

## Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts (Case Study: The Russian Intervention in Donbas War 2014)

التدخل الأجنبي في الصراعات العرقية (دراسة حالة: التدخل الروسي في حرب دونباس  
(٢٠١٤)

أحمد محمد محمود عبدالعزيز

طالب ماجستير بكلية السياسة والاقتصاد – جامعة بني سويف

نجاح عبدالفتاح الرئيس

أستاذ العلوم السياسية بكلية السياسة والاقتصاد – جامعة بني سويف

أسامة فاروق مخيمر

أستاذ العلوم السياسية بكلية السياسة والاقتصاد – جامعة بني سويف

الشيءاء عبدالسلام إبراهيم

مدرس العلوم السياسية بكلية السياسة والاقتصاد – جامعة بني سويف

### Abstract:

Foreign interventions constitute a crucial factor in shaping international politics. One significant type of them is third-party interventions in ethnic conflicts. This study focuses on understanding how crucial foreign interventions are in ethnic conflicts, the factors behind these kinds of interventions, and how these factors correspond to the international law framework applying to the case study of the Russian interventions in the Donbas War 2014. The study depends on the national interest approach in analyzing interventions in world politics, the reasons and justifications of the Russian intervention in the insurgency war of Donbas in Ukraine. It summarizes that interventions are mostly to change the balance of power between the parties engaged in the conflict to achieve the national interests of the intervener party, even the humanitarian intervention isn't always altruistic and seeks only humanitarian purposes. Solo interventions can be driven by multiple factors like the existence of ethnic ties between a party of the conflict and an outside party. Also, the diaspora groups can have a significant influence if the right conditions are in their favor. There are other motives for interventions like the irredentist policies and the effect of the political systems of the world's states. The Russian state would not have been able to implement its interventionist policies in the conflict inside

Ukraine during the war except because of the presence of a group in the Donbas with ethnic ties to Russia, which justified and facilitated Russia's external intervention and its irredentism policy.

**Keywords;** Ethnic Conflicts, irredentism, humanitarian interventions, responsibility to protect.

### المستخلص:

تشكل التدخلات الخارجية عاملا حاسما في شكل العلاقات الدولية، وواحد من أهم أشكال هذه التدخلات هو تدخل طرف ثالث في صراع إثني، وتركز هذه الدراسة على فهم مدى حاسمية التدخلات الخارجية في الصراعات الإثنية، وما هي العوامل الداعية لهذه التدخلات، وكيف تتفاعل هذه العوامل مع أشكال التدخلات الخارجية في إطار القانون الدولي تطبيقا على دراسة حالة التدخلات الروسية في حرب الدونباس في عام ٢٠١٤، واستخدمت الدراسة في تحليلها منهج المصلحة القومية في تنفيذ العوامل المؤدية لهذه التدخلات في إطار السياسة الدولية، وكذلك في تحليل أسباب تدخل الروس في حرب الدونباس ودعم الانفصاليين، وانتهت إلى عدة ملاحظات، منها: أن التدخلات الخارجية تهدف إلى الإخلال بموازين القوى داخل الصراع الإثني لصالح الطرف الذي سيخدم مصالحها القومية، وحتى التدخلات الدولية الإنسانية ليست كلها غيرية ولكنها أيضا تهدف لتحقيق مصالح الدول الراعية لها، والتدخل الأحادي من طرف ثالث في صراع إثني له عدة دوافع منها وجود روابط إثنية بين أحد طرفي الصراع (على الأغلب الأقلية)، وكذلك مجموعات الشتات قد تشكل عاملا دافعا للتدخلات في الصراعات الإثنية إذا توفرت الشروط المناسبة، وغير ذلك فإنه يوجد دوافع أخرى مثلا السياسات الوجودية وطبيعة النظم السياسية، وأن الدولة الروسية لم تكن لأن تصير قادرة على تنفيذها سياساتها التدخلية في الصراع داخل أوكرانيا خلال الحرب الانفصالية في عام ٢٠١٤ إلا بسبب وجود مجموعة في الدونباس تربطها روابط إثنية مع روسيا مما سوغ وسهل على روسيا تدخلها الخارجي وسياستها الوجودية.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** الصراعات الإثنية، السياسات الوجودية، التدخل الدولي الإنساني، مسؤولية الحماية.

## Introduction:

Intervention in world politics can be defined as “dictatorial or coercive interference by an outside party or parties, in the sphere of jurisdiction of a sovereign state”.<sup>1</sup> It is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as: “action by a country to become involved in the affairs of another country when they have not been asked to do so.”<sup>2</sup> No doubt, interference can be military or non-military coercive interference. Foreign interventions, in all their shapes, constitute a continuing issue confronting international society. They are not a new phenomenon and they have been threatening the sovereignty of states since international relations have been recorded.

Additionally, “in the strictest sense of the term, intervention involves unauthorized coercive interference in the internal affairs of another state; that is, the threat or use of force, short of aggression or war, in ways that infringe state sovereignty.”<sup>3</sup> Under this conception, sovereignty is violated when intervention occurs. Also, any infringement or restriction of the liberty of a state is considered intervention.<sup>4</sup> Other commentators can define intervention as any interference in the domestic affairs of another state. This definition stresses that intervention may be coercive and non-coercive acts.

International law provides equal sovereignty for all the world’s states. This means all states possess the legal power to apply and implement their laws within their territory. Also, this asserts that the basis of equal sovereignty for all states is the concept of non-intervention in international relations among states. No state has the right to intervene unilaterally in a domestic matter of another state. However, governments may intervene and take a close interest in the domestic affairs of other sovereign states when it may have been consequential to them. The latter action taken by several governments on many international occasions is considered illegal.

The intervention phenomenon reflects the inequality of the world order politically, militarily, and economically in all of world history. The impetus for foreign/ external intervention may exist in militarized groups that might be mercenaries or supporting a political course. Also, international intervention arises in cases when powerful states in the world or regional hegemonies (states or regional organizations) intervene in domestic matters of relatively lesser or weaker states in any shape of interference. These interferences are portrayed as liberating people from oppression, democratizing governments, protecting specific ethnicities from the danger of genocide crime, etc.

Conflicts are a worldwide phenomenon. One of the most common conflicts in the world since the last century is the ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflicts are clashes between parties that are classified on an ethnic basis. The reasons for these kinds of conflicts vary

very much as well as their scenarios. Most notably, foreign interventions surely exist in this type of conflict. This study will search for the reasons for interventions, their motives, and justifications applying to the case of the Russian interventions in the Donbas War in 2014.

### **Research problem:**

Ethnic conflicts constitute a significant portion of the current conflicts ongoing in the whole world. Undoubtedly, one of the major variables that determine the final result of such conflicts is the foreign interventions of third parties in the conflict. Third-party interventions in ethnic conflicts have many reasons, justifications, and impacts that interact with the national interests of the related states to the conflict and intertwine with international politics. Thereby, analyzing and understanding such cases the study asks a main question: what are the motives of the foreign interventions for a third party in an ethnic conflict?

### **Research Questions:**

1. What is “ethnic conflict”?
2. What are the major motives that drive a state to intervene in an ethnic conflict?
3. How did the irredentism policies affect the Russian foreign policy towards the insurgency war in Donbas in 2014?
4. How did the ethnic ties affect the foreign policy of Russia towards Ukraine? What was the impact of that influence on the insurgency war course of events?

### **Research Methodology:**

This study will rely on the national interest approach to analyze the case study of the Russian intervention in the Donbas War in 2014. This analysis focuses on understanding the reasons and impacts of the foreign intervention of Russia to support the Russian ethnicity in its insurgency war against the Ukrainian government.

### **The National Interest Approach:**

The aim for any foreign policy of any country in the world is to achieve their national interests. The concept of national interests itself reflects the aspirations of a state in international politics. Later on, these aspirations turn into foreign policy. Generally, national interests can be divided into three categories: (1) Interests that cannot be negotiated like territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence. (2) Interests that might be negotiated even if they are important, such as: arms control agreements within the limits of initial military needs of a state. (3) Interests that are subject to negotiations all the time, like trade agreements and so on.<sup>5</sup>

The national interests can be analyzed in a realistic and liberal context as well. In the realistic view of international relations, the world is anarchic and the main interest of all states is to achieve national security and seek power. After that, the secondary interests like securing the trade goal come. And in the liberal view, all liberals agree that in the long run cooperation based on mutual interests will prevail because modernization will increase the scope of cooperation. This study will follow this approach to help analyze the causes of actions of all states related to the issues of secession and claiming the right to self-determination by ethnic groups. This may help in answering the questions of the study and testing the hypotheses.

### **Literature Review:**

The literature review of this study is divided into two sectors: the first focuses on the study relevant to foreign interventions in ethnic conflicts and the second is related to the Russian intervention in the Donbas War as a case study.

### **Studies related to ethnic conflicts and foreign interventions:**

1. Caselli, Francesco, and Wilbur John Coleman II. **On the Theory of Ethnic Conflict.**<sup>6</sup>

In *On the Theory of Ethnic Conflict*, Francesco Caselli and Wilbur Coleman propose a model to explain the dynamics of ethnic conflict, suggesting that ethnic markers like skin color, language, and religion play a crucial role in creating group boundaries that help dominant groups control resources by limiting infiltration from losing groups. The model posits that ethnic conflict is more likely when there is a moderate level of valuable, expropriable resources, as low value makes conflict less worthwhile, while high value prompts losing groups to resist infiltration, escalating to open conflict. Additionally, factors like ethnic distance (the visibility and psychological cost of crossing group boundaries), group income, and size influence the likelihood of conflict; for instance, wealthier dominant groups tend to avoid conflict due to enforcement costs, while smaller group sizes increase the appeal of capturing resources. The authors apply their theory to historical cases, such as racial and religious conflicts, to show that ethnic conflict depends on specific economic, social, and demographic conditions, rather than being an inevitable outcome in diverse societies.

This study focuses on explaining ethnic conflicts and their reasons in a social and economic context while the current study will add the security scope to the analysis. Additionally, the study will apply this analysis to the case of the Russian intervention in the Donbas War in 2014.

2. Paquin, Jonathan, and Stephen M. Saideman. **Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts.**<sup>7</sup>

The paper Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts by Jonathan Paquin and Stephen Saideman examines why foreign states intervene in ethnic conflicts and the impact of such interventions. It reviews literature on motivations for intervention, categorizing them as instrumental (e.g., economic, security interests) or affective (e.g., ethnic or cultural ties). The authors argue that traditional categories are often blended, with motivations being both domestic (e.g., ethnic lobbies or diaspora influence) and international (e.g., security norms). The paper also explores theories like vulnerability, ethnic ties, regime type, and international norms, suggesting that both domestic and external factors shape intervention decisions. Additionally, it discusses intervention outcomes, such as prolonged conflict or peace enforcement, and calls for future research into how different types of intervention affect various ethnic conflicts.

**Studies related to the Russian intervention in the Donbas War:**

1. Malyarenko, Tatyana, and Stefan Wolff. **The Logic of Competitive Influence-seeking: Russia, Ukraine, and the Conflict in Donbas.**<sup>8</sup>

After the crisis in Ukraine began at late 2013, four international agreements has been done and partially implemented. This study explains these agreements, their results, and causes on the basis of competitive influence-seeking logic of Russia. The study found that Russia is seeking influence in Ukraine. However, it cannot achieve that by creating a pro-Russian regime in Kyiv. So, Russia supports the division of Ukraine by solidifying the independence of Donbas in eastern Ukraine. This will help Russia keep its influence in Ukraine through the re-integration agreements between Donbas and Kyiv.

Russia's tactics to destabilizing Ukraine included violent and non-violent means. They varied from propaganda to military occupation. All of that which was to help keeping and increasing Russia's influence in Ukraine domestic and foreign policy.

2. Katchanovski, Ivan. **The Separatist War in Donbas: A Violent Break-up of Ukraine?**<sup>9</sup>

This study examines the public support for separatism in Donbas, compared to other regions in Ukraine. It did that through a survey. In addition to that, it analyzes the reasons behind the support for the separatism and the role of separatists, Yanakuvych government, Russia, the US, and the EU in the conflict in Donbas.

The study concludes that many actors contributed to the conflict in Donbas which involved both a civil war and a direct Russian intervention since August 2014. Moreover,

the regional political culture in Donbas and Russian ethnicity were the strongest determinants of support for separatism in Ukraine after the annexation of Crimea

### **Ethnic Conflicts**

Ethnic conflicts, exploitation, and discrimination are seen everywhere in the world and throughout history. In many countries, the ethnic conflicts took the shape of extreme violence, and in other cases, the minority groups coexisted and lived together peacefully. A study by Fearon and Laitin in 2003 identified no less than 58 ethnic conflicts/civil wars in the time between 1945 and 1999.<sup>10</sup> This is the notable type of ethnic conflict, the violent ethnic conflict, there is the non-violent ethnic conflict which is hard to notice and can take many forms. Another study was made on 92 armed conflicts during the years 1945 to 1989. It concluded that the fuel that powers most of the violent conflicts and wars today is ethnic hostility.<sup>11</sup>

First, conflict cannot be avoided ever because of the differences between the groups and individuals in values, ideas, interests, perceptions, affiliation, and needs. Generally, conflict can be defined as an antagonistic state of disagreement and opposition or incompatibility between two or more parties. It happens due to the interactions of two interdependent groups who perceive that their interests clash or don't match. Also, it can be defined as the incompatibility of interests that create tension between the clashing groups. The types of clashes or conflicts can be generally categorized into two broad categories; violent conflicts and non-violent conflicts.<sup>12</sup>

An ethnic conflict is a type of conflict in which one part or all parties of conflict are defined in ethnic terms. The conflict may not be about ethnic or cultural differences but mostly over political, economic, social, or territorial matters. Ethnic conflicts threaten the world peace and order every now and then. These conflicts are world-spread in Balkan, Rwanda, Ukraine, Iraq, India as well as in Palestine. Ethnic kind of conflicts usually come along with many human rights violations and genocide that lead to huge human suffering.

Ethnic conflicts to achieve secession or political autonomy from an existing state appeared in the aftermath of the decolonization movement in the last century. It existed in great numbers in Africa and Asia in the successor states of the European empires. Yet, the attention during the Cold War wasn't on ethnic conflicts. The world was worried about the possibility of a military confrontation between the eastern and western blocs led by the Soviet Union and the United States.

After the end of the Cold War between the Eastern and the Western blocs, two major tendencies happened regarding the ethnic conflict. First, many cultural, linguistic, religious, and nationalist conflicts emerged in Europe. Second, due to the first tendency,

the modern world started to focus on such ethnic conflicts. One of the major examples of these conflicts was the Kosovan War. Many reasons caused the emergence of these ethnic conflicts in Europe. The major cause was the dissolution of the Federation of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 1990s.

An ethnic conflict is one of many inter-state conflicts that can be classified into many categories of conflicts such as ideological conflict, governance or political dominance conflicts, and ethnic conflicts. In ethnic conflicts, the conflict is marked to be between two ethnic rivals. The dominant types of ethnic rivalry are the religious and linguistic types. Some of the main examples of these conflicts in the world are the conflict in Palestine, Siri Lanka, and the conflict of the Kurds.<sup>13</sup>

Ethnic conflicts began to increase in multi-ethnic countries since the 1960s and the existence of newly independent states in Africa and Asia. Also, it moved to exist in Europe after the end of the Cold War. The general issues or demands for ethnic minorities that are parts of these conflicts are: a. greater protection for the minorities' interests inside the state, b. to achieve political autonomy or self-governance inside the exiting state, c. to achieve complete secession or political independence which requires the foundation of a new nation-state.<sup>14</sup>

The model of nation-state presupposes that the existence of multiple ethnic affiliated groups in the state represents a potential threat to political stability. A nation-state is “a sovereign state a sovereign state in which the cultural borders of a nation match the borders of the state. Examples include Iceland and Japan.”<sup>15</sup> It is the opposite of a multi-ethnic state or multi-nation state in which there exist many ethnic or nations in one state. The pure nation-states are very few around the world like Japan which doesn't accept many immigrants and its people are unified by a shared language, history, race, and culture. Most of the world's states are considered multi-ethnic states.<sup>16</sup> The existence of many ethnic groups in the same state is a challenge for the concept of a nation-state in today's world. In cases when political and economic powers are centered in the hands of a dominant cultural majority, this puts the interests of the other minority ethnic groups at stake. The mainstream group will consider the other ethnic groups as competitors for political dominance and a threat to their interests.<sup>17</sup>

### **Military intervention in ethnic conflicts:**

Third-party military intervention in domestic conflicts has been a well-known phenomenon throughout history. It means “convention breaking military... activities in the internal affairs of a foreign country targeted at the authority structures of the government with the aim of affecting the balance of power between government and



opposition forces.”<sup>18</sup> It can take the shape of providing military troops, training, and weapons to support one party in a violent conflict and it appears to increase the duration of an ethnic conflict or provide a quick end to it.

Besides being a factor in changing the duration of the conflict, military intervention surely influences the outcome of the conflict and the balance of power in the region. Reasonably, a third-party military intervention is crucial in deciding the outcome of a forceful conflict when neither side of the conflict has a significant advantage in capabilities over the other side.

Military intervention by a foreign party is most likely to happen in ethnic conflicts because the interveners' target if they are supporting the minority group and not the government, is to influence the outcome of the violent conflict. So, interveners care much about making the central government face a strong rebel group, this way the minority group can achieve its demands if not by winning it will be by making the government try to avoid huge humanitarian and materialistic losses.

### **Motives of foreign interventions in ethnic conflicts:**

Intervention, in the context of ethnic conflicts, is a very wide terminology and can be applied to any kind of interplay between an outsider state and the actors in an ethnic conflict. It refers to so many kinds of interferences such as economic sanctions, military force, diplomatic involvement, mediation offers, or even rhetoric support. Many factors can stand behind the states' interventions in ethnic conflicts. Some of which are materialistic factors. States might engage in such activities for expected economic gains or natural resources. Other factors may be military or security factors. States might seek military power, regional stability, or national security. The last kind of factor is the affective kind. This assumes that states can be involved in an ethnic conflict for cultural, linguistic, or religious considerations. However, all these different factors in politicians' practices overlap and are not that clear. Affective factors can be instrumentalized to intervene in an ethnic conflict as a tool to accomplish economic gains.<sup>19</sup>

#### **1. The factor of ethnic ties:**

Scholars in this context regard the existence of ethnic ties like shared culture, language, religion, race, etc., as a central motive for foreign intervention in ethnic conflicts. Scholars suppose that states support the side that shares ethnic ties with the leaders' voters and supporters.<sup>20</sup> Many examples can apply to this argument. Recently, the Arab support for the Palestinian course since the emergence of the Israeli state in 1948 until the recent events after the attack of the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2023 is most notable. No doubt, the Arabs

share strong ethnic ties with the Palestinian people against the Israelis such as their common language, race, and religion.

Also, ethnic diasporas have a great influence in creating a foreign intervention in an ethnic conflict. A diaspora is defined as “a people with common origin who reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside the borders of their ethnic or religious homeland.” They can affect ethnic conflicts in multiple ways. The most notable ways are creating lobbies inside their state to impact its foreign policy in order to support the group of conflict that supports their ethnic course. Or they can put pressure upon the government through protests, marches, and sometimes violence to force it to be involved in the ethnic conflict and support its original ethnic group.<sup>21</sup>

The size of the diaspora group's effect on the foreign policy of their host countries to support their original homeland can be measured through the analysis of the elements that affect their influence. The impact of the diaspora's efforts is changeable due to some elements. The first element is the identity-based motive. This element measures: to what limit of the diaspora group's will to support their original ethnic group is strong. The second element is the democracy of the host state. The diasporas, no doubt, are more influential in democratic countries than in nondemocratic countries due to the forums of democracy. In supporting this argument, political science scholars noticed that the ‘exile patriotism’ had flourished in Western democratic countries since the 1990s because of the emergence of new communication technologies and the disintegration of multi-ethnic states. The third element is how strong their host and homeland states are. This is a critical element because diasporas can't expect much effect from a very weak state. All the previously mentioned elements affect the diasporas' effect on the foreign policy of their host state to support their homeland agendas.<sup>22</sup>

One of the most well-known examples of the diaspora effect in ethnic conflicts is the Zionist lobby in the United States of America. The Zionist lobby is also known as the Israel lobby. This lobby consists of more than 7 million people and speaks on behalf of American pro-Israeli groups and Jewish groups to serve Israeli interests.<sup>23</sup> They offer the Israeli government unlimited American support on many occasions, especially in their ongoing conflict with the Palestinians. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is an obvious ethnic conflict based on linguistic, religious, and racial discrimination. The lobby in the USA provides huge support for their ethnicity that shares with it the same culture and religious beliefs. They secure foreign policy, military, political, and economic backup for Israel by the United States.

## 2. Irredentism:

Irredentism can have a direct and very dangerous effect not only on ongoing ethnic conflict but it can start on ethnic-based conflict from square zero. It means that a state may spend efforts to unify or restore a territory with another based on an existing ethnic kinship. It can be defined as “a political principle or policy directed toward the incorporation of irredentas within the boundaries of their historically or ethnically related unit.”<sup>24</sup> While irredentas are referring to a certain space of territory. The reasons that motivate such a policy vary, ethnic-based reasons are very common, but regardless of the motives, irredentism constitutes a dangerous reason for violent ethnic conflicts. It was examined in Armenia, Croatia, Serbia, and elsewhere.

One example of irredentism policies was the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia in 2014. Crimea was a part of Ukraine since its independence at the beginning of the 1990s after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Before Ukrainian independence in 1991, Crimea was a part of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic since 1921. Moreover, it was annexed to the Russian Empire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. So, historically, Crimea was considered a part of Russia for a very long period of time and that is considered an unchallenged fact. In addition to that, interestingly, the census of 2001 showed that 77% of Crimeans considered Russian as their native language.<sup>25</sup> Also, the same census showed that 60% of the inhabitants of Crimea were ethnic Russians and 24% of them were ethnic Ukrainians. Russia was linked through historical territorial and ethnic ties to Crimea which constituted and paved the way for the annexation. Despite that, there are many political, ethnic, economic, and security-based reasons behind the Russian annexation of Crimea, it is still called irredentism because of the historical and ethnic linkages.

## 3. States' political systems:

The political system of a foreign state from an ethnic conflict has a great influence on the determination of its intervention in that conflict. The type of states' regimes constitutes their norms which influence their conduct in international relations. One sight of this argument is illustrated in the democratic peace theory/ republic liberalism in international relations. This theory argues that democratic states in international relations don't fight each other. Of course, democracies have gone to war as many times as non-democratic regimes, but they don't go to war with each other because they are more law-abiding and more peaceful than other political systems.<sup>26</sup>

The first to recognize this phenomenon was Immanuel Kant. His idea of perpetual peace among democratic states was rooted in his well-known essay: Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch which was written in 1795. He gave a justification for this peace

between democratic nations referring to them as republics. According to Kant, if all states are democratic or republics, there will be perpetual peace.<sup>27</sup>

There are three elements that stand behind peace among republics in the world order according to Kant. The first is the domestic peaceful democratic culture in the republics. He believed that republics would support peaceful reconciliation in international relations because they are governed by their citizens and not by tyrannies. The second is that democracies have a common moral foundation. This means that moral values held by democratic states like freedom of expression, association, speech, and free communication would help promote mutual understanding internationally and lead to the formation of what he called a 'pacific union'. A Pacific Union means to him a zone of peace. The third is economic cooperation and interdependence. In the Pacific Union, there will be commercial wars but no military fights because states are economically dependent on each other and in wars, all parties lose. They would prefer economic cooperation and reciprocal gains.<sup>28</sup>

Liberal scholars' analysis asserts that democratic states do not tend to support secessionist movements in other democracies. They argue that there is a moral bond between democracies, shared values, and commitment to peace which prevents them from intervening in an ethnic conflict in another similar democratic state. They add that this moral bond doesn't exist between non-democratic states.<sup>29</sup> An example was shown in Europe when the separation movement in Catalonia - Spain reached its peak in 2017. The European Union states showed no willingness to back the Catalan separatists for many reasons. One major reason was the bond of democracy. If the European states were to support the secessionist movement in Spain, they would open the door for all ethnic groups to call for secession in all of Europe.

#### **4. Humanitarian Intervention:**

The kind of foreign intervention that has a clear humanitarian character is what is being undertaken in response to systematic human rights violations. Human rights are an uncontroversial notion as, internationally, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the International Human Rights Covenants of 1966 provide a list of internationally recognized human rights. Hence, any coercive intervention in response to systematic violations listed in these legal documents can be certainly called humanitarian intervention.<sup>30</sup> One example of human rights violations is genocide; "the murder of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnic group, with the aim of destroying that nation or group."<sup>31</sup> It is crucial to recognize that violations of recognized human rights by international law and politics involve actions of a state against its own citizens, like a government committing genocide against an ethnicity living in the state.

Intervention by foreign states due to human rights violations is humanitarian intervention. Another similar case that doesn't imply the terms of humanitarian intervention is intervention during the humanitarian crisis. Humanitarian crises, just like human rights violations situations, cause great suffering for a huge number of people and this happens because of extraordinary circumstances. The reasons behind a humanitarian crisis are not a direct result of governmental actions. However, it can happen because of a status of warfare like in Somalia in 1992<sup>32</sup>, or because of natural disasters. The distinction between a systematic violation of human rights and a humanitarian crisis is very important in determining the legality and nature of the intervention. For example, intervention during a humanitarian crisis is usually not coercive. In addition to that, military foreign intervention rarely happens during a humanitarian crisis.<sup>33</sup>

Humanitarian intervention is a moral obligation to international society. No doubt, the citizens of a state that commits persistent systematic violations of human rights cannot ever be imaged to have consented to their fate. However, not all interventions are for humanitarian purposes alone. Sometimes, interventions are mixed with selfish self-interests for the foreign states. For example, NATO engaged in the Kosovan war against the Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992 to stop the ethnic cleansing committed by the Serbs against the Albanian minority in Kosovo. Undoubtedly, the intervention of NATO led by the United States was crucial and decisive in ending the suffering of the war.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, a part of this military coercive intervention was meant to fight communism and its existence in Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Before the Second World War, most human rights practices were considered to be domestic matters. After the end of the Second World War, a comprehensive list of human rights was developed in various treaties and declarations like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which was signed in 1966 and entered into force in 1976. Moreover, there were important treaties that established many human rights in international law like the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (which entered into force in 1951). However, there aren't any bilateral or multilateral treaties that authorize its members to intervene in another state for humanitarian purposes.

International human rights treaties require that states, in the status of questioning, submit a report on their practices on the rights recognized in that treaty. The supervisory body, which can be the International Court of Justice or the Human Rights Committee in the United Nations, is authorized to study these reports and then question the representatives of the state about their contents. In case the supervisory body finds out

that the treaty has been violated, it has no authority to enforce any changes on the ground because of the lack of coercive measures. Legally, and in practice, the only body that can binding enforcement is the Security Council. The charter of the UN gives the Security Council the authority to investigate violations of human rights in conflict areas and dispatch missions. Furthermore, it can issue a ceasefire and deploy peacekeeping forces. "If this is not enough, the Security Council can opt for enforcement measures, such as economic sanctions, arms embargos, financial penalties and restrictions, travel bans, the severance of diplomatic relations, a blockade, or even collective military action."<sup>35</sup>

### **The Russian Intervention in the 2014 Donbas War:**

The revolution of Dignity inside Ukraine resulted in the removal of the pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich and installed a new Euro-oriented government. This created large threats to the neighboring country Russia because of the strategic location of Ukraine leading to Russia adopting an offensive realistic foreign policy towards Ukraine to ensure its strategic national interests and security. This included the annexation of Crimea in March 2014 which contained the Black Sea Fleet of Russia with the help of the Russian nationality majority in the peninsula. The Russian nationality in both Crimea and Eastern and Southern parts of Ukraine led the anti-maidan protests that enabled Russia to create huge unrest in Ukraine, without this movement Russia would never have been able to create such unrest.

Concurrently with Crimea's annexation, the protestors in Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv oblasts occupied the government's buildings in early March 2014 trying to follow Crimea's steps. However, the government of Ukraine was able to control this unrest at first. The unrest increased in April 2014 in the Donbas region (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts) and armed pro-Russian groups were created and then launched a separatist insurgency in the region. It was later followed by an anti-terrorist operation led by the Ukrainian government. This is what is called the Donbas War 2014.

### **The Separatist War in Donbas 2014:**

The unrest, the anti-maidan movement, in the Donbas Region had developed into an insurgency. First, it started on the first of March 2014. In Luhansk oblast, which is the easternmost region, 5000 anti-maidan protestors held a rally against the new pro-western Ukrainian government demanding a referendum to join Russia.<sup>36</sup>

Some reports said that dozens of Russians in buses had crossed the borders into Ukraine to support the pro-Russian demonstrations. Furthermore, it was reported that

demonstrators in different cities had replaced the Ukrainian flag with Russian flags on the governmental buildings in cities like Kharkiv, the second biggest city in all of Ukraine.<sup>37</sup>

Map 4:

The Location of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts (Donbas region).

This Map illustrates the location of the oblasts of the Donbas region (Luhansk and Donetsk) and the borders that the region shares with Russia.



Ukraine rebels hold referendums in Donetsk and Luhansk. 11 May 2014. BBC News. Accessed on August 2, 2024.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27360146>

In Donetsk oblast, pro-Russian demonstrators raised the Russian flags at their rallies. Also, they put the Russian flag on top of the administrative buildings of the oblast. The protestors were estimated to be up to 12 thousand people. One notable demand of the protestors is that they wanted to make the Russian language the official language of the oblast which reflects their loyalty to their Russian origins and ethnicity. The protestors managed to put a new pro-Russian governor who was later arrested by the Ukrainian government. On 6 March 2014, the central government of Ukraine started to control the situation in Donbas in general and arrested many pro-Russian protestors and the governor of Donetsk. The same phenomenon happened in Luhansk Oblast, as the protestors

controlled the buildings of the Oblast's administration and put in a new pro-Russian governor of their choice, but later the situation was controlled by the police, and the governor was arrested.

Protests lasted from the beginning of March, but the insurgency started on April 7th, 2014. On this day the protestors in Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts took over the offices of the security service of Ukraine which is the central and most important internal security agency in Ukraine. On the same day, the interim president of Ukraine Oleksandr Turchynov launched a counter-terrorism operation to oppress the separatists in Donbas. Subsequently, this may be considered the day of the war in Donbas's birth.

Some reports mentioned that the armed green men who seized the security service buildings in Donbas were Russians. Those men were armed with new Russian weapons and were professionals. They helped and led the separatists in both Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts. Also, reports mentioned that some of the armed Green men came from Crimea to help the separatists. However, the Ukrainians constituted nearly two-thirds of the armed militia. Additionally, Russia was later accused by the Ukrainian government of providing hundreds of armed men to seize control over Donbas.<sup>38</sup>

In April the separatists in Donbas announced that they would make referendums to decide the status of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. Two referendums were planned to be overtaken, one was to determine self-rule or to keep the status quo, and the second was to decide between political independence and joining Russia. The first referendum was chosen to be held on 11 May 2014. Meanwhile, the war was ongoing between the separatists and the Ukrainian government in which tens and hundreds of people were being killed and injured on both sides provided that Russia was ensuring that the war did not end quickly or in favor of the Ukrainian government.

On 11 May 2014, the referendums were executed in both Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. As expected, the two areas moved forward to self-ruling by far. In Donetsk, 89% of the votes were in favor of independence with only 10% of the votes against separation. Where in Luhansk, 96.2% of the votes encouraged separation from Ukraine. Subsequently, the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DPR and LPR) were proclaimed by the separatists. After the referendums were undertaken, Ukraine called them a game or a farce by Russia.

Russia was accused by the Ukrainian government and intelligence of being the grand supporter of the insurgency in Donbas by men and all kinds of weapons and information. Many incidents proved this claim to be true like capturing Russian troops inside Ukraine. Also, Russia was accused several times by Ukraine, confirmed by the



United States intelligence, of shelling many positions inside Ukraine. These actions were to ensure that the separatists didn't lose to the Ukrainian government. Hence, Ukraine considered that it was facing a full-scale Russian invasion.

### **Minsk<sup>39</sup> protocols:**

After the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics were created inside the Donbas region of Ukraine with the help of Russian special actors, the war went on for several months. It was important for both sides to go to a negotiation table as the Ukrainian side wanted to stop the losses of land and lives in the war and the separatists' side wanted to stabilize their gains and get more recognition. This way Ukraine was forced to attend in Minsk in August and September 2014. The trilateral group of Russia, Ukraine, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)<sup>40</sup> led the negotiations and addition to representatives for the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics.

The Minsk Protocol or Minsk I was finalized on September 5, 2014, and consisted of 12 points. The most important points in it were:

1. Ensuring a ceasefire.
2. Ensuring the withdrawal of all illegal armed groups and mercenaries inside Donbas.
3. Monitoring the ceasefire by the OSCE.
4. Monitoring the Russian-Ukrainian borders by the OSCE.<sup>41</sup>

The protocol was signed by representatives of OSCE, Ukraine, Russia, DPL, and LPR. And then it was followed up by a memorandum on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014. It was made because of the frequent violations of the protocol in the following days after signing it. The follow-up memorandum was meant to clarify the way of implementing the protocol of Minsk. One of the most important points in it was the creation of a buffer zone of 30 km.<sup>42</sup> However, both the Protocol and Memorandum couldn't stop the war in Donbas. On the contrary, both were violated, and the ceasefire collapsed entirely in January 2015 after the elections held in DPR and LPR.<sup>43</sup>

### **Minsk II:**

After the collapse of Minsk I, the leadership of both France and Germany took the lead in new peace talks. All representatives of the relevant parties of the conflict, Russia, Ukraine, DPR, and LPR went to Minsk on 11 February 2015 in addition to the French president and the German Chancellor. This meeting was followed by the announcement

of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreement on 12 February 2015, also called Minsk II.

This agreement was considered the last chance to resolve the war. It contained 13 points, some of the most critical points are:

1. Unconditional ceasefire observed by the OSCE starting from 15 February 2015.
2. Withdrawal of all the heavy weapons from the front line of the war.
3. Releasing prisoners of war.
4. New constitutional reforms in Ukraine in 2015 in which the main principle is decentralization that will help stabilize the special status of the Donbas region.<sup>44</sup>

Despite the endeavors for a ceasefire, the fighting and shelling continued in different zones, nonetheless. According to the Minsk II agreement, the Ukrainian parliament approved a law of “Special Status” for Donbas on 17 March 2015. This law was to offer self-rule for the pro-Russian rebels in the region. However, Ukraine conditioned the implementation of the special status law by a local election under Ukrainian jurisdiction which had been postponed for several years by the rebels’ leaders in DPR and LPR.<sup>45</sup> To summarize, there wasn’t a single provision of the agreement has been fully overtaken.

### **Analysis of the Russian intervention in the 2014 Donbas war:**

After the dissolution of the USSR, NATO led by the United States decided to adopt a new policy. Provided that the ordinary threat had fallen, and the West thrived over the Soviet Union and communism, NATO worked on preventing possible threats from arising in the future by circling Russia and preventing it from being a competing superpower. Such a policy was threatening to Russia and its national interests through the past three decades which forced it to adopt a defensive foreign policy in many strategic locations such as Ukraine.

The rivalry between Russia and NATO was based on Russia preventing NATO from circling it or threatening its national security directly. The fact that Ukraine after the revolution of dignity was about to be one step closer to being an EU and NATO ally was itself an indicator that Russia lost its influence in Ukraine and lost its protective fence. This means that NATO is on the doors of Russia and directly touching the Russian borders from the North, the Baltic states, and the West.

Russia's foreign policy was to create a buffer zone between itself and the West. First, it secured the most important part of Ukraine, Crimea. It annexed Crimea because it was an important outlet to the Black Sea and contained its fleet in Sevastopol. Second, it fueled an insurgency inside eastern Ukraine. The insurgency helped Russia to add a defense line in front of its border. Also, the newly born republics were to follow Russia and ensure Russian influence inside the Ukrainian territory. The existence of DPR and LPR is so important to Russia to help secure national security, that's why it supported their existence with weapons and men and is ready to go to war to keep them.

The main reason Russia was able to undertake such a policy was the spread of Russian nationality inside these parts of Ukraine. In Crimea and Donbas, there was a majority of the Russian nationality who are linked to Russia through language, history, and culture. These groups built the anti-maidan movement to face the pro-western changes, they were ready to fight in order to join Russia. The extremists of the rebels called for Self-determination and building new states in Donbas. They even planned to try to join Russia. The way undertaken to achieve their goals was through violence. They succeeded but only because of the Russian help. Russia created a justification for itself to intervene in the war by declaring they were defending the ethnicity. Its intervention violated Ukraine's sovereignty and was denounced by Ukraine and the Western world. To conclude, the dream of establishing DPR and LPR was possible to achieve only because it matched the national interests of a neighboring powerful state. The foreign policy of Russia in Ukraine was possible because of the dense existence of the Russian ethnicity inside the Ukrainian lands due to their common history.

### **Conclusion and Results:**

The study emphasizes that foreign interventions are pivotal in shaping the dynamics of ethnic conflicts, particularly illustrated through the case of the Russian interventions in the Donbas War of 2014. It suggest that understanding the motives behind foreign interventions is critical for predicting future conflicts and the potential for international involvement. The study highlights the need for a nuanced approach to analyzing ethnic conflicts, recognizing the interplay of various factors, including national interests and ethnic identities.

In summary, the study concludes that foreign interventions in ethnic conflicts, while often framed within the context of humanitarianism, are deeply intertwined with national interests, ethnic ties, and geopolitical strategies. Understanding these dimensions is vital for comprehending the complexities of international relations in conflict scenarios. It revealed the following results:

1. Ethnicity is a terminology called for any minority group in any society. This minority should be associated together by a shared language, culture, religion, race, or any real or fictive relationship.
2. Ethnicity and race are two different but interrelated concepts. Ethnicity is a broader concept than race as race is a category for human beings that depends only on physical traits and biological characteristics while ethnicity is an identity that might contain race, religion, culture, language, or any actual or subjective kinship.
3. Outside-party intervention, which means a coercive intervention in the domestic affairs of another state using or not using brutal force, is a direct threat to the guaranteed equal sovereignty for all states by international law. Also, it is considered a breach of the international law principle of non-intervention which is well-established in the charter of the United Nations.
4. The purpose of military intervention by a third party in an ethnic conflict is to change the balance of power in favor of the supported ethnicity. States intervene in ethnic conflict to take advantage of the situation to secure their national interests.
5. Motives of foreign intervention vary. They can be undertaken because of (1) the existence of ethnic ties that relate one of the conflicting sides with an outside party from the state, (2) the efforts of a certain state to restore a territory based on an existing ethnic kinship (irredentism), (3) the efforts of liberal states to support a secessionist movement in another authoritarian regime, or (4) the existence of huge human rights violations that make the international community take multilateral measures under the charter of the United Nations to stop the human suffering and losses.
6. The ethnic diasporas have a great effect on ethnic conflicts' course of events by influencing the foreign policy of the current countries in which they live. This process is determined by two variables: (1) the will of the diaspora groups to support their original ethnicity in their original homeland and (2) the political system of their current country.
7. The political principle of irredentism constitutes a huge motive for ethnic conflicts and foreign interventions.
8. The type of states' political systems can be a decisive element in intervening in ethnic conflicts. Liberal scholars argue that, as in republic liberalism theory in international relations, a democratic state would never support a secessionist movement in another democratic state. However, democracies may support a secessionist movement in another authoritarian regime. Also, authoritarian governments may intervene coercively in the internal affairs of other authoritarian systems.

9. Humanitarian intervention can provide a legal framework for coercive military intervention in an ethnic conflict, especially after the development of the responsibility to protect principle.
10. There exists a difference between humanitarian intervention and intervention during a humanitarian crisis like warfare and natural disasters. Humanitarian intervention is coercive military intervention but intervention during a humanitarian crisis is usually not coercive.
11. The insurgency inside Donbas wasn't going to be founded unless the Russian foreign policy fueled it through the annexation of Crimea and military and strategic support.
12. The Russian foreign policy inside Ukraine to secure its national interests and security was successful due to the heavy existence of Russian ethnicity inside Ukraine.
13. The main reason behind establishing DPR and LPD was the military and strategic support of Russia, and their purpose of existence is to ensure there is a Russian influence inside Ukraine and to keep NATO away from the Russia-Ukrainian borders.

---

<sup>1</sup> H. Bull, ed. 1984. **Intervention in World Politics**. Oxford: Clarendon Press. P. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Definition of "**Intervention**". Oxford Dictionary.

<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/intervention>

<sup>3</sup> Donnelly, J. 1993. "**Human Rights, Humanitarian Crisis, and Humanitarian Intervention.**" International Journal, Vol. 48, No. 4. P. 608.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/002070209304800402>

<sup>4</sup> I bid, P. 609.

<sup>5</sup> Metea, Ileana-Gentilia. 2020. "**National Interest, Terminology and Directions of Approach.**" International Conference KNOWLEDGE-BASED ORGANIZATION 26 (1): 75-76.

<https://doi.org/10.2478/kbo-2020-0011>.

<sup>6</sup> Caselli, Francesco, and Wilbur John Coleman II. 2013. "**On the Theory of Ethnic Conflict.**" Journal of the European Economic Association 11 (S1): 161-192.

[https://www.academia.edu/75961925/On\\_the\\_Theory\\_of\\_Ethnic\\_Conflict](https://www.academia.edu/75961925/On_the_Theory_of_Ethnic_Conflict).

<sup>7</sup> Paquin, Jonathan, and Stephen M. Saideman. 2008. "**Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts.**" Canada: King's University College at the University of Western Ontario.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229007378\\_Foreign\\_Intervention\\_in\\_Ethnic\\_Conflicts](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229007378_Foreign_Intervention_in_Ethnic_Conflicts).

<sup>88</sup> Malyarenko, Tatyana, and Stefan Wolff. 2018. "**The Logic of Competitive Influence-Seeking: Russia, Ukraine, and the Conflict in Donbas.**" Post-Soviet Affairs 34 (4): 191-212.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1060586X.2018.1425083>.

<sup>9</sup> Katchanovski, Ivan. 2016. "**The Separatist War in Donbas: A Violent Break-up of Ukraine?**" Perspectives on European Politics and Society 17 (October): 473-89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2016.1154131>.

<sup>10</sup> Francisco Caselli, and Wilbur Coleman. July 2014. "**On the Theory of Ethnic Conflicts,**" Journal of the European Economic Association. Vol (11), No (1). P. 1.

DOI: <http://10.0.4.87/j.1542-4774.2012.01103.x>

<sup>11</sup> Banton, Machel. Aug 2000. "**Ethnic Conflict,**" Sociology Journal. Vol (43), No (3). P. 481.

DOI: 10.1177/S0038038500000304

<sup>12</sup> Abdul Fattah Hussien, and Yaser Al-Mamary. Aug 2019. “**Conflicts: Their Types, And Their Negative And Positive Effects On Organizations,**” INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC & TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH. Vol (8), No (08). P. 1.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341804810>

<sup>13</sup> Brown, Michael E., ed. 1993. **Ethnic Conflict and International Security**. Princeton University Press, P. 4.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv36zq9w>.

<sup>14</sup> Stavenhagen, Rodolfo. 1996. **Ethnic Conflicts and the Nation-state**. Lindon: MacMillan Press LTD. P. 27.

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-1-349-25014-1>

<sup>15</sup> **Nation vs Nation Satet**. Institution of StudySmarter. Accessed in 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2024.

<https://www.studysmarter.co.uk/explanations/human-geography/political-geography/nation-vs-nation-state/>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Stavenhagen, Rodolfo. **Ethnic Conflicts and the Nation-state**. P. 197.

<sup>18</sup> Regan, Patrick M. 2002. “**Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts.**” The Journal of Conflict Resolution. Vol 46, no. 1. P. 55.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3176239>.

<sup>19</sup> Paquin, Jonathan, and Stephen M. Saideman. 2017. “**Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts.**” Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies. PP 2-3.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.183>

<sup>20</sup> I bid, P. 5.

<sup>21</sup> I bid.

<sup>22</sup> I bid, P. 6.

<sup>23</sup> Parke, Caleb (July 9, 2019). “**Largest pro-Israel group grows to 7M members, lauded by Netanyahu, Trump administration**”. Fox News. Accessed on January 19, 2024.

<https://www.foxnews.com/faith-values/largest-israel-trump-netanyahu-christians-united>

<sup>24</sup> Merriam Webster Dictionary, the definition of “irredentism”.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/irredentism>

<sup>25</sup> Ukrainian census in 2001. **General results of the census: linguistic composition of the population**. Accessed on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

<https://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/language/Crimea/>

<sup>26</sup> Robert Jackson, and Georg Sorensen. 2013. **Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches**. Oxford: Oxford University Press. P. 113.

<https://www.kharagpurcollege.ac.in/studyMaterial/231813Introduction-to-International-Relations-Theories-and-Approaches-by-Robert-Jackson-Georg-S%C3%B8rsen-z-lib.org.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Steve Chan. 1997. “**In Search of Democratic Peace: Problems and Promise**”, Mershon International Studies Review, Vol. 41, No. 1 (May), p. 60.

<sup>28</sup> Robert, Jackson. **Introduction to International Relations**. P. 115.

<sup>29</sup> Paquin, Jonathan. “**Foreign Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts.**” P. 7.

<sup>30</sup> Dannelly. “**Human Rights, Humanitarian Crisis, and Humanitarian Intervention.**” P. 612.

<sup>31</sup> Definition of “**Genocide**”. Oxford Dictionary.

<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/genocide?q=genocide>

<sup>32</sup> The Somalia Civil War is an ongoing war that started in 1988-1990. During that time, the armed forces of Somalia engaged in combat against various rebel armed groups. In 1990-1992, Somalia transferred to a failed state during the absence of a central government and the fighting between various armed factions.

<sup>33</sup> Dannelly. “**Human Rights, Humanitarian Crisis, and Humanitarian Intervention.**” P. 613.

<sup>34</sup> The Kosovo War started in February 1998 and until June 1999. The war was led by the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) and against the discrimination of the ethnicity of Albanians by the Serbian authority. The movement of the KLA started after the suppression of Kosovo’s autonomy. The war was ended by the intervention of NATO after their air strike in March 1999.

<sup>35</sup> United Nations. Protect Human Rights. Accessed on January 29, 2024.

<https://www.un.org/en/our-work/protect-human-rights>

<sup>36</sup> **East Ukraine separatists seek union with Russia.** 12/25 May 2014. BBC News. Accessed on: 12/29/2024.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27369980>

<sup>37</sup> Lina Kushch. **Pro-Russia protesters occupy regional government in Ukraine's Donetsk.** 3 March 2014. Reuters. 12/29/2024.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-ukraine-crisis-donetsk-protests/pro-russia-protesters-occupy-regional-government-in-ukraines-donetsk-idUKBREA221NH20140303/>

<sup>38</sup> Rosenberg, Steven. 30 April 2014. **Ukraine crisis: Meeting the little green men.** BBC News. Accessed on July 31, 2024.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27231649>

<sup>39</sup> It is the Capital city of Belarus and the biggest city in the country. Belarus lies between the two states, Russia and Ukraine, and played a vital role in helping Russia to achieve its foreign policy agenda in Ukraine.

<sup>40</sup> It is an intergovernmental security organization and is considered the largest regional security organization. It has 57 participant states from Europe, North America, and Asia. Its mention is to promote stability and peace. Therefore, it engages in many international security issues.

<sup>41</sup> **Minsk Protocol (Minsk I).** United Nations Peacemaker site.

[https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/UA\\_140905\\_MinskCeasfire\\_en.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/UA_140905_MinskCeasfire_en.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> **Ukrainian peace talks lead to a buffer zone deal.** Sep 19, 2014. CBC News. Accessed on August 5, 2024.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/ukrainian-peace-talks-lead-to-buffer-zone-deal-1.2772573>

<sup>43</sup> **Ukraine forces admit loss of Donetsk airport to rebels.** 21 January 2015. The Guardian. Accessed on August 5, 2024.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/21/russia-ukraine-war-fighting-east>

<sup>44</sup> **Minsk II.** 2015. United Nations peacekeeping official website.

[https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/UA\\_150212\\_MinskAgreement\\_en.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/UA_150212_MinskAgreement_en.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Natalia Zinets, and Richard Balmforth. 17 March 2015. **Ukraine parliament offers special status for rebel east, Russia criticizes.** Reuters. Accessed on August 5, 2024.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-status-idUSKBN0MD1ZK20150317/>