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Ukraine

THE UN FACING RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR AS A CHALLENGE TO EUROPEAN SECURITY

***Abstract:** The article deals with the problem of insufficient effectiveness of the international organizations, the UN in particular, in preventing hostilities at the global level. The point is that the UN has no effective mechanisms and instruments at its disposal to stop aggression. It is high time for the UN to be sufficiently reformed. The problem of the UN reforming is rather urgent and not new and is being discussed for several years. Russia should be removed from its place as a UNSC permanent member, where it holds veto power. UN Secretary-general A. Guterres paid several visits to Ukraine during Russia’s full-scaled aggression. Whilst condemning the Russian invasion as a clear violation of the UN Charter, Mr. Guterres acted as an intermediary, visiting both Russian and Ukraine. Maybe, one of the results of Russian-Ukrainian war will be significant reforming of the Organization.*

***Keywords:** Russian-Ukrainian war, security, the UN Security Council (UNSC), veto, International Criminal Court (ICC), Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle.*

Introduction

The European continent found itself in a critical situation. The war has become a reality and Ukraine has obviously turned into the epicenter of this terrible war unleashed by Russia. On 24 February 2022, the RF invaded Ukraine in a major escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian War, which began as far as in 2014, after which the security situation in Ukraine were deteriorating rapidly. Russian bombs and missiles have hit residential areas,

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schools and hospitals in Ukrainian cities including Kharkiv, Kyiv, Mariupol, Bucha, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhya, Kherson, Odessa, and many more beautiful cities of Ukraine. The invasion has likely resulted in tens of thousands of deaths on both sides and caused Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II with 6.302.600² million Ukrainians fleeing the country. Within the period of the invasion, Russia experienced its greatest emigration since the 1917 Revolution. The invasion has also caused global food shortages.

While doing her research, the writer has got acquainted with several sources giving more or less objective data concerning losses of both sides as a result of hostilities.

According to Dr. Vikhram Mittal³, at the start of March 2023, the General Staff of Ukraine's Armed Forces stated that the Russian military casualties exceeded 150,000. Meanwhile, several reports indicate that Ukrainian military casualties are in excess of 100,000. However, it is likely that the actual numbers of Russian and Ukrainian combat losses are considerably less. Maybe now they are not less, it is not March outside...

Meanwhile, according to an assessment found in the leaks, seemingly collated by the US Defence Intelligence Agency, Russia has suffered 189,500 to 223,000 total casualties, including 35,500 to 43,000 killed in action and 154,000 to 180,000 wounded.

Ukraine has suffered 124,500 to 131,000 total casualties, including 15,500 to 17,500 killed in action and 109,000 to 113,500 wounded in action, according to the document titled, *Russia/Ukraine – Assessed Combat Sustainability and Attrition*⁴.

It is stressed that the figures are approximately 10 times larger than any public casualty figure published by either Moscow or Kyiv⁵.

So, the conclusion is: it is impossible to calculate losses at the moment. In any case, they are great for both sides and are increasing with every passing day.

² *Ukraine refugee situation*, <<https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>> (17.07.2023).

³ *Military Casualties In Russia-Ukraine War Are Likely Less Than Commonly Stated*, <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/vikrammittal/2023/03/05/military-casualties-in-russia-ukraine-war-are-likely-less-than-commonly-stated/>> (17.07.2023).

⁴ *Russia/Ukraine – Assessed Combat Sustainability and Attrition*, <https://www.google.com/search?q=%E2%80%9CRussia%2FUkraine+%E2%80%93+Assessed+Combat+Sustainability+and+Attrition&rlz=1C1CHBD_ruUA779UA779&oq=%E2%80%9CRussia%2FUkraine+%E2%80%93+Assessed+Combat+Sustainability+and+Attrition&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i512j0i22i30j69i58.3963j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8> (17.07.2023).

⁵ *Ukraine war likely to stretch past 2023: purported US documents*, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/12/ukraine-war-likely-to-stretch-past-2023-purported-us-documents>> (17.07.2023).

Thus, the European continent really found itself in an extremely difficult situation. We have reached the mid-year of 2023 facing total crisis of international organizations when the world has no international regulators, when international relations are controlled by nothing except intentions and forces of the participants of the hostilities.

The world is encountering unpredictability, a vague future, a complex of new threats which could be generalized by “a security crisis” term. The main political and security institutions – NATO, the EU, the UN and the OSCE together with major states and smaller units remain, but their future roles and activities are unclear. Their strengths and weaknesses are painfully visible.

The point is that there is lack of mechanisms able to defuse the war, finally stop it. There are no guarantors, no arbiters, no effective international organizations, and this fact aggravates the situation. It is worth to recollect the sad situation with the League of Nations when it failed to prevent the WWII.

Is the United Nations effective institution?

As the unsuccessful League of Nations has just been mentioned, it seems worth to begin this concise article with short characteristics of the UN activities believing it will appear more successful than its predecessor.

As we all know, the work of the United Nations covers five main areas:

- Maintaining International Peace and Security.
- Protection of Human Rights.
- Delivering Humanitarian Aid.
- Support of Sustainable Development and Climate Action.
- Upholding International Law.

As you can see, the amount of the UN activities is great. It goes without saying that “Maintaining International Peace and Security” area is of paramount importance for us to discuss the topic under consideration.

From the very first days of hostilities the United Nations devoted the primary attention to Russian-Ukrainian war trying to find some way out of the heavy situation. On the night of 23 to 24 February 2022, Russia launched a military offensive in Ukraine. The simple list of the UN initial actions given below, clearly demonstrates the immediate reaction of the Organization to the first manifestations of the aggression.

The United Nations considers this attack to be a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. It is contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

On 25 February, the Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed Amin Awad of Sudan as Assistant Secretary-General to serve as United Nations Crisis Coordinator for Ukraine.

- On 28 February, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court opened an investigation for war crimes and crimes against humanity.
- The United Nations General Assembly adopted on 2 March a resolution deploring the “aggression” committed by Russia against Ukraine (141 votes in favour, 5 against and 35 abstentions).
- The UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on 4 March calling for the “swift and verifiable” withdrawal of Russian troops and Russian-backed armed groups from the entire territory of Ukraine.
- The UN Human Rights Council decided on 5 March to urgently establish an independent international commission of inquiry following Russia’s aggression against Ukraine.
- On 16 March the International Court of Justice ordered Russia to immediately suspend its military operations in Ukraine.
- On 24 March, the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly demanded civilian protection and humanitarian access in Ukraine, while also criticizing Russia for creating a “dire” humanitarian situation (140 votes in favour, 5 against and 38 abstentions).
- On 30 March the United Nations appointed three human rights experts to investigate possible violations of international law committed during the conflict in Ukraine.
- In a statement on 4 April, UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet said she was horrified by the images of people lying dead on the streets and in improvised graves in the town
- On 7 April, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for Russia to be suspended from the Human Rights Council. The resolution received a two-thirds majority of those voting, minus abstentions, in the 193-member Assembly, with 93 nations voting in favour and 24 against.
- End of April, the UN Secretary-General visited Russia and Ukraine; etc.

This list can be continued of course, as an illustration of the enormous amount of work carried out by the UN. All kinds of its activities are presented by approval or disapproval of actions, resolutions and calls, visits and decisions. Thus, for example, the UN General Assembly in New York has overwhelmingly backed a resolution of 23 February, 2023⁶ condemning Russia’s invasion of Ukraine started nearly a year ago. It called for the withdrawal of troops from Ukraine and a halt to fighting. The motion was

⁶ *UN General Assembly calls for immediate end to war in Ukraine*, <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/02/1133847>> (22.07.2023).

backed by 141 nations with 32 abstaining and seven – including Russia – voting against. Or, “On 2 March, the UN General Assembly adopted – by an overwhelming majority of 141 against 5 – a resolution rejecting the Russian Federation’s brutal invasion of Ukraine and demanding that Russia immediately withdraw its forces and abide by international law”⁷.

However, to tell the truth, all similar resolutions and appeals are worth nothing. Why? Since Russia has been violating numerous UN principles, its permanent member status in the UNSC raises questions about the role of the UN in global affairs. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the UN has lost its significance as a peace securing mechanism at the international stage.

The changing needs of global governance for peace and security require significant reforms firstly in the UNSC, including expanding its permanent and non-permanent seats to better address the complex and evolving challenges to international peace and security. The problem is being discussed for a long period of time by experts from different states all over the world. Unfortunately, up till now nothing has changed. Why has the problem become so complicated to be solved?

It is worthwhile mentioning that the Security Council was designed in a different era, after World War II, with a membership and veto system that have ultimately restricted its effectiveness in dealing with today’s global conflict. The UN Security Council was established by the 1945 UN Charter and comprises 15 members. The 15-nation Security Council appeared to become the UN’s most powerful organ. It can authorize military action, deploy peacekeepers, sanction nations and individuals, and refer possible war crimes cases to the International Criminal Court. Ten rotating non-permanent countries are elected by the UN General Assembly to do a two-year term on the Security Council. Five members – the former USSR (now Russia), Republic of China (now People’s Republic of China), the US, UK and France – have the status of permanent members and so have a veto on any vote before the Council. Why Russia? As for Russia, in his letter of 24 December 1991, B. Yeltsin, the then RF President, informed the Secretary-General that the membership of the Soviet Union in the Security Council and all other United Nations organs was being continued by the Russian Federation with the support of the 11 CIS member countries.

The point is that a ‘no’ vote from any one of the five permanent members of the Council stops action on any measure put before it. Even when a permanent member is accused of being the aggressor, the veto still applies. So, the Security Council seems to be deadlocked – and Russia has already used its

⁷ *UN General Assembly demands Russian Federation to withdraw all military forces from the territory of Ukraine* <https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/un-general-assembly-demands-russian-federation-withdraw-all-military-forces-territory-ukraine_en> (22.07.2023).

veto to block any reaction to the situation in Ukraine. Thus, after Russia illegally annexed the Ukrainian republic of Crimea in March 2014, it vetoed a Security Council resolution condemning the act, and, when Russian-backed militants shot down Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine, Russia vetoed a resolution that would have created an international tribunal to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the loss of 298 lives⁸.

Official Kyiv argues that Moscow should have formally applied for UN membership after the USSR disintegration in 1991, and since it has not done so, it does not have the legal right to be on the council, much less a permanent, veto-wielding member. “Russia’s presence in the UN Security Council is the result of the largest diplomatic fraud of the 20th century,” D. Kuleba said at a Chatham House discussion of Russia’s war. “We should delegitimize Russia’s presence in the UN Security Council first, by exposing the truth to everyone”⁹.

Here it should be stressed that any reform of the Security Council would require the agreement of at least two-thirds of UN member states in a vote in the General Assembly and must be ratified by two-thirds of member states. All of the permanent members of the UNSC (which have veto rights) must also agree. Even the UN Secretary General only dreams of reforms and remains powerless in their implementation. “I have not the power to reform the Security Council,” Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary General told reporters. “I have no illusions about the possibility to do it immediately, but I will do everything I can through making the UN as effective as possible in situations like these to at least compensate for a failure that I cannot solve”¹⁰.

So is it realistic to speak about removing Russia from the UNSC and question Russia’s presence in the UN? Unfortunately, as we can see, there is no mechanism to remove a permanent member of the Security Council written into the UN Charter. The word “permanent” was to mean just that. But there is a process to remove a country from the United Nations. That would require a vote of the UN General Assembly based on the recommendation of the Security Council. This has never been done. And given that Russia has a veto on the Security Council, the Council cannot recommend Russia’s removal without Russia’s agreement. This simply will not happen.

So no, Russia cannot be kicked out.

Thus, is it really a deadlock?

⁸ *United Nations Security Council*, <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Security-Council>> (22.07.2023).

⁹ *Russia Set to Take Helm of UN Security Council, to Critics' Dismay*, <<https://www.voanews.com/a/russia-set-to-take-helm-of-un-security-council-to-critics-dismay/7031636.html>> (22.07.2023).

¹⁰ *Security Council failed to halt Russia's war against Ukraine – Guterres*, <<https://www.jpost.com/international/article-705414>> (22.07.2023).

Moreover, on April 1, 2023, Russia took over the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council for the month, and no one could have prevented it despite the fact that 141 countries condemned its aggression against Ukraine. According to Ukraine's Foreign Minister D. Kuleba, Russian UNSC presidency on April 1 is a bad joke. Russia has usurped its seat; it's waging a colonial war; its leader is a war criminal wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for kidnapping children. The world can't be a safe place with Russia at UNSC¹¹. It is also worth mentioning that it was during its previous UNSC presidency in February 2022, namely on the 24th day of its presidency, when Russia launched its so-called "special military operation" into Ukraine, in a flagrant breach of the UN Charter and international law.

With Russia's war in Ukraine entering its 14th month, an arrest warrant being issued by the International Criminal Court for president Vladimir Putin, and Moscow planning to deploy tactical nuclear weapons to neighboring Belarus, critics were questioning how Russia could helm the UN's most powerful organ. "The question is very clear: can the war criminal head the UN Security Council?" Andrius Kubilius¹², a Lithuanian member of the European Parliament, asked during a session, referring to Putin.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in a dramatic video appearance at the United Nations (April, 2022) called on the body to remove Russia from the Security Council days after evidence circulated of executions and other atrocities committed by Russian troops in his country.

V. Zelensky said Russia should be removed from its place as a UNSC permanent member, where it holds veto power, arguing that it was time to reform the global peace-keeping body. "We are dealing with a state that is turning the veto [in] the UN Security Council into the right to die," V. Zelensky said in his remarks. "This undermines the whole architecture of global security and allows them to go unpunished." "The main thing is today, it's time to transform the system, the United Nations," he told the Security Council¹³.

And one more aspect, concerning the Russian Language Day 2023: every year on June 6, the United Nations celebrates UN Russian Language Day, which was established by UNESCO in 2010. This day aligns with the birthday of Alexander Pushkin, a renowned Russian poet known as the founder of modern Russian language. Neither the 2014 annexation of Crimea, nor the 2022 full-scale invasion have caused the UN to put the celebration of the holiday on

¹¹ *Security Council failed to halt Russia's war against Ukraine – Guterres*, <<https://www.jpost.com/international/article-705414>> (22.07.2023).

¹² *Russia Set to Take Helm of UN Security Council, to Critics' Dismay*, <<https://www.voanews.com/a/russia-set-to-take-helm-of-un-security-council-to-critics-dismay/7031636.html>> (22.07.2023)

¹³ *Ukraine's President calls on Security Council to act for peace or 'dissolve' itself*, <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1115632>> (23.07.2023)

hold. In 2023 the UN “celebrated” the Russian Language day after Russia blew up Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Station.

It is obvious that Alexander Pushkin as well as the Russian language itself have nothing to do with the Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. Nevertheless, if the UN has clearly demonstrated its attitude towards Russia’s aggressive policy at the moment and issued so many declarations and statements, why popularize further the significance of Russia even in this neutral field?!

Antonio Guterres paid several visits to Ukraine during Russia’s full-scale aggression. His first visit to Ukraine (when he visited Kyiv and the devastated outskirts of the capital), since Russia’s invasion in late February 2022, came two days after he had met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow, where he stressed the need for so-called “humanitarian corridors”, particularly out of the besieged Ukrainian southeastern city of Mariupol. According to Guterres, the UN Security Council failed to go far enough in his efforts “to prevent and end” war. Moreover, Guterres and his team were “shocked” by the proximity of the Russian missile attacks which slammed into central Kyiv as they were visiting but remained all “safe”. “I was shocked to be informed that two rockets have exploded in the city where I am”, Guterres was quoted as telling the BBC. “So this is a dramatic war and we absolutely need to end this war and we absolutely need to have a solution for this war”¹⁴.

Guterres’s second visit to Ukraine in August 2022 was concentrated on visiting Ukrainian ports involved in the framework of the Black Sea Initiative to export wheat grain and solving corresponding problems of grain shortages that have left African countries among the most heavily impacted. “It will take more than grain ships out of Ukraine to stop world hunger, but with Ukrainian grain back on global markets we have a chance to stop this global food crisis from spiraling even further”¹⁵, stated the head of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) David Beasley.

During his third visit on March 8, 2023, the UN Secretary-General stressed the UN’s full commitment and desire to seek solutions. The position of the United Nations, which he has consistently expressed, is crystal clear: Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is a violation of the UN Charter and international law. According to President of Ukraine V. Zelensky who met with António Guterres, “right now, it is Ukraine that is defending the goals and principles of the UN Charter. Hence, it is now and in Ukraine that the future of the UN and the global

¹⁴ *UN chief, team ‘shocked’ by proximity of Russian raid on Kyiv*, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/27/us-to-provide-670m-in-global-food-assistance-amid-crisis-liveblog?traffic_source=KeepReading > (22.07.2023).

¹⁵ *UN chief pays second call on Ukraine, will visit grain-exporting Black Sea Port*, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/08/1124922> > (22.07.2023).

role of the United Nations are being decided,” Volodymyr Zelensky emphasized speaking to the media after talks with the UN Secretary-General in Kyiv¹⁶.

Meanwhile, the well-known military analyst R. Svitlan informed that UN Secretary-General remained unsatisfied with the results of his visits to Ukraine. According to R. Svitlan, Guterres’s visits were aimed not at helping Ukraine or organizing UN operation. He came to the bleeding country to decide on the grain deal. The grain deal, where the UN was used as a pad, should not have happened at all. We must forget about the grain deal, the analyst says, there are mechanisms for this, and the UN must be thrown out of the territory of Ukraine¹⁷.

People’s deputy of Ukraine, and now the officer of Ukrainian Armed Forces, the “Zakhid” commander of the 24th territorial defense battalion “Aidar” Ihor Lapin, has a somewhat similar position regarding the UN. In his speech on the First TV channel, he harshly criticizes the UN for publishing false data on Ukrainian losses as a result of Russian aggression¹⁸.

As far as 2018, while debating in UN GA António Guterres mentioned: “At this time of extreme challenges, we must not abandon the ‘responsibility to protect’ or leave it in a state of suspended animation, finely articulated in words but breached time and again in practice”¹⁹.

Here it seems worth to address the ‘Responsibility to Protect (R2P)’ principle which embodies a political commitment to end the worst forms of violence and persecution. R2P emerged as an international norm in response to the failure to prevent mass atrocities in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. It seeks to ensure the United Nations never again fails to halt mass atrocities such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

At the 2005 high-level UN World Summit meeting, UN member States finally committed to the principle of the ‘responsibility to protect’ (R2P) by including it into the outcome document of that meeting (A/RES/60/1)²⁰. Though the concept adopted omitted some of the aspects proposed initially by

¹⁶ *Same zaraz i same v Ukrayini vyrishuyet'sya, yakym bude majbutnye*, <<https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/same-zaraz-i-same-v-ukrayini-virishuyetsya-yakim-bude-majbut-81505>> (22.07.2023).

¹⁷ Svitlan ran over the Gensek hard. Interview with R.G. Svitana Natalia Ivashchenko on her YouTube channel on April 20, 2023

¹⁸ Ihor Lapin's speech on August 1, 2023 on YouTube for the Pryamiy TV channel.

¹⁹ *UN General Assembly Debate on the Responsibility to Protect*, 2018, <<https://www.globalr2p.org/resources/un-general-assembly-debate-on-the-responsibility-to-protect-2018/>> (22.07.2023).

²⁰ *Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 September 2005, 60/1*, 2005 World Summit Outcome. <https://www.google.com/search?q=a%2Fres%2F60%2F1&rlz=1C1CHBD_ruUA779UA779&oq=A%2FRES%2F60%2F1&aqs=chrome.0.0i51213j0i30j0i390i65012j69i58.5857j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8> (22.07.2023).

the ICISS, it retains its fundamental aspects in relation to prevention of and response to the most serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. The following Articles of the Document demonstrate the UN political commitment to end the worst forms of violence and persecution:

- 138. Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. We accept that responsibility and will act in accordance with it. The international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility and support the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability.
- 139. The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this context, we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We stress the need for the General Assembly to continue consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and its implications, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law. We also intend to commit ourselves as necessary and appropriate, to helping States build capacity to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and to assisting those which are under stress before crises and conflicts break out.

The Secretary-General contributed actively to the implementation of the “responsibility to protect” principle through his good offices, his briefings to the inter-governmental bodies of the United Nations and the work of the different departments that compose the Secretariat on issues related to early warning, conflict prevention, human rights, cooperation with regional organizations, political engagement with member states, capacity building, electoral assistance, mediation, administering peacekeeping/ peacebuilding/ political missions etc. In particular, the Secretary-General is mandated to bring issues or situations threatening the maintenance of peace and security, including those where atrocity crimes are likely to occur or are ongoing, to the attention of other United Nations organs.

The Secretary-General has also taken a series of steps to elaborate the “responsibility to protect” principle and guide its practical implementation, including the establishment of the position of the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect in 2007 (S/2007/721)²¹. Currently, George Okoth-Obbo of Uganda is the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

Later on in 2009, based on a report from the UN Secretary-General²², the R2P discourse was transformed into three pillars: protection (national state), international assistance (if national state fails in the first pillar), and international intervention (if peaceful means of assistance fail in the second pillar).

Essentially, R2P should provide means for the international community to find a way to intervene when sovereign states fail to meet the Responsibility to Protect or to accept assistance. As Russia’s aggression threatened and is threatening the human rights of millions of Ukrainian civilians caught in the crossfire of war, concerns have arisen about the Responsibility to Protect in Ukraine. However in the case of Ukraine R2P obviously failed. The UN’s inability to protect populations at risk underscores the failure of the R2P doctrine. According to Obasesam Okoi, “the R2P norm has suffered a political setback due to the deliberate reluctance of the UN Security Council to bring it to practical reality by enforcing the authority entrusted to it by the UN Charter to exercise the use of force to protect populations at risk”²³.

Conclusions

It is generally accepted that the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine is a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations. The Organization remains fully committed to Ukraine’s sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. The parties involved bear the responsibility to avoid actions that could further escalate tensions. But these are more words, loud slogans and condemnations than activities and actions.

It was obvious, that from the very beginning of the war the UN remained neutral, inconsistent in its declarations and assessments, too cautious to accuse

²¹ *Letter dated 31 August 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council*, <<https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/gen-s2007-721.php>> (22.07.2023).

²² *Report of the Secretary-General: Implementing the Responsibility to Protect*, <<https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/report-of-the-secretary-general-implementing-the-responsibility-to-protect/>> (22.07.2023).

²³ Okoi O., *Ukraine and the failure of the Responsibility to protect norm /Obasesam Okoi // E-International Relations*, <<https://www.e-ir.info/2022/09/05/ukraine-and-the-failure-of-the-responsibility-to-protect-norm/#:~:text=The%20R2P%20norm%20has%20suffered,to%20protect%20>> (22.07.2023).

the aggressor. The visit of Antonio Guterres, the UN secretary-General, to Ukraine appeared of no effect as well.

That is why it was not surprising to come across the declarations done by the UN officials like this: Both Russia and Ukraine violate human rights and international humanitarian law during the ongoing war between them. Both the RF Armed Forces and the Armed Forces of Ukraine place military facilities near civilian buildings and use civilians as human shields, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet said on July 5, 2022, speaking at the Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva²⁴.

It is obvious that the support of both the aggressor and his victim will result in the stagnation of the situation. It is no coincidence that at regular pro-Ukrainian rallies in London, where the author of this article is actively participating, one can see a poster “THE UN UNITED NOTHING”.

We can absolutely agree with the conclusion of Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo voiced in his remarks to the Security Council meeting on Ukraine, 17 July 2023: The longer this war continues, the more dangerous its consequences, including the possibility of a wider conflict. For the sake of the Ukrainian people and for the sake of our global community, this senseless, unjustified war must stop²⁵.

The main point is that obsolete and outdated UN institutions, UNSC first of all, need fundamental reform. The UN Security Council looks impotent at this moment, with the world watching. In fact, its work is paralyzed due to the constant use of the veto by Russia. Other parts of the UN have responded more effectively to the humanitarian and refugee crises the war has created. Nevertheless, to avoid the infamous history of the League of Nations, the whole UN system must be reformed. Considering that there are no alternatives to the UN in the contemporary world, and the formation of similar international organizations is not expected in the nearest future, so there is a direct need to reorganize and reform the UN. And immediately.

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²⁵ *UN News. Ukraine*, <<https://news.un.org/en/focus/ukraine>> (22.07.2023).

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