Global Security Governance from the Perspective of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Dilemma and Way Out

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I n the face of global common security threats and challenges in the 21st century, countries joined their efforts in fighting against the SARS in 2003, overcoming the global financial crisis in 2008, and combating the terror of the Islamic State from 2014 to 2017. These collective actions displayed a new level of collaborative global security governance. However, as the United States has taken the path of full-scale great power competition, global security governance has shifted from cooperation to confrontation in a profound manner, as reflected in the deep split over the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020 and the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2022. The Russia-Ukraine conflict demonstrates that "the geopolitical rivalry has come back to the center stage of international politics,"[1] as the gap in trust, development, governance and peace is widening across the globe, weakening the theme of peace and development and bringing the world to the brink of division and confrontation.

The historic setback in global security governance, from cooperation to deep division and severe confrontation, has multi-faceted reasons, and the prospect is worrisome. On February 8, 2022, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in a special report titled *New Threats to Human Security in the Anthropocene: Demanding Greater Solidarity* points out that global progress in development will not automatically bring

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1 Wu Wencheng, "From the Kosovo War to the Ukraine Crisis: NATO's Eastward Enlargement and Russia's 'Strategic Awakening'," *Journal of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies*, No.3, 2022, p.1.

a greater sense of security, which is at a historic low as an estimated six of seven people across the world already felt insecure in the years leading up to the pandemic.[2] It is generally believed that the probability of a nuclear war is very low, but the danger of high-intensity local wars cannot be ruled out given the fragility of the global security system and the potential for security issues to spiral out of control. The question that arises is: how to ensure human security and development? If the legitimate security interests and concerns of all countries are not respected, it will not only be difficult to ensure stable development of the world, but even the hard-won development achievements of each country would be undermined and the future survival and development of mankind would be endangered. This article argues that amidst the current major global changes, issues of rebuilding trust, breaking free from security dilemmas, strengthening security cooperation, promoting security governance and building security systems should be placed on top of the global governance agenda.

The Russia-Ukraine Conflict and the Global Security Dilemma

The term security dilemma refers to a situation in which one party, in pursuit of absolute security, tries to improve its security capabilities to the maximum, while disregarding the security interests of another. It forces the other party to strengthen its own security capabilities in response, and in turn increases the sense of insecurity of the former. Both sides therefore continue to upgrade their capabilities reciprocally, which ultimately creates an environment with more insecurity for both.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict is a typical example for the current global security dilemma. It can be named a "gray rhino" if the COVID-19 pandemic is considered a "black swan." Most Western scholars would argue that the Russia-Ukraine conflict is the result of Russian leaders' efforts to maintain domestic rule and to restore regional hegemony in the

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2   UNDP, *New Threats to Human Security in the Anthropocene: Demanding Greater Solidarity*, 2022 Special Report, pp.3-4.

strategic field after the collapse of the Soviet Union by taking the advantage of the declining US power. Therefore, they reason, Russia must bear the responsibility of the Russia-Ukraine crisis or conflict.[3] However, this is far from reality if the Russia-Ukraine conflict is observed in the longer perspective of the past 30 years of global security governance. The conflict is indeed the continuation and result of the post-Cold War geopolitical rivalry. The Kosovo war, the Georgia war and the Russia-Ukraine conflict are successive junctures in Eurasia's regional restructuring after the drastic changes in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Soviet Union. They represent regional security clashes involving militaries to shape a new regional security framework. During this process, the US quest for global hegemony and Russia's resistance are the two sides of the coin, and how to deal with Russia as a security threat has become the core issue in the post-Cold War European security architecture.

In fact, at the end of the bipolar US-Soviet stand-off the US did not end its hostility toward Russia, but rather intensified its attempts to exclude Russia, which eventually led to a strong Russian retaliatory response. The Georgia war in 2008, the Ukrainian crisis in 2014, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2022 all occurred against this backdrop. Of course, initially Russia did not take NATO's post-Cold War eastward enlargement as a significant security threat, and it did not resort to arms to defend its security interests, until the US and NATO sharply increased the pressure on Russia, which illustrates the US-Russia security dilemma and the underlying in-depth reasons of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

After the Cold War, the US took very decisive steps to maintain its global hegemonic interests and attain a unipolar order. In the course of this neo-interventionism it continues to promote NATO's eastward enlargement, fueled by hegemonic mentality as well as its pursuit of absolute security, which eventually resulted in the subsequent security dilemma. Booth and Wheeler suggest that the dual uncertainties, namely the physical (uncertainty

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3   Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation and Trust in World Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

of offensive and defensive weapons) and the psychological (uncertainty to fully determine whether other countries' present and future intentions are benign), are the root causes of the security dilemma. These uncertainties make it difficult to understand the intentions of others and respond accordingly. In the early post-Cold War years, Russian leaders accepted the US rhetoric about NATO's defensive nature and chose to give tacit consent to the eastward expansion of NATO. However, this did not receive the same kind of goodwill from the United States; and instead, the US continued to promote the expansion and increased security pressure on Russia. Since 2008, Russia ceased to regard NATO as a defensive organization but viewed it as an existential security threat and chose to respond in a harsh way to safeguard its security interests and safety zone. At the same time, during the Georgia War in 2008 and the Ukraine crisis in 2014, Russia took tough measures without receiving strong resistance from the West. Therefore, the illusion of a "tough stance for security" may be an important factor driving the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2022. However, Russia's hardline approach has not improved its security situation effectively but has rather steered it into a security dilemma.

International relations scholars have long been aware that the struggle for absolute security[4] does not bring real security but ends in a severe security dilemma. In the 1950s, Hertz and Herbert[5] pointed out that in a security dilemma of international politics, the non-malicious struggle for the security of one country might lead to insecurity and an increase of armament of others, with a tragic outcome of insecurity on both sides. Professor Tang Shiping suggests some characteristics of the security dilemma: under anarchy, countries cannot be certain about each other's present and future intentions.

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4 Chinese scholars Zhang Yuyan and Feng Weijiang have defined and studied "relative security" and "absolute security." Relative security refers to a situation ensured by limited and partial advantage as well as security residues. It does not seek to achieve its security by completely eliminating internal and external potential threats or imposing overwhelming threats on others in an offensive and pre-emptive manner. Absolute security is to ensure a situation of no threat or danger by removing all uncertain threats and increasing its power advantage over others in a comprehensive and infinite manner. See Zhang Yuyan and Feng Weijiang, "The Outline of National Security in the New Era," *Social Sciences in China*, No.7, 2021, pp.147-148.
5 John H Hertz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol.2, No.2, 1950, pp.157-180; Herbert Butterfield, *History and Human Relations*, Collins,1951, pp.19-20.

As a result, countries tend to fear each other. Because of the uncertainty about each other's intentions (hereafter, uncertainty) and fear, countries use the accumulation of power or capabilities as a means of defense, and these inevitably also contain some offensive capabilities. The dynamics of the security dilemma are self-reinforcing and often lead to spirals of conflicts and arms races. Accumulating unnecessary offensive capabilities is self-defeating: more power but less security.[6] Zhang Yuyan and Feng Weijiang argue that a security dilemma is a situation in which more security input reduces the security level. At the international level, a country's struggle for security or power increases the security investment of others, which ultimately worsens the general security situation (such as arms races).[7]

In the case of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the US-led NATO military bloc continues to expand eastward, trying to attain absolute security at the expense of Russia's security interests, which has led to a major shift in Russia's perception of NATO enlargement as the biggest security threat. Russia and Western countries have come to a state of hostility in the perception of security threats, and the two sides are sharply opposed to each other in security goals and means, especially when NATO recognized Ukraine as an Enhanced Opportunities Partner in 2020, which immediately raised Russia's alarm. Military conflict was just a matter of time. Consequently, when Russia once again resorted to military means to remove security threats in February 2022, the US-led West responded strongly, turning the conflict into a security dilemma and therefore taking the global security crisis to an unprecedented level.

The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict on Global Security

Since Russia launched the special military operation against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, many scholars have analyzed that the Russian-Ukrainian

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6   Tang Shiping, "The Security Dilemma: A Conceptual Analysis," *Security Studies*, Vol.18, No.3, 2009, pp.594-595.
7   Zhang Yuyan and Feng Weijiang, "An Outline of National Security Studies in the New Era," *Social Sciences in China*, No.7, 2021, p.146.

conflict would have significant impact on the international order and the velocity of international structural change, and that it would be a prelude to the transformation of the international system and the restructuring of the international order. The prolonged Russia-Ukraine conflict is a mix of hybrid war and proxy war, and there is no sign of truce. Though still a local war in Europe, it affects various countries and the world at the large and will have wider and long-term implications.

First, it exacerbates multiple global security crises. Traditional and non-traditional security issues are the two major types in the security field, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict has aggravated both. On the one hand, the conflict unveils that traditional security issues still pose immense challenges. First of all, it accelerates militarization around the globe. Soon after the outbreak, the West joined the operation by providing Ukraine with a large number of weapons, including Stinger missiles, drones, armored vehicles, body armors and small arms. The delivery of weapons in support of Ukraine would prolong the conflict and may add to the loss of control over it. The conflict also increases the military expense of European countries, as Germany has begun to build up its military budget and revitalize its stock of armaments, and Japan, far away in Asia, has taken the opportunity to strengthen its weaponry and plans to raise its military budget to 2% of its GDP. A number of developing countries have purchased advanced weapons and equipment, and global arms sales orders have surged, and the degree of militarization has increased. Furthermore, it increases the risk of a nuclear war. Russian President Vladimir Putin stated on February 27, 2022, that Russia's deterrent force included nuclear weapons, which is the first time since the 1960s that Russia had made such a public announcement regarding its nuclear alertness.[8] The probability of an intentional use of nuclear weapons remains low as long as the NATO refrains from sending troops to Ukraine or the Putin regime does not face existential pressures. Russia, however, is extremely discontent with the West, which is increasing its effort to

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8   Liviu Horovitz and Lydia Wachs, "Russia's Nuclear Threats in the War against Ukraine Consequences for the International Order, NATO and Germany," April 2022, https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publication/russias-nuclear-threats-in-the-war-against-ukraine.

sink Russia ever more deeply into the war and wear out its forces, and the risk of a nuclear strike has not been completely eliminated. In addition, the conflict stimulates nuclear ambitions of some countries, undermining the stability of the non-proliferation system.

On the other hand, the conflict brings bigger challenges to non-traditional security, including security of food, energy and finance, and war refugees. First, it exacerbates global food insecurity. In 2021, Russia and Ukraine combined accounted for about one-third of global wheat exports and were the world's largest and fourth largest wheat exporters respectively.[9] The conflict not only directly pushed up global food prices, but also affected the global food supply and put great pressure on global food importing countries. To take the Middle East as an example, the conflict increased food insecurity and financial pressure on countries heavily dependent on food imports from Russia and Ukraine, such as Egypt, Morocco, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen. For example, wheat prices in Egypt shot up by 50 percent one month after the conflict erupted. It also jeopardizes the safety of the people. The conflict has led to an energy and food price upsurge, and inflation in many countries is at a record high. Coupled with the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic, it imposes a direct threat to people's security and survival, especially to the low-income bracket of the population. These problems may spark off secondary risks and take effect with existing risks to trigger popular protests and a new wave of political and social unrest in some countries. It also creates a new refugee crisis. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the conflict has resulted in 6 million refugees and 8 million displaced Ukrainians. The conflict has imposed immediate physical and mental harm as well as long-term negative effects on the refugees, with insufficient medical care, education, and social welfare guarantees.

Second, it creates a new security dilemma. On the one hand, US hegemony and power politics gained ground by exploiting this opportunity. After the 2008 financial crisis, the trend of "a rising East vs a declining

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9   UNCTAD, "The Impact on Trade and Development of the War in Ukraine: UNCTAD Rapid Assessment," March 16, 2022, https://unctad.org/webflyer/impact-trade-and-development-war-ukraine.

West" in the international power landscape has become more pronounced. US strategists have become increasingly anxious as can be seen from its strategic contractions in the Middle East and its strategic rivalry with other big powers in the Asia-Pacific and in Eurasia. This strategic anxiety is the result of the US's hegemonic mentality and the panic reaction in the face of, among others, a rising China and Russia. Therefore, the United States continues to add fuel to the conflict by supporting Ukraine to contain Russia. There are two strategic incentives. First of all, the US attempts to divert attention away from its internal troubles by summoning popular support at home through challenging the patience of Russia and provoking Russia. Secondly, in Eurasia, the US seizes this opportunity to integrate its traditional alliance system and enhance its leadership among allies to defeat Russia and weaken Europe through the Ukraine crisis. The United States has been striving to promote NATO's eastward enlargement, engaging in a "color revolution" in Ukraine, interrupting the European-Russian economic cooperation and peace framework. The Russia-Ukraine conflict is the result of the US's offshore balancing strategy. The United States itself sits back to reap the benefits and watch the flames of war burning in a foreign land, to consolidate its hegemony by weakening Russia and pinning down Europe, while allowing the US military industries to make enormous profits. In short, the United States will not let this conflict come to its end easily.

On the other hand, the US adopts a diplomacy of coercion, intimidating countries to choose its side in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, but most developing countries are not willing to take sides as requested. Taking the Middle East as an example, most countries maintain a cautious neutral position and try to satisfy both Russia and the Western camp, but their bottom line is not to irritate Russia. There are five categories of positions on Russia's launch of special military operations: active support, passive support, neutrality, cautious opposition, and firm opposition. Active supporters include Syria, which has close strategic ties with Russia. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad stated that Russia's action was a correction of history, and the West was responsible for the chaos and bloodshed. Passive supporters include Iran,

Iraq and Algeria. They support Russia out of strategic concerns, emphasizing that the root cause lay in NATO's provocation, that Russia's security concerns needed to be respected, and that political settlement of the conflict should be fair and comprehensive. The neutral countries include Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, who keep good relations with both Russia and the United States and maintain a neutral attitude. They call for a diplomatic solution to the dispute to avoid a humanitarian crisis. Those who form a cautious opposition include Israel, Qatar and Turkey, who are US allies and maintain close ties with Russia. They regard Russia in violation of the UN Charter and express support for Ukraine's territorial integrity. Kuwait is in firm opposition, and based on its experience of being invaded by Iraq in 1990, insists on the importance of respecting Ukraine's independence and sovereignty. However, most developing countries, including those in the Middle East, are opposed to the extreme pressure and sanctions which were imposed on Russia by the United States and European powers.

At the same time, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has caused the European security architecture to further disintegrate and turn into a "security black hole." In this conflict and crisis, the United States is the initiator, promoter and beneficiary. In the Russia-Ukraine standoff, both have suffered huge losses. NATO members in Europe, faced with significant threats, are changing their perceptions of security threats. The crisis in the security system has once again caught Europe, which had enjoyed peace and development for more than half a century, in a security predicament.

Third, it has serious consequences for the global security governance system. The impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on global security governance has caused a comprehensive transformation of the security governance agenda, its methods and concepts. First of all, rising military conflicts and military security problems have changed the theme of peace and development. With the United States fully orienting its strategy towards great power rivalry, the world is plagued by turbulence and disruption. Insecurity across the world has become more severe, and global military security issues have unprecedentedly risen in prominence. There

is a possibility that the Russia-Ukraine conflict escalates, so that countries around the world may embark on the old path of arms races. There is also an increased possibility that high-end weapons get into the hands of extremists, confronting the 21st century world with the danger of irregular warfare and jungle law. The US-led West steps up arms races and wages a new Cold War. It not only attempts to cripple Russia with the Ukraine conflict, but also continues to exert extreme pressure on China by aggravating issues related to Xinjiang, Taiwan and the South China Sea. In addition, the United States makes overall arrangements in the fields of politics, security, economy, finance, technology, etc., to control the global industrial and supply chains, while also rolling back globalization by forming groups and regional blocs to safeguard its own hegemonic interests.

Second, confrontation between different groups replacing cooperation of mechanisms has changed the patterns of security governance. After the Cold War, despite various disputes, major powers had managed to maintain a high level of coordination, especially security cooperation on the platform of the UN Security Council. However, since the Russia-Ukraine conflict erupted, security cooperation between major powers in the Security Council has come to a complete deadlock. The United States is engaged more with setting up confrontation between different groups or blocs, and NATO is more inclined to "globalize." For example, NATO has expanded eastward to encroach on Russia's strategic space, attacked Libya to overthrow Gaddafi's regime, intervened in Afghanistan and Iraq to meddle in Central Asia and West Asia. Now it has begun to dip its toes in the Asia-Pacific, attempting to intervene in the South China Sea. Therefore, NATO is both an accomplice and an instrument of the United States for implementing its global hegemony strategy.

Third, the zero-sum game mentality replaces ideas of win-win cooperation, further distorting the core concept of global security governance. In the Russia-Ukraine conflict, all NATO members have become irrational anti-Russian fanatics, imposing overall sanctions on Russia. Failing to acknowledge Russia's legitimate security concerns in a rational manner, the United States and some other Western countries are still obsessed with the

scenario of repeating a complete victory over the Soviet Union, which increases Russia's sense of insecurity. The US and Russia have entered a "Hobbesian" state of mutual enmity, and their security philosophy has turned into a zero-sum game or even a negative-sum game mentality. The perceptions of mutual security threats and hostile behavior are difficult to change in the short term.

Ways to Promote Global Security Governance

Sorting out the root causes of the Russia-Ukraine conflict is a logical starting point to advance global security governance. The conflict is a condensed version of the current global issues. Global issues refer to the challenges and universal problems that human society faces beyond national and regional boundaries and concern the overall survival and development of the human species. Global issues include cross-border natural disasters, ecological imbalances, climate change, pandemics, etc. as well as wars and conflicts, economic crises, North-South contradictions, famines and poverty, environmental pollution, terrorism, transnational crimes, cyber-crimes, etc. Global issues can be divided into two categories by their nature from the perspective of their origins. The first category includes general problems that originate from environmental changes caused by natural phenomena and geological movements, which in turn bring about major changes and major impacts on human living conditions. The other includes major problems generated in the process of social changes. As far as the latter is concerned, global issues in modern history are largely the result of the expansion of Western capitalism and the practice of power politics on a global scale, thus revealing the root causes of modern and contemporary global problems. Many scholars argue that the history of the development of Western capitalism is a history of "wars for profit," largely based on brutal aggression, ravage, plunder, resources extraction and unequal exchanges with the non-Western world.[10] The evolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict has underscored the reckless

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10   Zhu Yunhan, "A New Journey of Chinese Political Science in the Global Changes Unseen in a Century," *Journal of Political Science*, No.1, 2021, p.22.

expansion of the US-led capitalist bloc after the Cold War. To maintain its global hegemonic interests, the United States has devastated the sovereignty and legitimate security interests of other countries, creating many global problems, such as arms races, local wars, regional conflicts and refugee crises, as well as a series of global security governance problems.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict underlines the global security crisis and the difficulty and immediate urgency of establishing a durable international security order. The term security governance dilemma refers to the stalemate in which actors are incapable of reaching consensus. However, such a predicament does not always mean that there is no way-out, but that the situation needs a more rational response by constantly creating conditions for a gradual solution.

To resolve the security governance dilemma, people must rebuild mutual security trust by correctly understanding the intentions of the other, gradually changing the perceptions of security threats, establishing security risk prevention mechanisms, and removing the security crisis step by step. Booth and Wheeler suggested that are several types of security dilemma. If you compare uncertainty with a house with multiple rooms, some of these rooms may feel safer than others although the uncertainty is the same when there are constraints in the mechanisms and mutual trust. Therefore, even if a security dilemma may be inevitable, security risks can nevertheless be relaxed or overcome by establishing mechanisms, restraining hostility, shifting intentions and building trust.[11] Yin Jiwu believes that the key to solving a security dilemma lies in overcoming the uncertainty and understanding each country's intentions through strategic communication by delivering reliable and clear messages and thus building up a community with a shared future.[12] Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Security Initiative on April 21, 2022 in the speech

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11   Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation and Trust in World Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
12   Yin Jiwu, "The Logic of Relaxing in International Security Dilemma: A Theoretical Comparative Analysis," *Journal of Teaching and Research*, No.12, 2017, pp.23-24.

he delivered via video link at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference, stressing that humanity was an inseparable security community. He emphasized the importance of upholding a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security; respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries; abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter; taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously; peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation; and maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional domains.[13] The Global Security Initiative has enriched the new security concept, provided ideas for the resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and represents a new approach and blueprint for global security governance.

First, in terms of its philosophy, we must stay committed to a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security to seek harmony and coexistence. The way forward to new global security governance is inseparable from constructing a new security vision. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has triggered or exacerbated the global security crisis, and the zero-sum game and the negative-sum game mentality has ensured to spread it around the world. In fact, Ukraine's sense of security cannot be detached from the interaction between Russia and NATO, but unfortunately the Ukrainian political elites have the illusion that Ukraine can attain its security by simply relying on the strength of the United States and NATO. The problem is that, in the absence of any security trust, once Ukraine turned to NATO for support, Russia lost its sense of security and regarded it as a significant security threat. The closer Ukraine moved towards NATO, the higher the security crisis and risk. This shows the necessity of one's own security and the importance of mutual security.[14] It is precisely in the face of multiple crises that China has put forward a long-term and fundamental

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13   Xi Jinping, "Rising to Challenges and Building a Bright Future through Cooperation," keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2022, *The People's Daily*, April 22, 2022.
14   Wang Lincong, "Security Issues in the Middle East and Governance," *Journal of World Economy and Politics*, No.12, 2017, pp.23-24.

approach to the problem — building a community with a shared future for mankind, the Global Development Initiative and the Global Security Initiative. These ideas are born out of traditional Chinese wisdom and the Chinese security vision of harmony. They are not only global public goods and the wisdom of collectivity provided by China, but also the demonstration of China's sense of responsibility as a major power and a crucial force in responding to crises in the new era. Therefore, with the new vision of security as the core, it is necessary to strengthen the sense of a community with common security for all in harmonious coexistence, and to build a global security governance system to ensure long-term stability and prosperity for the whole world.

Second, in terms of mechanism and governance method, it is necessary to establish an inclusive security mechanism and an interest-driven security governance model. Security mechanisms should be inclusive and cooperative to be fair and durable. A global security mechanism must consist of security arrangements that include Russia. At present, the United States, the United Kingdom and France are intentionally marginalizing Russia in the Security Council, and even attempt to operate without China and Russia. The design of such a security system is invalid and fragile and would also worsen the situation. Only by respecting the legitimate security interests and concerns of all countries, and adhering to the principle of indivisibility of security, that is, one country must not improve its security situation at the expense of the security of others, can we establish an inclusive security architecture that is reasonable, benign and lasting. At the same time, in terms of methods of governance, we must replace the present passive crisis-driven security governance model with a positive benefit-driven model, which remains focused on internal mechanisms to promote common development and shared security to achieve a universal and inclusive security community.

Third, concerning the security agenda, it is necessary to coordinate traditional and non-traditional security. In the Russia-Ukraine conflict, people tend to pay attention to traditional security issues of military confrontation, but the point is how to achieve a ceasefire while addressing

Russia's legitimate security concerns. If the US-led NATO forces continue to support Ukraine against Russia, it will only intensify Russia's fear and insecurity, failing to safeguard Ukraine's security interests and making it difficult for Russia to end military operations. Meanwhile, the conflict has caused global security problems in food, energy, finance, refugees, environment, etc. affecting countries all over the world. The impact is far-reaching and has become a complex and urgent security problem to be worked out together by the international community to save the situation.

Conclusion

As the Russia-Ukraine conflict persists and its prospect remain unclear, urgent and profound lessons should be learnt from it. From the Russia-Ukraine conflict, we may conclude that building security trust and respecting the legitimate security interests of all countries is the premise and foundation of security governance, that security is mutual and universal, and that there is neither absolute security nor exclusive security. It is futile to attain absolute security. Chinese President Xi Jinping has pointed out on various occasions that "Security must be universal. We cannot have security of just one or a few countries while leaving the rest insecure. In no way can we accept the so-called absolute security at the expense of the security of others."[15] He also stated: "No country can maintain absolute security with its own effort, and no country can achieve stability out of other countries' instability."[16] The US-led NATO, long regarding Russia as a heretic as well as a major security threat, reinforces its exclusive security alliance, which eventually amplifies Russia's sense of insecurity. In turn, when Russia resorts to arms to remove security threats and safeguard its security interests, it makes the West extremely insecure. Eventually both are caught in a security dilemma. Thus, the security system in the making should be inclusive instead of exclusive, cooperative instead of confrontational, and open instead of bloc-based, since the former

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15   Xi Jinping, *The Governance of China*, Foreign Languages Press, 2014, p.354.
16   Xi Jinping, *The Governance of China (II)*, Foreign Languages Press, 2017, p.523.

leads to peace and development, and the latter to conflict and confrontation.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict also exemplifies that the world is moving towards more division. The pursuit of hegemony and power politics are the biggest threats to human development and security in the 21st century. The US, by instrumentalizing the narrative of an "authoritarian"Russia and China, is swiftly consolidating NATO in the midst of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and integrates the Western alliance system to enhance its leadership and control of the Western camp. It also expands and consolidates its global hegemony through "globalizing" NATO. The Russia-Ukraine conflict and its repercussions reveal the fact that the United States is obsessed with great power competition to seek global hegemony. It attempts to pursue absolute and exclusive security, neo-interventionism, unilateralism and diplomacy of coercion, provoking conflicts and wars. It reflects the real intentions of the United States of maintaining its hegemonic interests, imposing serious threats to the global security system and governance. By not respecting the legitimate security interests of other countries and even regarding the development and rise of other countries as a security threat, the United States is undermining and damaging their sovereignty. Acting as the spokesperson of the "democratic world," it fabricates the division between the "democratic"and "authoritarian" worlds, increasing global turmoil and risks by creating insecurity and disorder globally. Thus, in the face of increasingly severe global problems, only by upholding the idea of a community with a shared future, can mankind usher in a new era. The Global Security Initiative proposed by President Xi points to the direction that, on the premise of respecting the legitimate security interests of all countries, they can jointly shape a security governance mechanism that is inclusive, cooperative and sharing, and build an authoritative and efficient global security governance system. This entire process requires people's foresight, rationality, tolerance and capability to act.

are undergoing a transition from passively absorbing the impacts to playing a more active role in the process. The realignment of world forces amid the crisis demonstrates the complexity of changes in international power configuration that are bound to be long-term and tortuous. However, world polarization will continue to advance in the medium to long term despite the current setbacks.