Sudan

Sourina Bej, Porkkodi Ganeshpandian, and Mohammad Aseel Ummer



France remembers Samuel Paty, a school teacher beheaded in October 2020 by a radical. (Image Source: Reuters/Eric Gaillard)

### France: One year after Samuel Paty's beheading

[In the news](#)

On 16 October, the French Prime Minister commemorated in Paris the schoolteacher, Samuel Paty, who was beheaded one year ago after he exhibited cartoons of Prophet Muhammad as part of his history lessons on free speech. At the commemoration, the French government unveiled a plaque at the Education Ministry in Paty's honour, and renamed the capital's Latin Quarter after him. The French Prime Minister Jean Castex noted, "Here is a man who wanted to do his job... a man who only aspired to transmit the values of freedom, secularism, tolerance, free will." "We will not forget Samuel Paty," added the Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer on a visit to a school in Paris.



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## ISIS violence in Afghanistan, and Targeted killings in J&K

Abigail Miriam Fernandez and Akriti Sharma

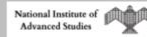


A series of targeted killings in J&K, attacking members of the minority communities. (Image Source: AP-TheHindu)

### Afghanistan: Over 50 people killed in ISIS-K suicide bomber attack

[In the news](#)

On 8 October, a suicide bomber attacked a Shiite mosque in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz, killing over 50 people and wounding more than 150 others. The Islamic State Khorasan (ISIS-K) claimed responsibility for the attack. In a statement carried by the IS-linked Amaq news agency, the group said that the attacker was an ethnic Uyghur and that the attack targeted both Shiites and the Taliban for their supposed willingness to expel Uyghurs to meet demands from China. Following the attack, the Taliban's chief spokesman, Zabihullah



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7 October 2021, Vol.2, No.27

## Anti-Bolsonaro protests in Brazil, UK-France fishing row, Talks with the TTP in Pakistan, and Anti-abortion law protests in the US

Porkkodi Ganeshpandian, Sourina Bej, D Suba Chandran, and Sambavi Parthasarathy



Protests against President Bolsonaro in Brazil. (Image Source: Reuters-BBC)

### Brazil: Anti-Bolsonaro protests across the country

[In the news](#)

On 2 October, thousands of Brazilians gathered across Brazil to protest against President Bolsonaro. The protests were peaceful, displaying messages on posters and inflatable gas canisters. The protests spanned across more than two hundred Brazilian cities, including Sao Paulo and Rio De Janeiro. The protestors highlighted their unhappiness over the handling of the pandemic, dwindling economic opportunities and called for the impeachment of President Bolsonaro.

[Issues at Large](#)

First, the pandemic mishandling, Brazil has lost over 600,000 lives during the pandemic, the second-highest death toll after the US. Bolsonaro has been accused of promoting crowds at the



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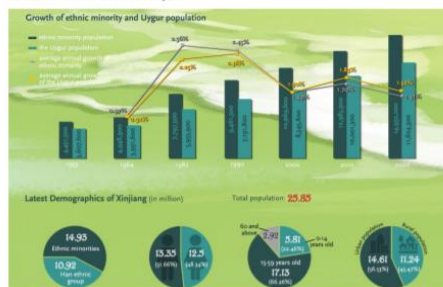
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## The Chinese White Paper on Xinjiang, and the Haitian migrant crisis in the US

Avishka Ashok and Vaishnavi Iyer

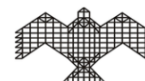


"Uyghurs accounted for 83.74 per cent of the population in the four prefectures in southern Xinjiang," says the White Paper titled 'Xinjiang Population Dynamics and Data'." (Image Source: Global Times)

### China: The first White Paper on Xinjiang's demographic and economic development

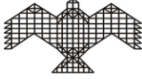
[In the news](#)

On 26 September, the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China released its first white paper focusing on the population dynamics in the Xinjiang region. The 20-page report displays the fast demographic development over seven decades and boasts of a 99.96 per cent enrolment rate in primary education in the region.





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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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