War in Ukraine

Roots of the Conflict

The origins of the conflict between Ukraine and Russia can be traced back to the Vikings, but the history relevant to the current conflict can be traced back to Catherine the Great’s expansion of the Russian Empire in the 18th century and the Russian Revolution of the early 20th century. Russian leaders have viewed Ukraine as a “little brother” that can be molded into a compliant vassal state that can be used to benefit Russia and expand their power across Eastern Europe. Ukraine has resisted the advances of Russia/USSR multiple times over the course of their shared history and has only continued to resist into the present day. Ukraine resisted Russian occupation after the fall of the Russian empire and rise of the USSR, during the Second World War, when a Russian backed President refused to join the European Union, and after the Russian annexation of Crimea. Understanding the roots of Russian/Ukrainian relations is crucial to understanding the motives behind President Putin’s current decision to invade and deny the sovereignty of Ukraine.

Russian Invasion as of March 3, 2022

Due to the constantly changing nature of this conflict, for this conference we will be focusing on the beginning of the invasion (February 24-March 3, 2022). Russia officially began their invasion on February 24, 2022 after weeks of escalating tensions and troop movements to the border of Ukraine and Belarus. On February 21, 2022 President Putin formally recognized
Luhansk and Donetsk (Donbass) as independent states in order to begin moving Russian “peacekeeping” troops into the region. On February 24, 2022 the invasion began with troops moving into Ukraine from the East and explosions rocking major Ukrainian cities. The following day, the UN Security Council voted on a resolution that demanded Russian withdrawal from Ukraine and was vetoed. By the end of the month, Russian troops have begun to gather on the outskirts of the Ukrainian capital Kyiv. Ukrainian troops have put up a strong resistance, preventing Russian troops from taking the capital. As of March 3, 2022 the UN Security Council has passed a resolution condemning the invasion of Ukraine and talks between Russia and Ukraine create a ceasefire to allow civilian evacuation (Taylor, 2022)
Helpful Resources


