

Pugwash statement on the war in Ukraine

26 February 2022

1. The war in Ukraine is a very dangerous war inside Europe. It is the first significant Russian military intervention in Europe in more than 50 years.
 2. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the definition of the boundaries of the new independent states was dealt with, mostly, in a constructive and peaceful way. The Armenia-Azerbaijan case and the case of Georgia are the most significant counterexamples. In the case of Armenia/Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation played a positive role in containing the consequences of the antagonism and conflict.
 3. In general, the problems connected to the autonomy of regions inside states – especially of those regions that have a different linguistic or ethnic or religious identity from the dominant one of the state – within Europe have been addressed mostly in a positive way after the end of world war II. The main exception has been the case of the dismantlement of the former Yugoslavia.
 4. In the case of Ukraine, the direct involvement of Russia is a source of very serious concern for all Europeans and also for the entire world. The invasion of Ukraine by Russian military forces should be reversed and all attacks against Ukraine should be stopped. *States are legally committed by the Charter of the United Nations to refrain from the use or threat of use of force to settle disputes.* The situation is further complicated by the fact that Russia is one of the two nuclear armed superpowers and that nuclear weapons are also present in western Europe.
 5. A possible way out from the present serious critical situation should include
 1. An immediate cease-fire
 2. The total withdrawal from the present territory of Ukraine of all foreign military forces and foreign military installations
 3. The recognition of the autonomy of the Donbass region inside Ukraine in terms of local government and linguistic identity
 4. The recognition of the Crimea as part of the Russian Federation. Two referendums in Crimea supported the return to the Russian Federation.
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5. The freedom of movement of people across the boundaries of Ukraine with Russia and other countries
6. Following the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine, sanctions against Russia should be eliminated. Economic sanctions can also bring very negative consequences not only for the country that is sanctioned.
7. A clear agreement that will stress the neutral status of Ukraine. In particular it should be understood that Ukraine will not seek NATO membership. Instead, the establishment of treaty-based international security assurances to neutral Ukraine will be important.
8. An inclusive program of peaceful economic rehabilitation of Ukraine. Once the first steps towards resolution of the crises in Ukraine are made, there should be new negotiations on new European security architecture based on an indivisible security for all.

In line, with Pugwash's commitment to dialogue and peace, we appeal to all parties to exert maximum restraint, work for an immediate ceasefire which prioritizes humanitarian needs, and a swift return to diplomacy and negotiation. Pugwash is committed to strengthen dialogue with the relevant stakeholders at both the official and non-official levels to promote understanding and trust, and to bring back peace and stability to Europe.

Paolo Cotta Ramusino, Secretary-General

Sergio Duarte, President
