



The Russian war on Ukraine and its repercussions on the Middle East

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to analyze the Russian war on Ukraine, its causes, the factors for the rise of the crisis and its evolution towards war, and to identify the driving forces of the crisis, as well as the repercussions of the Russian war on Ukraine on the Middle East region, including the repercussions on the Arab Gulf states and Iran, leading to the most prominent scenarios of the Russian war on Ukraine. The research problem centered on the fact that the repercussions of the Russian war on Ukraine were not confined to Europe, but were affected by the Middle East region, as the region is a neighbor of Ukraine, separated from it only by a distance of about a thousand kilometers. On the economic level, some countries in the region are also very close to Ukraine and Russia as trading partners, and therefore, the effects of the crisis will be tangible, albeit to varying degrees, on the economies of the region. It may have multiply negative consequences on levels of food security and well-being across the region, in addition to the Corona pandemic, disruption of supply chains, and internal problems specific to each of its countries. The consequences of this war will affect the energy sector in the Middle East, as it may urge the United States, in light of The crisis urged its partners, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, to increase energy supplies to Europe in the event that Russia decided to stop supplying it with these resources. The research came out with several scenarios for the Ukrainian scene, and the proposed scenarios do not contradict each other, and may intersect and lead to a different result. But no matter how this war ends, the world will change after that, and it will not return to the way it was before. Russia's relationship abroad will be different. The Europeans' handling of security issues will be different.

Introduction

Two days after the Russian recognition of the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk republics from Ukraine, the Russian President,

Vladimir Putin, on the morning of February 24, 2022 AD, decided to launch a military operation to protect the Donbass region, in southeastern Ukraine, and following the decision, Russian forces launched an attack on multiple targets in Ukraine, And the Russian President warned against the intervention of any regional or international parties in favor of Ukraine, of bearing catastrophic consequences, which moved the conflict to the stage of war between the Russian and Ukrainian states. The Russian decision called for global reactions condemning the military operation, due to its dangerous repercussions on the state of international peace and security, as well as its repercussions on international trade, oil supplies and energy prices, which reflects the features of an upcoming global crisis, which may accelerate the transition to a multipolar world in its content. The impact of the Russian war on Ukraine does not depend on the geopolitical field of the two states, affecting many countries in the central and peripheral spheres of the structure of the global system, and with the increasing intensity of escalation, whether through military maneuvers by Russia, or the supply of weapons and military vehicles by the United States and NATO countries to Ukraine, and the continuity of threats. The harsh response to the tough economic sanctions on the part of the countries of the European continent and its Atlantic ally, and these developments raise some questions about the extent of their relationship to the geopolitical shifts on the international scene, the factors for the escalation of the crisis and the positions of the active forces in it, and what is the impact that will be reflected on the countries of the Middle East.

1- The research problem

The problem of the research is that the repercussions of the Russian war on Ukraine were not confined to Europe, but were affected by the Middle East region. On the economic level, some countries in the region are also very close to Ukraine and Russia as trading partners. Therefore, the effects of the crisis will be tangible, albeit to varying degrees, on the economies of the region, and may have multiplying negative consequences on the levels of food security and well-being across the region, in addition to the Corona pandemic. disruption of supply chains, and internal problems specific to each of its countries.

2- The importance of research

The importance of the war in Ukraine is no longer a matter for Europe, but the Middle East will also not remain immune from its repercussions, as the Russian presence in the Middle East will acquire a new dimension in the context of a conflict that reflects Moscow's desire to enjoy great influence in its immediate and wider surroundings, including Syria,

where it has Russia has two naval and air bases; and Libya, where it also has an air base and has deployed pro-government mercenary forces. The consequences of this war will affect the energy sector in the Middle East, as the United States, in light of the crisis, may urge its partners, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, to increase energy supplies to Europe in the event that Russia decides to stop providing it with these resources.

3- The aim of the research

The aim of the research is to analyze the Russian war on Ukraine, its causes, the factors for the rise of the crisis and its evolution towards war, and to identify the driving forces of the crisis, as well as the repercussions of the Russian war on Ukraine on the Middle East region, including the repercussions on the Arab Gulf states and Iran, leading to the most prominent scenarios of the Russian war on Ukraine.

The first topic: The Russian war on Ukraine, its causes and escalatory factors

First: The Ukrainian crisis in international geopolitical transformations

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict erupted in light of transformations in the international arena during the last decade, the most important of which is Russia's desire to restore its position and growing fears of expanding the reach of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) towards its eastern border with Europe, which threatens its national security and eliminates its geopolitical ambitions towards its vital areas. This comes in conjunction with escalating American fears that its position on the international scene is under threat, and that the balance of power may be disturbed to its disadvantage.⁽¹⁾

In fact, the American realization of the danger threatening its standing on the international scene, from China, which is rising strongly on the international arena, and Russia, which is seeking to reposition, had prompted the administration of US President Joe Biden to pursue a policy of containment instead of the policy of engagement that the United States has adopted since the end of the war. This policy was the start of a new cold war between the United States and both Russia and China, and the strategy is basically based on the fact that there is a new international reality, and that the United States is in the process of confrontation with the major powers in a manner that has become inevitable sooner or later,

¹ John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 93, no. 5 (September/ October 2022), pp. 77-84.

and this strategy is based on restoring balance strategically located on the European and Asian arenas in its far southeast.⁽²⁾

The conflict erupted while the United States was conducting, within its strategy, discussions about reformulating transatlantic relations, and it seems that there is a desire to crystallize the relationship according to a new vision, which preserves the two powers' position on the international arena, especially after Europe's concerns began to increase regarding defense and security issues, which are The fears that emanated from the American orientations towards the Far East with the withdrawal from the Middle East and North Africa, and the weak level of coordination and consultation, which appeared clearly with the American withdrawal from Afghanistan, and the American and British tensions with France after the nuclear submarine deal with Australia, and European fears about the direction of the United States to build New axes and alliances away from it, and thus the crisis came as an important test for US-European relations, and came to reveal the limits of the American commitment to Europe's security and stability.⁽³⁾

Not only does the crisis represent a test for transatlantic relations, but it also came as the Europeans reconsidered their security strategy, as it seemed that NATO was no longer a sufficient security umbrella to meet the aspirations of Europeans or Americans themselves, and the United States gave signals to the need for stronger European defense capabilities complementary to NATO. NATO, and focused on the necessity of Europe increasing its military expenditures, and not relying heavily on American support, and this did not mean that the United States is not committed to its basic duties towards Europe, as Europe is still a basic pillar in the existing international balances as powers satisfied with the current international system.

While the Western camp is looking for a repositioning to preserve the current international order, the active major powers are seeking to strengthen their position, led by China, which is crawling forcefully towards changing the rules of the current international order, and shares China's position on the current balance of power and Russia's revisionist desire, although its position The economy does not allow it to remain an influential force in the current international balances, because its GDP is not among the top ten in the world. However, Russia is a nuclear

² Thomas Graham and Rajan Menon, "How to Get What We Want from Putin," Politico, 10/1/2022, accessed on 17/2/2022, at: <https://politi.co/3s3AKNu>

³ Helene Cooper, "Biden Freezes Trump's Withdrawal of 12,000 Troops from Germany," The New York Times, 4/2/2021, accessed on 20/2/2022, at: <https://nyti.ms/33DvQxu>

superpower and has weight on the international scene, and its relationship with China, America and the European Union affects the geopolitics of Europe and its geopolitical space. extending to the Middle East and Africa, It is trying to maintain its international standing, and its foreign policies in the face of the United States are based on maintaining a degree of strategic balance and military intervention in strategic locations when necessary, and there is no doubt that it is benefiting from its Soviet legacy in restoring some of its influence on the international arena, and it is practicing an active policy to restore Its influence in the old Soviet space, all the way to the Middle East, and it exercises, through its veto in the Security Council, an active role in protecting its strategic interests, as well as obstructing American policies in many issues.⁽⁴⁾

With these developments, Russia moved the course of the conflict over Ukraine, a conflict that might redraw the map of Europe again, and upset Washington's efforts to stabilize its relationship with Russia, given that Moscow is becoming more confident politically and economically, especially in light of the Russian regime's ability to confront its opponents who It suppresses them severely, in addition to the fact that Moscow has rebuilt its financial center since the start of Western sanctions in 2014 AD, and it owns a balance of foreign exchange reserves estimated at about \$620 billion. That the European and transatlantic differences and the American focus on China were viewed as weaknesses, allowing Russia to enhance its strategic security towards its European space, considering Ukraine a secondary interest for the United States, and perhaps the West, and for this reason the crisis was preceded by an escalating Russian rhetoric about its red lines in Ukraine, this is not to mention that the flow of Western weapons to Ukraine represents a security threat to Russia.⁽⁵⁾

Second: the factors behind the rise of the crisis and the forces active in it

1. Factors of the rise of the crisis and its evolution towards war

Tensions have exacerbated since the beginning of the year 2022 AD, between the western parties on the one hand, and Russia on the other, and speculation has increased, especially by the United States of America and

⁴ D'Anieri, p. 10; Dolgov; Marlene Laruelle, "Alexei Navalny and Challenges in Reconciling 'Nationalism' and 'Liberalism'," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 30, no 4 (2022), pp. 276–297.

⁵ Steven Woehrel, "Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy," Congressional Research Service, May 8, 2021, p. 1, at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33460.pdf>

Britain, that a large and comprehensive Russian invasion of Ukrainian lands will take place during the remaining days of February 2022 AD, which is what happened. Already. The entire crisis is due to the Russian side's refusal to join Ukraine to the NATO defense alliance, and its emphasis on confronting any attempt to deploy missiles for the alliance on Ukrainian territory, while the western side believes, according to the Secretary-General of NATO, that the matter of joining the alliance is a sovereign decision, which is reserved for the Ukrainian government, and it is not Any other external entity has the right to stand up to what is authorized by international law and custom.⁽⁶⁾

Despite Western capitals imposing sanctions on Russia to prevent it from invading Ukraine, it did not care and invaded Ukraine. This may be due to the growth of its military capabilities over the past decade, its increased influence on regional and international issues, and most importantly the prior steps taken by Russia to limit the effects of Western sanctions, as the Russians minimized From their dependence on the US dollar during the past years, as the share of assets estimated in dollars in the reserves of the Russian Central Bank decreased to 50% during the period from 2013-2020 AD, and by 2021 AD Russia announced replacing the dollar in the country's sovereign wealth fund, and limiting its use in settling accounts. Trade with partners in the Eurasian Economic Union and the BRICS countries, with raising foreign exchange reserves to the rank of the fourth largest monetary reserve in the world at about \$ 630 billion, and the decline of Russia's external debt to reach the lowest rates of debt in the world, and reducing the share of Russian bonds owned by foreigners in Russia.⁽⁷⁾

At the international level, it was not surprising even for Western circles that Russia rejected Ukraine's accession to NATO, and that is only because the Russian moves during the past decade revolved around restoring the international status as an entity that inherited prestige and the former Soviet superpower, and its attempts to harass its Western opponents and defeat the dangers of the proliferation of their weapons and bases. These movements emerged with the restoration of the Russian state under Putin's leadership to some of its presence on the international scene, which appeared early in the forceful return of Chechnya to the Russian orbit, and more recently in the attack on the Ukrainian Crimea peninsula and then annexing it to its lands in 2014. AD, and its

⁶ Faisal Alloush, Ukraine. A coup against the Orange Revolution or a victory for democracy? Al-Mustaqbal, Issue 3582, Tuesday, March 2, 2022, p. 1

⁷ Nourhan Al-Sheikh, Decision Making in Russia and Arab-Russian Relations, Center for Arab Unity Studies, 2021, Beirut, Lebanon, pg. 99.

acquisition of the regions (South Ossetia) and (Abkhazia) under the pretext of claiming the historical properties of Russia in those parts, and under the pretext of defending the pro-Russian minority, as well as its entry into the Syrian crisis in 2015 AD, as for creating areas of conflict with the opposing parties at the international and regional levels far away About its lands and areas of contact with its vast geography.⁽⁸⁾

The map of the conflict between NATO and Russia shows that the Ukrainian arena will become an area of direct confrontation between them, especially in the presence of Russia's desire to put brakes on NATO's expansion towards Russia in view of the western expansion that affected most of the countries of Eastern Europe, specifically the countries that joined after 1997 AD, while Russia enjoys the support of Belarus and deploys its soldiers there, continues to denounce NATO's military activities in eastern Europe, and demands that no missiles be deployed in countries such as Poland and Romania, as well as its demand for the withdrawal of NATO's combat forces in Poland and the Baltic republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. There is no doubt that the (Ukrainian revolution) or what Russia considers a coup against the previous government in 2014 AD represented a great loss for Moscow, which motivated it to storm the Crimea peninsula, and deepened the rift in the relationship with Ukraine.⁽⁹⁾

On the other hand, Washington's demands for its Russian counterparts to clarify the circumstances of their military movements on the border with Ukraine since last November, with the two sides exchanging accusations of provocative military maneuvers, and despite the constant media exchange, the American and European sides are aware of Russian concerns, while Ukraine's request to join For NATO, it is in the interest of the alliance and increasing its influence, and Europe in particular is aware of the importance of economic intertwining with Russia, especially in the field of energy and natural gas supplies, as Europe imports about forty percent of its gas needs from Russia, and likewise, Russian energy policies cast a delusion on The European inside, which is trying to match its needs as well as Ukraine's economic need, since it is no longer the only transit corridor for Russian gas pipelines to Europe in the presence

⁸ Nahed Ezz El-Din, Transformations of Eastern Europe. Between Push and Pull, International Politics Journal, Issue (178), October 2022, the forty-fifth year, Al-Ahram Center, Cairo, Egypt, p. 5.

⁹ Amr Abdel-Aty, The Return of Russian Influence in Eastern Europe, International Policy Journal, Issue (181), July 2021, Al-Ahram Center, Cairo, Egypt, p. 2.

of Nord Stream 1 and 2 projects across the Baltic Sea directly to Germany.⁽¹⁰⁾

There remains no doubt that the conflict between the international powers is one of the pillars of interpretation of the Ukrainian crisis, and if the sparks touch regional and geopolitical problems, the international balance of power and the transformations of the global system at the present time are the motives behind the strategic plans being hatched behind the curtain, whether by the United States. In order to confront the Russian (transcendence), or by Russia on the one hand, in terms of its desire to reshape the existing international order, in order to impose its hegemony over what it considers its vital space and its legitimate right to regain lands (historical Russian-Soviet), while noting that other centers of power in the world, It is following with caution what the Ukrainian crisis will lead to, especially the centers of political and economic power such as China, India and Brazil, in addition to the European Union.⁽¹¹⁾

2. The driving forces of the crisis

Despite Western and American assurances that Russia is preparing to launch a military war against Ukraine, the Russians have confirmed that they do not intend to wage war, and that all Western intelligence reports and statements by US President Joe Biden about Moscow's readiness to launch a possible war against Kyiv in the coming days are (misleading), It aims to fuel tension, in preparation for imposing new economic sanctions on Moscow, and to justify the expansion of NATO eastward towards the Russian borders to surround Russia and threaten its national security, by providing military equipment to Kiev, and supporting it in conducting more maneuvers in the Black Sea and near the borders with Russia, and Washington reaffirms , that its satellites monitored Russian military movements near the Ukrainian border, and therefore asked American citizens to leave Ukrainian lands, and accordingly NATO countries asked their citizens to quickly leave Ukraine, in reference to the imminent outbreak of war, and despite Moscow's decision to take cautious steps to withdraw part of the stationed forces On the border and ending its military maneuvers, however, President Biden's administration is still concerned about a Russian attack on Ukraine, as it confirmed that

¹⁰ Imad Kaddoura, Houria Geography and Control of the Eastern Gate to the West: Ukraine is a Hotbed of Conflict, *Siyasat Arabiya Magazine*, Issue 9, July 2114, pg. 45.

¹¹ D'Anieri, p. 10; Dolgov; Marlene Laruelle, "Alexei Navalny and Challenges in Reconciling 'Nationalism' and 'Liberalism'," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 30, no 4 (2022), p 278.

the remaining forces on the border are still in a position to allow Russia An attack on Kyiv at any time.⁽¹²⁾

In light of the current developments in the conflict, the question arises: What is the real goal behind the successive Russian escalation in invading Ukraine? And what prompted Russia to attack Ukraine at the present time? To answer this question, it can be said that the issue seems to be much further and more complex than Ukraine itself, and that major international transformations are taking place at the present time in this sensitive geopolitical part of the world, and this is what It explains the nature of the American and European positions that warned Moscow against invading Ukraine, which turned into a complex arena for settling scores, between major international players the size of the United States and Russia, and an important geopolitical gateway to Moscow's attempts to expand its vital space in its traditional historical back gardens, and to complete the policy of repositioning in Europe after the annexation of The Ukrainian Crimea in 2014 AD, and re-consideration of the Russian role at the international level.⁽¹³⁾

Russia realizes that if Ukraine joins NATO, this means a direct border threat to Russia, as it realistically allows the deployment of medium-range American missiles on the borders with Russia, which makes it militarily threatened. Therefore, Putin's message was clear to stop the Western advance towards his country's borders. To end the crisis, Putin wants an eternal Western pledge not to accept Ukraine as a member of NATO, as well as a NATO withdrawal from front countries, such as Poland (in which the United States has established a military base, and is among the reasons for Moscow's growing concern), Romania and Bulgaria, in other words, Russia It seeks to delineate the security map in Europe, to protect its security, consolidate its influence and ensure the expansion of its geographical and political scope. If the United States and NATO reject these demands, escalation and military war may be the Russian option to achieve its demands. The scene seems complicated and all possibilities are on the table.⁽¹⁴⁾

On the other hand, the active capitals of NATO, including Washington, London, Paris, Berlin, and then the UN Security Council, reject Russia's

¹² Emad Hatem, Foundations of Geopolitics, Russia's Geopolitical Future, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Jadeed, first edition. June 2022, Tripoli, the Great Libyan Jamahiriya, p. 43

¹³ Hassan Hardan, The Ukrainian Crisis, Between the Cards of Russian Power and Western Impotence, Al-Akhbar, Issue 45, 2022, pg. 56.

¹⁴ Imad Kaddoura, Houria Geography and Control of the Eastern Gate to the West: Ukraine is a Hotbed of Conflict, Siyasat Arabiya Magazine, Issue 9, July 2114, pg. 52.

use of armed force against Ukraine, and warn it of the consequences of the military scenario, and threaten it to pay the price. The Germans, French, and British made diplomatic efforts between Moscow and Kiev to ease tension. All of them failed, because the Russians adhered to their demands that Kyiv not join NATO, and then these capitals resorted to using the weapon of sanctions against Russia, to discourage it from waging war against Ukraine, and preparing for broader sanctions against Moscow, and the Russians did not care about the sanctions, and launched military attacks against Ukraine.⁽¹⁵⁾

Despite the US threats to Russia, many observers saw that the real US position on the conflict is not to prevent the Russian invasion of Ukraine, for reasons related to the US administration's desire to aggravate Russia, drain it financially and exacerbate its economic problems, and even disrupt the entry of the (Nord Stream 2) line for gas transportation. Germany to active service, as it will give Russia greater influence in the old continent, and the American goal may have been achieved by announcing Germany to stop the procedures for licensing the Russian gas pipeline (Nord Stream 2), and the imposition of many Western capitals of sanctions against Moscow, including Britain, Australia, Canada and others, which is detrimental. In favor of American goals in isolating and besieging Russia.

Russia has winning cards in the crisis, putting pressure on NATO countries to achieve Russian demands, and making Putin hold the reins, most notably the gas exported to European countries Germany, Italy and France, and the difficulty of finding an alternative to securing energy easily at the present time, as Washington and Doha will not be able to secure the quantities of gas required in Europe if they decide Russia stopped exporting gas to Europe, due to considerations related to the difficulty of transforming European infrastructure into a structure that can absorb liquefied gas instead of raw gas, and the high cost factor for transporting American gas to European countries, and the volume of Norwegian gas is not sufficient to compensate for the Russian gas gap, especially in light of Numerous international reports confirm the decrease in the amount of Norwegian gas by 2024 AD, in addition to the fact that

¹⁵ Arquilla Ronfeldt, "Networks, Net wars, and the fight for the future", 1st Monday, Vol 6, Chicago: (University of Illinois), NO 10, Oct 1, 2001, At: Accessed on Oct 17, 2017.

Qatar is committed to long-term future contracts for its gas to Asian countries.⁽¹⁶⁾

The timing of the Russian escalation against the European position cannot be ignored in the winter, when the Europeans are in dire need of Russian gas, as a result of the hugely high rate of energy consumption. The past few years, which contributes to Putin's control over managing the crisis and influencing the European position, as well as the American position, especially at a time when Washington needs global energy price stability, and then the Russians increased their insistence on keeping Ukraine away from NATO, despite the US waving the sanctions card against Russia, but the actors in NATO are aware of the Russian pressure card (gas supplies) and Europe's need for that, and the catastrophic repercussions of the upward rise in energy prices, especially since Russia's allies like Venezuela and Iran, it is expected that their positions will be strongly supportive of the Russians.⁽¹⁷⁾

It is clear from the nature of these positions that the Ukrainian crisis and the Russian escalation against Ukraine are linked to a broad geopolitical struggle over areas of power, influence and vital areas, and intense international commercial competition over oil and gas and international trade patterns and lines between international strategic poles that go far beyond Ukraine in itself, as the conflict comes within the current international transformations and conflicts over areas of power, influence and international status between the international powers that influence international issues and affairs, the forces that call for transformation in the international system and between them and Russia and the countries adhering to the existing international system, led by the United States.

The second topic: the repercussions of the Russian war on Ukraine

The current international conflict over Ukraine shows the intensity of the conflict between the dominant powers, represented by the United States and Russia, which is one of the most important revisionist powers that want to end American hegemony and shift towards a multipolar system alongside China. Therefore, some believe that this crisis may constitute a crossroads in the balance of power. The existing international conflict, in

¹⁶ Pyung-Kyun, Woo, "The Russian hybrid war in the Ukraine crisis: Some characteristics and implications", *The Korean Journal of Defense analysis*, Vol 27, No 3, South Korea: (Korea Institute for defense analyses), September, 2020, p 384.

¹⁷ Janis, Berzins, "Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy", Riga: (National Defense Academy of Latvia, Centre for Security and Strategic Research), 2022, P234.

addition to the outbreak of an open conflict, may be like a third world war, which puts the world in front of catastrophic challenges at the humanitarian and economic levels, especially in light of the military build-up that brings back memories of the atmosphere of the Cold War and the Russian decision to invade Ukraine, and some of the effects can be monitored. It can extend to the countries of the region, particularly the Gulf and Iran, as follows⁽¹⁸⁾

1. repercussions on the Middle East region

a. Geopolitical repercussions: The impact of the Ukrainian crisis does not depend on the Eastern European region, but rather has repercussions on the Middle East, given that the parties to the conflict are linked to vital interests in the countries of the region, and are involved in their conflicts in one way or another, and to a degree no less than the conflict in Ukraine, as the Gulf states are an important ally. The United States and Europe, and Iran has an important alliance with Russia and China, and whenever the conflict in Ukraine intensifies, its echo will reverberate in the region as it is one of the arenas of strategic competition between the major powers, and Russia has announced its intention to conduct naval exercises in the Mediterranean, and that it has transported bombers and planes equipped with faster missiles. From the sound to its air base in Syria, and this is an indication that the region is not far from the conflict and tensions that are currently evident in the Ukraine crisis, and may be manifested tomorrow in any of the hotbeds of tension and conflict in the Middle East.⁽¹⁹⁾

B. Repercussions for regional conflicts: Syria represents a prospective arena more affected by the crisis, as pressure on Russian influence in Syria may represent a card that the United States and Europe can use, and some indicate that reaching a settlement between the parties to the conflict in Ukraine will not exclude access to some kind of trade-off regarding Syria. This will have consequences for the Gulf states, Iran and Turkey, which seem to be facing difficult choices in light of their fluctuating relations with Russia, the United States and the West, whose interests in Syria clearly intersect. It is worth noting that when Russia tried to reduce American and European pressure after its annexation of Crimea in 2014 AD, it decided to intervene in the Syrian conflict in 2015 AD on the side of the Syrian regime, as it was among its motives to create a balance and a focus of conflict away from its geopolitical space. vital,

¹⁸ Lawrence, Freedman, "Ukraine and the Art of Limited War", (Survival, Global Politics and Strategy), December 2021–January 2022, pp. 7–38.

¹⁹ Hassan Hardan, The Ukrainian Crisis, Between the Cards of Russian Power and Western Impotence, Al-Akhbar, Issue 45, 2022, pg. 76.

in addition to controlling competing energy transfer projects, not to mention besieging NATO from its southern flank in the Mediterranean Sea in addition to besieging it in the Black Sea and finding new geostrategic positioning points, linking the Russian vital areas of influence, so entering into a state of war or continuing The tension will lead the region into international alignments and an inevitable cold war.⁽²⁰⁾

c. Economic repercussions: The global economy is currently suffering from weak economic growth and a sharp rise in inflation. The crisis has already contributed to a rise in global oil and gas prices, basic metals, electronic connectors, and fertilizers. There is no doubt that the crisis getting out of control will have dire consequences for the European economy - especially Germany. - and universal; Europe, which relies on Russia to provide nearly a third of its oil and gas needs, will face a severe shortage in those supplies before it finds a suitable alternative and fills the deficit, and until that time, oil and gas prices will rise more than it is now, to pose serious challenges to global economic growth and further rise. In production costs, freight and insurance costs, and possibly disrupting supply chains again. In addition to oil and gas, Russia is a major producer and exporter of products that constitute an important proportion of the global market, such as fertilizers, and metals such as nickel, aluminum, palladium, and platinum, which will be reflected in the prices of these important products for the global industry in the event that the crisis gets out of control.⁽²¹⁾

On the other hand, the blockade of Ukraine will pose challenges related to global food security, given the comparative advantages that Ukraine enjoys in the agricultural sector and the export of grains such as wheat, corn, meat, poultry and other basic food products, which will expose the prices of these products to an increase, at a time when the countries of the world are trying hard to put an end to the rise in prices. Basic food prices after the Corona pandemic, due to its direct impact on increasing poverty and the purchasing power of the general population, and while Ukraine is an important trading partner for a number of Arab countries, and it is also an important supplier of strategic products and commodities, especially wheat, the exacerbation of conflict or war scenario may hinder movement Trade and harm the economies of some countries, and this may be

²⁰ David, Sikory, "The Fog of Non-linear War: Russia's Strategic Coercion in the Near Abroad", Arizona (School of Politics and global studies), 28th February, 2016, p 77.

²¹ Nourhan Al-Sheikh, Decision Making in Russia and Arab-Russian Relations, Center for Arab Unity Studies, 2021, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 102.

accompanied by social and political unrest, not to mention the rush of governments to search for alternative sources to obtain goods, including the United States, which will undoubtedly have its own conditions, demands and dictates.⁽²²⁾

There is no doubt that the package of US and European sanctions that will target Russia will not exclude its trading partners and may affect individuals, companies and official entities. This may harm some countries in the region that have important economic relations with Russia, and impede cooperation with it, not to mention disrupting concluded or expected arms deals in the future.

2. The repercussions for Iran

a. Opportunities for the energy sector in Iran: The crisis and the intensification of international competition reinforce the American desire to adhere to the path of diplomacy with Iran in the hope of calming tensions in the region, or that reviving the nuclear agreement will open the door to the absorption and integration of Iran, which would allow the entry of Iranian gas and oil into the market. Energy, Iran possesses enormous resources, and with the possibility of reviving the nuclear agreement within weeks and its return to the international energy market, it is qualified to be one of the main gas suppliers to Europe next to Qatar, which contributes to providing Europe with an alternative to Russian gas and oil that passes through Ukraine. Or even through the Nordstrom 2 line across the Baltic Sea, which increases pressure on Russia. This economic opportunity gives Iran more room to maneuver and implement its agenda of pressure on the United States and the West by developing the relationship towards the East.⁽²³⁾

B. Economic repercussions: With Putin resorting to the military option, Iran's trade with Russia will be affected more than its trade with Ukraine, which is very limited. The volume of trade between Russia and Iran exceeds four billion dollars a year, while the rate of import of goods from Ukraine during the year 2021 reached AD amounted to approximately 111 million and 710 thousand dollars, while Tehran exported goods worth 48 million dollars, and the trade volume of the two countries, which amounted to 160 million and 290 thousand dollars, also indicates an increase of 76% compared to the same period in the year 2020 AD.

²² Amr Abdel-Aty, The Return of Russian Influence in Eastern Europe, International Policy Journal, Issue (181), July 2021, Al-Ahram Center, Cairo, Egypt, p. 22.

²³ Nahed Ezz El-Din, Eastern European Transformations. Between Push and Pull, International Politics Journal, Issue (178), October 2022, the forty-fifth year, Al-Ahram Center, Cairo, Egypt, pg. 35.

The agricultural industry is the most affected because Iran started farming in Ukraine during the past years, as many Iranian companies acquired very large areas of land in Ukraine, and work there to produce wheat, grains, and others at a lower cost due to land fertility.⁽²⁴⁾

c. Strengthening Iran's alliance with Russia and China: Some may see that the talks in Vienna could be a bargaining chip with the West on the issue of Ukraine, and Putin may work to push the Vienna negotiations forward and join the pressure on Iran in return for concessions in eastern Europe, but there is no doubt that the intensification of the conflict preoccupies the United States. The United States is aware of the dangers posed by Iran, and Iran will benefit from this atmosphere to continue its policies and gain more time to implement its plans, in addition to gaining more support from Russia, especially since the possibility of the United States imposing more sanctions on Iran will push Russia to more cooperation. Strategic and economic relations with Iran, and disregarding US sanctions. China may support this approach, creating a front on which Iran can rely to enhance its influence and retain its gains, not to mention that this support will contribute to the possibility of Iran obtaining a better agreement in Vienna. Russia's insistence on an approach reminiscent of the atmosphere of the Cold War will prompt it to develop its relations with its allies, especially in the Middle East, which represents one of the most important arenas for reviving Russian ambitions on the international stage. Iran occupies a priority as an important ally for Russia in the region, as Russia will be keen not to normalize relations between Iran and the West.⁽²⁵⁾

D. Russia's promotion of regional competition: by providing military support and implementing arms deals and trade agreements that contribute to creating a complex regional environment for the United States, and China benefits, of course, from this tension and will work on a policy of confrontation outside the field by deepening competition in the Middle East in line with Russia's own orientations and support for the enemies. Washington, including Iran, however, the importance of the OPEC + alliance for Russia may limit its approach and impulse towards Iran.

²⁴ Muhammad bin Said al-Futaisi, "The Future of the Ukrainian Crisis Between the American Hammer and the Russian Anvil," *Journal of Law and Politics*, Al-Dar Al-Tunisi, Issue 45, 2022, p. 159.

²⁵ Woo Pyung-Kyun, "The Russian hybrid war in the Ukraine crisis : Some characteristics and implications", *The Korean Journal of Defense analysis*, Vol 27, No 3, South Korea: (Korea Institute for defense analyses), September, 2020, P233 .

3. The repercussions of the crisis on the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council

a. Economic opportunities for the Gulf states: For the gas and oil producing countries, led by the Gulf states, the crisis is in their favor economically, as their gas and oil resources are increasingly important, as they are an alternative to Russian oil and gas. Indeed, the United States and some European countries have made contacts with a number of countries in the region, and with Western companies operating in the gas and oil sectors, to discuss opportunities to provide Europe with energy supplies as alternatives to Russian gas, and Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates can relieve pressure on oil prices in the event of a Russian invasion of Ukraine, as the Ukraine crisis opened the door for the countries of the region to present themselves to Europe as an alternative source of energy.⁽²⁶⁾

B. Political gains: In connection with the economic aspect, the crisis gives these countries a political position in the current arrangements on the international arena, from the entrance to the energy policies that they will follow to mitigate the rise in prices, especially in the event that the crisis worsens, conflict breaks out, and Russian supplies stop, in addition to the escalation of the conflict that would give the Gulf states greater opportunities for maneuver and freedom of movement.⁽²⁷⁾

c. Reducing American pressure: The Ukrainian crisis reinforces American realism in dealing with the Gulf states. The conflict has demonstrated the need for the United States to support its traditional allies in the Gulf, especially on the strategic and economic side. There is no doubt that this will push the American behavior towards more realism towards dealing with some governments in the region, regardless of the disagreement with them regarding some issues and policies, and perhaps this is what prompted President Biden to meet a summit between Iraq, Egypt, Jordan and the Arab Gulf states in Riyadh.⁽²⁸⁾

D. Getting rid of American restrictions and pressures: It can be said that the United States' need for the Gulf states in the conflict may contribute to some of these countries getting rid of the Biden administration's restrictions on arms imports to them. The countries of the region have refrained from rapprochement with Russia and not

²⁶ Oscar Jonsson, & Seely Robert, "Russian Full-Spectrum Conflict: An Appraisal After Ukraine", *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 28:1, 2019, p 78.

²⁷ Lawrence, Freedman, "Ukraine and the Art of Limited War", (*Survival, Global Politics and Strategy*), December 2021–January 2022, p 78.

²⁸ Kelley, Michael B., "Crimean Parliament Votes Unanimously to Become Part of Russia," *Business Insider/Military and Defense*, March 6, 2022, p 233.

proceeding with the implementation of the expected arms deals with Russia and China. Russia will lose as a result of this change, especially after it had regained some of its position as one of the most important arms suppliers to the countries of the region during the last decade.

The war scenario has the most impact on the Middle East, as it will most likely carry an important change in global politics and in the orientations of the major powers, and given that the Middle East is at the heart of the existing balances and one of the important circles of the conflicting powers, the inevitable costs and repercussions that the region will pay, are not comparable to the potential economic gains for some countries, not even the opportunities for political maneuvering available to some governments, especially if the war marks the beginning of a new era of struggle between global powers for hegemony and influence, but if the United States and the West deal with the Russian declaration of recognition of Donetsk and Luhansk provinces and the attack on Ukraine as a *fait accompli* imposed by Putin And by not taking deterrent steps similar to what happened in Georgia or what happened when Russia annexed Crimea, Putin would have succeeded in imposing a new *fait accompli* on the conflict in Eastern Europe, but this does not mean that the confrontation will stop, but it will also be a strategic competition that will not be surrendered. The region is one of its consequences, but with less intensity.

The third topic: Scenarios of the Russian war on Ukraine

The Russian military campaign is continuing in Ukraine, and no one can be certain of what will turn out in Ukraine, amid the rising smoke of fires and explosions, and the continuation of battles in the streets and squares, so what are the most realistic expectations for the way the war will end? What are the possible scenarios?

First: a short war scenario

In this scenario, it is assumed that Russia will escalate its military operations, and in this case the indiscriminate artillery and missile shelling may increase in various regions of Ukraine, and it is likely then that the Russian Air Force, which has not had a major role until now, will launch devastating raids, and that the main Ukrainian institutions will be exposed to Massive electronic attacks, cutting off communications and energy resources kills thousands of civilians despite fierce resistance, Kyiv is likely to fall within days, the government is dismissed and replaced by a government loyal to the regime in Moscow, and President Zelensky is either assassinated or flees to form a government in exile, and President Putin declares victory He withdraws some of his forces, leaving

enough to control the situation, thousands of refugees continue to flee west, and Ukraine joins Belarus as a client state of Moscow.

This scenario is not impossible, but it is linked to a number of factors, among which is that the performance of the Russian forces improves, and that the determination to fight and the amazing resistance shown by the Ukrainians wane. President Putin may succeed in changing the regime in Ukraine after his military campaign against his western neighbor. But any pro-Russian government would be weak and vulnerable to popular rebellion. This situation will lead to a state of instability that warns of the possibility of renewed conflict again.

Second: a long war scenario

This dispute is likely to develop into a protracted war. The Russian forces may find themselves mired in the mud because of their broken morale, poor equipment, or failure of their leaders, and the Russian forces may take longer to control cities such as Kyiv, whose defenders are fighting from street to street, which leads to a long-term siege, and the fighting brings to mind Russia's long, brutal struggle in the 1990s to control and destroy Grozny, the capital of Chechnya.

Even if the Russian forces managed to enter the Ukrainian cities, they may find it difficult to control them, and Russia may not be able to provide a sufficient number of forces to impose its presence in a country of this vastness, and the Ukrainian defenses turn into effective rebel teams, armed with determination and support of the population, as well as The West will continue to supply the Ukrainians with weapons and ammunition, and the political leadership in Moscow may change after years, so that the Russian forces will leave Ukraine, exhausted and defeated, as happened to them in 1989 in Afghanistan after a full decade of fighting against the Islamic rebels.

Third: The scenario of the war extending beyond the Ukrainian borders

President Putin may seek to restore parts of the former Russian Empire, sending his forces to former Soviet republics, such as Moldova and Georgia, which are not in NATO. It could just be escalation and miscalculation. President Putin may declare that supplying weapons to Ukraine by the West is aggression that requires a response, and he may threaten to send his forces to the Baltic states, which are in NATO, such as Lithuania, and open a land corridor to the Russian outer coastal enclave of Kaliningrad. This would be very dangerous and could threaten a war with NATO.

Article 5 of the military bloc charter stipulates that any attack on one member of the alliance is an attack on all members, but President Putin may risk that if he sees that it is the only way to guarantee his survival in power, and if he feels that he is heading towards defeat in Ukraine, he will try More escalation, and we now know that the Russian leader is determined to violate established international norms, and this applies to nuclear weapons. Putin has put his nuclear forces at the highest levels of readiness, and most analysts doubt that this means their likely or imminent use, but it is a reminder that the Russian doctrine allows for use Tactical weapon on the battlefield.

Fourth: the diplomatic solution scenario

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, said, "The weapon has now spoken, but the path of dialogue must remain open." And the dialogue is really continuing, as the French President, Emmanuel Macron, spoke to President Putin, and diplomats say that the West continues to sense Moscow's positions. Russian and Ukrainian officials also caused a surprise when they met for talks on the border with Belarus. If the talks made no progress, Putin at least accepted the possibility of a negotiated cease-fire.

The key question is whether the West is willing to offer what diplomats call "a way out of the highway." Diplomats say Putin must understand the requirements for lifting Western sanctions in order to reach a face-saving deal.

The war turns against Russia, the sanctions increase their impact on Moscow, the opposition is strengthened with the arrival of more bodies of the victims to the country, and President Putin wonders if he has put himself in trouble, and considers that continuing the war carries a greater threat to his authority than the humiliation of ending it, China intervenes and puts pressure on Moscow, in order to accept concessions, threatening that it will not buy gas and oil from Russia unless it reduces tensions, and this pushes Putin to search for a way out.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian officials watch the continued destruction of their country, and are convinced that political concessions are better than destruction and loss of life, so diplomats intervene and reach an agreement. The Ukrainians, for example, accept Russia's sovereignty over Crimea and parts of the Donbass region. In return, Putin accepts Ukraine's independence and deepening its ties with Europe. This does not seem likely, but it is not unlikely that such an agreement would emerge from the womb of the ruins left by the bloody conflict.

Conclusion

The war in Ukraine was expected, and the United States almost decided it by the hour. Although Russia has repeatedly denied its intention to occupy and annex Ukraine, it has not denied its willingness to use all appropriate means to prevent Ukraine from joining NATO. An authoritarian regime has developed in Russia with an anti-liberal ideology, and it can be called the nationalism of the Great State. Russia seeks to reformulate the European security system so that its areas of influence and its role as a superpower are taken into consideration. Russia is led by a president who has effectively ruled the country since 2000 and believes in a growing role for the state and in the politics of power externally, and is not committed to any principle in international relations except the principle of reciprocity between the superpowers.

Despite the expectation of war, not enough efforts were made to stop it, not by visits and warnings of the consequences, and threats of sanctions, but by searching for settlements. As a result of internal political reasons, and others related to Russia's behavior in the last decade, the concerned countries, especially the United States, were not ready to find a settlement, and therefore Ukraine paid the price. It is the country that did not have the opportunity to negotiate, and its interests were not taken into account. Even if Russia was not disturbed by the emergence of democracy in the countries surrounding it, the democratic process has always led to its request to join the European Union and NATO, which the United States and Western countries considered a natural matter, while Russia considered it a threat to them. The United States did not try to separate democracy from joining NATO in order to open a margin for understanding the security concerns of a non-democratic country, but it is a superpower, or stresses a lot in its political behavior as a superpower. The regime in Russia is no longer only hostile to liberalism, but has become anti-democratic and supportive of authoritarianism and military coups at the global level as well, as it has come to see democracy as an extension of the influence of the United States and NATO.

From the perspective of what might be called “honest realism,” the steps taken by a country that are important to its security may be considered a threat to another country that it does not have a relationship of trust with the first. It too takes steps it deems important to protect itself, and the first state sees these steps as a threat to it. Thus, a process of security escalation emerges that, in the absence of trust between the parties, can only be ended by willingness to negotiate and reach an understanding first on avoiding war, and then on ways in which a common concept of security can be developed. In Ukraine, there is a close relationship

between the issue of joining alliances and democracy. Because the issue is linked to major internal social cracks. Resolving this issue in an electoral manner destabilizes democracy. Neutralizing Ukraine is the solution to the question of Russia and NATO, and it is also the answer to one of the main sources of instability of democracy in Ukraine.

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