
SDG 2030, Agenda 2063, Russia-Ukraine War and Africa's Development Possibilities¹

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Abstract

Sustainable Development Goals (*SDG 2030*) and Africa's *Agenda 2063* address clearly defined collective development agendas, while the war in Ukraine relates to strategic management. This paper takes a look at these seemingly differing, yet related subjects in the overall context of the development aspirations of Africa. It argues that *SDG 2030* and *Agenda 2063*, like the Millennium Development Goals (*MDGs*) before them, are basically efforts at strategic planning, and underscore the integrated nature of the global political economy. As well, the war in Ukraine, and its globally ramifying nature, demonstrate the logic of globalisation, which makes collective approach to the agenda of development imperative. While the highly disruptive orientation of the war is evident, the possibility of African countries taking advantage of some of its dimensions to deepen their location in the global supply chain exists. Such may, however, not be realisable outside of a nimble state system that Africa does not as yet present; a fact which also accounts for the very modest performance of the continent on the *MDGs*, *SDG 2030*, and *Agenda 2063* initiatives. The expanding poverty net on the African continent is the most profound testimonial that Africa is still not acquitting itself creditably vis-à-vis these initiatives. The emergence and sustenance of an appropriately positioned developmental state is, therefore, a critical desideratum if the continent must moderate the massive disruptive impacts of the war in Ukraine, benefit from it where it can, and drive more determinedly towards the objectives of *SDG 2030* and *Agenda 2063*.

Keywords: SDG 2030. Agenda 2063, Russia-Ukraine War, Development, Africa.

¹ Keynote Address, presented by Prof. Femi Mimiko, mni, at the Research and Innovation Conference of the College of Social and Management Sciences, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria. Held at Owolabi Hall, Thursday, May 12, 2022.

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The Context

The International Union for Conservation of Nature conceives natural resource governance as

the norms, institutions and processes that determine how power and responsibilities over natural resources are exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens - women, men, indigenous peoples and local communities - participate in and benefit from the management of natural resources (International Union for Conservation of Nature, n.d.).

As a concept, resource governance speaks to the patterns and procedures for managing and/or allocating wealth derivable from natural resources produced by a social formation. It is addressed to the justice, fairness and the sustainability profile of the entire process of exploitation, management, and usage of natural resources. In this broad sense, resource governance makes meaning as a component of the more generic governance procedure within a given state. Even so, it can be extrapolated to the global plane, to wit, that a lot of the activities taking place in the global arena relate to how natural resources are extracted, allocated, exchanged, and consumed at the local level, implying that some forms of vertical relationship exist among state as well as non-state institutions brought into interaction for the purpose of superintending these activities. The entire global system and its functionality, including as it relates to international engagements, issues of war and peace, diplomacy, rise and fall of empires, race relations, relations of domination - between the dominant and the dominated, etc., are all anchored upon the overarching subject of access to resources.

While *SDG 2030*, and Africa's *Agenda 2063* address clearly outlined collective development goals, the war in Ukraine is considerably influenced by resource administration. In its wider implications for the global system, the economic dimension of the war is arguably the most critical, perhaps coming only after the issues of its legitimacy; strategic direction, relating to kinetic issues of how the war is fought; and the flurry of diplomatic engagements spurn around it. It is apposite, therefore, to take a look at these seemingly differing but greatly related subjects in the overall context of the development aspirations of the peoples of Africa. What is the place of *SDG 2030*, *Agenda 2063*, and the war in Ukraine on the development outlook of Africa? Does there exist any form of intersection to all of these? What are the implications of such for the quest for development on the continent? Addressing such a broad problematic would entail its location in the development trajectory of Africa, and an interrogation of the critical elements requisite for its development, in an ever-dynamic global system within which it must operate.

A critical starting point here is a recognition that the continent is but the basket case of development in the world. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA, in *AP*, 2021), 'nine in 10 of the world's extremely poor people live in Africa.' The continent has a population of 1.3 billion or 16% of the world total, but is responsible for 3% of global trade; and 2.84% of global GDP, a little higher than Brazil's - the eighth largest economy in the world. The point needs to be made, however, that the latter narrative may be reductive, given that much of the resources taken out of the African continent are largely unaccounted for. They are indeed conveniently left out to convey the image of an Africa that is a drag and burden on the world, relevant only as a pitiable object of the Global North's philanthropy. Even so, it is trite that Africa has not done well by its population, in development terms.

Theoretical Framework

A most relevant theoretical tool for unpacking these issues is multilevel governance (MLG), often deployed in relation to resource governance. Its enunciation benefited substantially from the resourcefulness that went into the reworking of the former European Economic Community (EEC) to European Union (EU), under the auspices of the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s - in the context of the 'the vertical integration of national and international politics' (Partelow, *et. al.*, 2020). Its most basic assumption is that top-down approach to governance constitutes the distinctive feature of the processes for managing natural resources. The top-down approach is defined by the tendency for policies to be made, and decisions formulated at the collective (regional or global) levels, only for such to find adaptation at the national and local levels. It is thus focused on the nature and patterns of interrelationships between governance agencies and institutions at all levels of social organization - communities, state, regional, and global.

Its most critical theses are that 'the better the vertical integration between the multiple levels of governance, the more effective governance will be; and that top-down driven governance can work well if effectively integrated across levels' (Ibid). MLG, therefore, not only recognizes the existence of 'self-organizational capacity for governance' at the several levels at which resource management is undertaken, but also 'the vertical integration of the different organizational levels of governance' (Ibid). It is directed at explicating 'the views, perceptions, goals, and/or motivations at different policy levels,' which ultimately help in defining the nature of the interactions at these levels within which decisions on the management of resources get taken, their implementation profile, and outcome on communities that 'face the reality of policies.' Put differently, this is about aligning the character of the different 'organisational levels of governance' - which ultimately defines the nature of the interactions at these levels, within which decisions on the management of resources get taken - with the patterns of implementation of the decisions or policies; and the outcome on communities that 'face the reality of policies.'

In practical terms, three areas are of particular interest in the MLG framework. The first relates to concerns over the very nature of top-down development approach, and its appropriateness. The second revolves around possible weakness of synergy between and among the different layers of engagement on resource administration, conceived by Partelow, *et. al.* (2020) as 'vertical integration challenges within administrative, legal, and political processes across levels.' It is trite that the third interest is on what interventions are required to engender the nature of synergy at the different organisational levels requisite for a more effective delivery of governance. The foregoing conforms to Giovanna's (2013) thesis that 'evaluating the sufficiency of (a) governance model ... requires consideration of its structure, operational efficiencies and ways of remedying its deficiencies.'

While *SDG 2030* and *Agenda 2063* are not narrowly focused on natural resources, they are development agendas that align with the top-down approach to governance. This is to the extent that both are initiatives designed and propelled at the global and regional levels, and put up for implementation (or as guide to policy) at the national level, the ultimate impacts of which are reflected at the community, family and individual levels. The implication of this is that outcome is greatly determined by the nature of the interaction or synergy ('vertical integration') among the different levels at which commitments are to be delivered, including the pattern of responses to same by the ultimate end-users, the local communities, families and individuals. Where such a synergy is lacking, a reality that can manifest in multiple dimensions, the outcome of attempts at implementation of these development agendas may fall far short of projections. Exploring ways of facilitating or enhancing appropriate interaction between the different organizational governance levels, upon which successful implementation is predicated, becomes, therefore, of critical import. These are the dimensions of thoughts that this paper explores.

The associated discussion on the war in Ukraine is conducted within the context of the Realist paradigm in International Relations. As a framework for analysing the workings of the global system, Realism tracks stark realities and their implication for policy choices and outcomes in the system. It avers that there is no stronger determinant of foreign policy acts of states than the quantum of power a nation is capable of ramping up behind the pursuit of their national interests (Mimiko, 2012; Mimiko, 2022a). It is, therefore, not amenable to wishes and admonitions; but constitutes what Henry Kissinger (2014: 3) regards as a 'practical accommodation to reality, not a unique moral insight.' Realism is antithetical to Idealism, which weakness was demonstrated in the outbreak of the two World Wars in spite of its highfalutin, but largely unrealistic projections. How these realist currents, which privilege realistic trends and goals over moralizations, admonitions, and idealistic posturing in explicating issues in the global system, shape the war in Ukraine, and the implications of same for Africa's development aspirations are examined presently.

From MDGs to SDGs: A Fixation on Development Programming

The backdrop to *SDG 2030* can be located in the *MDGs* - a group of 'eight goals with measurable targets and clear deadlines for improving the lives of the *world's poorest people*' within a 15-year (2000 - 2015) period. The eight Goals were: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; achievement of universal primary education; promotion of gender equality and empowering of women; reduction in infant mortality; improvement in maternal health; combating of HIV/AIDS, malaria, 'and other diseases'; ensuring environmental sustainability; and development of a global partnership for development. In the words of former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, the *MDGs* represented 'our shared vision of humanity and a social contract between the world's leaders and the people, ... a to-do list for people and planet, and a blueprint for success.' Even so, it is evident that these goals were addressed to the needs of the developing world - the world's poorest - more specifically, as the challenges they highlighted were those that had direct bearing to the Global South.

At the end of its implementation period, the *MDGs*, among others, 'helped to lift more than one billion people out of extreme poverty.' They however faced 'their biggest challenge in Africa,' where the overarching goal on halving extreme poverty was not achieved (Adenle, 2017). Significantly, in spite of the failure of much of Africa to meet the *MDGs*, the UN went ahead all the same, in September 2015, to build on them with *SDG 2030* - a testament to how lightly regarded issues of interest to Africa were in the global arena. It would have been more rational and a reflection of sensitivity to the African condition, if the UN had found a way to accommodate the reality that Africa had failed to meet set targets in the softer dimensions of development represented by *MDGs*, rather than spinning yet another, and certainly more demanding set of targets.

Sustainable Development Goals 2030

Described by the UN as a 'bold and transformative' initiative, *SDG 2030* was adopted by 191 countries, and 22 international organisations, and designed to run from 2016 through 2030. There are 17 of the Goals, to wit, (1) No Poverty, (2) Zero Hunger, (3) Good Health and Well-being, (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender Equality, (6) Clean Water and Sanitation, (7) Affordable and Clean Energy, (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth, (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, (10) Reduced Inequality, (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities (12) Responsible Consumption and Production (13) Climate Action (14) Life Below Water (15) Life on Land (16) Peace and Justice Strong Institutions (17) Partnership for the Goals. Projected by the UN as 'the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future *for all*,' the Goals are all encompassing, integrated and technically indivisible. Countries are also allowed the latitude of setting priorities 'according to their national circumstances.'

As noted by the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA, 2022), the *SDGs* differ from their precursor, the *MDGs*, in relation to the former's broader focus on 'all countries whether rich, middle or poor economies,' rather than only developing countries. Unlike the *MDGs*, the *SDGs* are 'nationally-owned and country-led, wherein each country is given the freedom to establish a national framework in achieving the *SDGs*.' With all of 17 goals in focus, the *SDG* initiative comes across as much more comprehensive than its forerunner, which paraded just eight targets.

Without prejudice to its overall achievements thus far, it is evident that the *SDG* initiative privileges symptoms over the fundamental basis of the challenges it sought to tackle. It is more process, rather than outcome oriented; lacks a credible degree of internal consistency; and is predicated upon a questionable assumption of the charitable orientation of much of the Global North. According to Montemayor (2018), the *SDGs* 'largely ignore the causes of (the developing world's) most pressing challenges in favor of addressing only the symptoms.' *SDG 2030*, like *MDGs* before it, fails to mainstream the structural and governance context within which the drive towards the Goals are to be made. Yet, the easiest way to guarantee the failure of any economic or indeed development programming, is to conceive and seek to deliver same outside of its broader institutional context (Mimiko, 2022b). This is a fundamental element in Development Administration, which the two development initiatives do not seem to place much premium upon.

As a reflection of the shortage of internal consistency in the array of goals on parade under *SDG 2030*, Montemayor (2018), in relation to *SDG #8* on 'decent work and economic growth,' avers that the goal 'targets 7% annual economic growth, among other myopic standards'; and that 'targeting growth, instead of balance in a resource-finite world, is a recipe for environmental degradation.' They conclude that it does not make any sense to focus narrowly on 'indefinite growth ... (in) a physically finite planet.' *SDG #16* focuses on 'peace and justice,' without much attention to the fundamental elements without which advertised commitment to peace and justice would amount to nothing. As Montemayor (2018) notes,

If risks and benefits are unfairly distributed in business, no amount of philanthropy or development aid will be able to address inequality and violence. But if risks and benefits are distributed in a socially and environmentally just way, then we may achieve peace.

How best to distribute 'risks and benefits' are pretty much unattended to in the *SDG* package.

To the extent that *SDG 2030* neglects a critical component of development - management of cultural diversity - it has been suggested that the initiative does not go far enough (Philippines Statistics Authority, 2022), and is indeed reductionist. Such other elements in development recommended by their criticality

to a good percentage of the human population – racism, debt and refugee crises, resource governance, brain drain, migration, social discrimination, the debilitating nature of a fundamentally skewed global political and economic system (Mimiko, 2010), exaction of reparation for historical crimes against Africa, etc. – are all conveniently left out. It is also hardly defensible that the structure and functionality of the international development agencies, and the equity concerns long expressed by the Global South about them, would be taken for granted under the *SDG*.

As well, the *MDGs* took for granted the will of the Global North to do what was needed in terms of reforms of the international political economic system – and its institutional structures, such as to facilitate attainment of the Goals in the poorer segments of the world. Such will was not demonstrated within the 2000 – 2015 plan period of the *MDGs*. There are as yet no indication that the situation under *SDG 2030* is, or would be any different. Rather, the stakes in these international agencies and processes continue to be loaded against the Global South.

A second assumption is succinctly captured by the UNDP (2016) thus: 'Poor implementation mechanisms and excessive reliance on development aid undermined the economic sustainability of several *MDG* interventions.' It was conveniently assumed in this respect, that the Global North would discharge its commitment on provision of development assistance to the poorer segment of the world, and in a manner consequential to how well the latter could do on the *MDGs*. Available evidence does not suggest that these commitments were kept. In absolute terms, flows of Official Development Assistance (ODA) moved up from \$81 billion to \$134 billion, in constant dollars, between 2000 and 2014. This, however, accounted for only 0.3% of the gross national income (GNI) of developed countries for the period. Only Denmark, Luxemburg, Norway, Sweden and the UK met the 0.7% of GNI targeted under the *MDG* rubrics (UN, 2015). Again, there are as yet no indication that the situation would be different during the *SDG* plan period, especially in the light of fresh developments in the global system outside of the South – the war in Ukraine inclusive – making demands on the ODA outlook of the Global North. Evidence of aid fatigue on the part of the Global North actually continues to mount, with no indications that this trend would abate in the short to medium terms. The situation reflects a major gap in vertical integration or synergy within the different organisational levels of government, which the multilevel governance framework addresses as critical to effectiveness under the rubric of the top-down driven governance model.

While 'the integrated nature and the indivisibility of the 17 sustainable development goals' is noted, the goals have nevertheless often been rated in terms of their relative importance. In this regard, and as measured by *SDG* scores, *SDG* #17, on global partnership, is taken to be the most pivotal – implying that most countries see global partnership and cooperation as central to the success of the

SDG initiative. Yet, it is this critical element that is still to be demonstrated in terms of the Global North's commitment to reform of the structures of the global economic system, and injection of ODA into the Global South.

It is be apposite, in the light of the foregoing, to conclude that on a scale of balance, African countries have not done too well on either the *MDG* or *SDG* agendas. The most profound evidence on this consists in the still expanding poverty net on the continent. What remains to be added is that this broadly weak performance profile is a function of Africa's relatively poor human capital status, continued stifling of innovation, shortage of inclusivity in its governance systems, conscripted space for collaboration across boundaries, and a slew of conflicts and wars. There is also the acute infrastructural deficit, which Africa suffers from; a fundamentally skewed global economic system that is basically unkind to it; and the continent's virtual railroading into neoliberalism, without much regard to neither the specificities of its economies, nor location of same on the global supply chain. This very modest performance record was key to the African Union's (AU) decision in January 2013, to launch yet another development initiative - *Agenda 2063* - a 50-year compass to '*The Africa we want*' by year 2063.

Agenda 2063: 'The Africa We Want'

According to UN Environmental Programme (UNEP, 2022),

Agenda 2063 is anchored on the AU vision and is based on the seven aspirations derived from the consultations (it had), namely: 1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; 2. An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance; 3. An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; 4. A peaceful and secure Africa; 5. An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics; 6. An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children; and 7. Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner.

The AU Commission, in collaboration with the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (2020), developed a First Ten Year Implementation Plan on *Agenda 2063*, to cover the period 2014-2023, as the first in a series of five ten-year implementation plans, on the basis of which progress by each African country could be measured. The performance profile of the continent is as reflected on Table 1 below:

Table 1: Performance profile of African countries, on Agenda 2063: first 10-year period, 2014-2023 – measured against 2019 targets

Item	Aspiration	(%)
1	“A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”	29
2	“An integrated continent, politically united that is based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of an African Renaissance”	44
3	“Good governance, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law”	16
4	“A peaceful and secure Africa”	48
5	“An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and beliefs”	12
6	“An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of the African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children”	38
7	“Africa as a strong and influential global partner”	26

Source: Table developed by the author from data obtained from African Union Commission and African Union Development Agency-NEPAD, *First Continental Report on the Implementation of Agenda 2063*, Addis Ababa: AU, Feb. 2020.

While overall aggregate score for the entire continent was put at 32%, substantial variations in performance were recorded across regions. According to African Union Commission, and African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (2020),

At the regional level, East Africa recorded the highest performance in five out of the seven aspirations in *Agenda 2063* First Ten Year Implementation Plan with an aggregate score of 40% against the 2019 targets. The aggregate performance of West Africa stood at 34%, while the aggregate performance of North Africa stood at 27%. Southern and Central Africa both recorded an aggregate score of 25% against the 2019 targets.

Perhaps the most profound assessment thus far made of *Agenda 2063* is that it

guides individual and collective actions towards the African Union’s vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa; an Africa driven and managed by its own citizen; and representing a dynamic force in the international arena (Ibid).

It is important to note in relation to the foregoing consideration, the good efforts being made in Africa on conflict resolution, and the calmer environment which these seem to present. Even so, cognisance must be taken of the 'flashing red light' signals that are all over the continent. The war in Ethiopia is a horrible set back to the expansive development profile that the country - the second most populous on the continent - had posted in the past decade or thereabout. The instability attendant upon the collapse of the Libyan state may seem to be abating, but I argue that this is only simmering given that the fundamental contradictions therein are yet to be addressed in the single-minded desire on the part of critical stakeholders, internal and external, to sustain crude oil extraction. Much of the Sahel is in turmoil by reason of the growing presence of several armed non-state actors, epitomised by the radical jihadist movements. The return of coup d'états in the region, problematic on its own, underscore the intense stress these countries are going through. In the Sudan, a military junta is vigorously and violently pushing back on the vibrant democratisation current flowing through the country. The challenge to the Nigerian state by sundry violent non-state actors, lack of both resolve or capability to address same by the leadership, amid the growing weariness of the military that is engaged in the war against terror, are noteworthy; even as the conflict in western Cameroon boils over. Added to these is the growing penchant of African leaders at doing away with fixed tenures, as such 'constitutional coups' deepen the scope of frustration and alienation of the African peoples from their countries' political and economic processes. All of these do not present a suitable landscape for an impactful development agenda, and must have to be dealt with.

The bold commitment to economic integration nevertheless presents a silver lining of sort, provided the continent is able to navigate the critical issues thrown up by the adoption of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) initiative (Mimiko, 2009). Launched by 54 out of 55 African countries in 2018, and billed to come into effect from January 2021, but delayed by Covid-19, AfCFTA seeks the integration of these economies, of 1.3 billion people, and with a combined GDP of about \$3.4 trillion. It is a veritable blueprint for inclusive growth - i.e. growth with 'simultaneous reduction of poverty and inequality across all segments of the population' - with the potential to 'unlock new opportunities for diversification and trade' (UNCTAD, 2021: 1) and lift the peoples of the continent out of poverty. As UNCTAD (Ibid) aptly notes, 'If effectively implemented, AfCFTA can help address challenges emanating from the excessive reliance in African on the supply of primary commodities and goods embodying limited value added to world markets.'

Notwithstanding its very high ratings, including its potential of 'unlocking untapped export potential of intra-African trade (at) around \$21.9 billion, equivalent to 43% of intra-African exports (yearly average for 2015-2019)' (Ibid), AfCFTA comes with a number of challenges. First is the risk of making Africa a dump site of sort for foreign goods, through the penetration of the continent by

more established, bigger, and more formidable regional integration arrangements like the EU. This is the context in which its 'rules of origin' remains quite contentious. In all, as noted by David Thomas (2022), AfCFTA 'achieving its full potential depends on significant policy reforms and trade facilitation measures across African signatory nations.' The status of atomised free trade deals, the type Kenya has with the US, need also be streamlined in the context of the continent-wide AfCFTA, as both are bound to run at cross purposes.

While the overarching goal of *Agenda 2063* remains poverty reduction on the continent, the Covid-19 pandemic expanded the extreme poverty net ('at the poverty line of \$1.9 per day') in sub-Saharan Africa, by some 23 million people (Mahler, 2020). UNECA and World Food Programme (2022) indicated that the percentage of the poor (people living on less than \$1.90 per day) in the West African sub-region increased, by reason of the Covid-19 pandemic, from 2.3% in 2020, to 2.9% in 2021. The attendant health crisis it created 'particularly annihilated the benefits gained by ECOWAS and its Member States in the fight against food insecurity and malnutrition' (World Food Programme, 2022).

It is projected by the African Union Development Agency (2022) that extreme poverty in Africa will decline from 46% of the 1996-2005 period, to 35% over 2016-2025. The Covid-19 pandemic not only challenged this rather positive outlook, it has actually been projected that 'if the impact of the pandemic (was) not limited by 2021,' an additional 59 million people could fall into extreme poverty, and this would 'bring the total number of extremely poor Africans to 514 million' (ECA, in *AP*, 24 Dec. 2021). Just as the Covid-19 pandemic began to abate as 2021 inched to an end, the Ukraine war began on February 24, 2022, with seismic implications for the global economy.

It is thus evident from the foregoing that the *MDGs*, *SDG 2030*, and *Agenda 2063* are all underpinned by commitment to economic growth and development, and are, therefore, particularly relevant to the African continent. They are also defined by a realisation that the nature of the overall improvement in the quality of life anticipated under their auspices, are better pursued as a collective, rather than on narrow, national basis. Implicit here too is a recognition of the integrated nature of the global political economy, which in spite of intermittent projections of national interests and power, basically functions as a composite, in a manner defined by the logic of globalisation - 'organisation of production and exchange on a planetary scale.' Profound as the visioning that went into the three development agendas may be, it is trite that they take place within a global context defined by intense dynamism, which the war in Ukraine epitomises.

Ukraine and Disruption to Global Economy

The invasion of Ukraine, dubbed 'special military operations' by Russian President Vladimir Putin, began on February 24, 2022. It has since snowballed into a full-blown war between the two countries, with the possibility of throwing some 1.7 billion people – over one-fifth of humanity – into poverty, destitution and hunger on a scale not seen in decades (Guterres, 2022). It is, to all intents and purposes, 'a perfect storm that threatens to devastate the economies of developing countries' (Ibid). Perhaps more than anything else, the war represents a disruption in the post-Cold War security order in Europe that is unprecedented in its scale within the period; and the fuller dimensions of which are yet unfolding. Any interrogation of the active conflict situation must, therefore, be tentative, as it remains in a state of flux. There are also multiple dimensions to the conflict, with perhaps the geo-strategic, as the most important. It certainly is by far the most dynamic, and with profound ramifying possibilities for peace and global security.

War in Ukraine: Layers of Clashes as Reality

When taken within the context of realism, the war in Ukraine is locatable in four layers of clashes. There is the clash between the principle of sovereignty and the attendant right of nations to act independently in the international system, on the one hand; and Great Powers' core interests, on the other. A second layer of clash consists in the conflicting national interests of the two-leading global (nuclear) powers. There is also the clash between identifiable cohorts of states, on the desirable shape of an incipient post-Cold War international order; and fourthly, in the purchase on statecraft within the Russian and Ukrainian leadership establishments.

Perhaps the most fundamental is the clash between the principle of sovereignty and the attendant right of nations to act independently in the international system, on the one hand; and Great Powers core interests, on the other. Sovereignty speaks to the supreme powers of a sovereign over their people and territory; and was the principle driving global diplomacy for many years. It is, however, evident that the principle of sovereignty has seen considerable qualitative and quantitative erosion in the global system, since it was first enunciated in the 19th century by the French jurist, Jean Bodin. Presumably, Ukraine like any other country, has a right to choose countries it would wish to align with. This is a right afforded under the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, which for the first time recognised the juridical equality of states, and their right to act independently in the international system. Presumably too, the right of Ukraine to choose its friends covers also individual members of NATO, and the security alliance compositely. Yet, Russia, Ukraine's more powerful neighbour, with whom it has long standing, deeply rooted ethno-national, historical, ideological, and religious affinity, defines its own national security interests in terms of what it thought was the ultimate

mission of the US and NATO east of the German border – to undermine the security of Russia. It thus conceives Ukraine's membership of NATO as an existential threat that must be contained.

A recognition of the unique status of this neighbour as a great power with the largest arsenal of nuclear weapons in the world should have advised a more nuanced response to the Russian concerns on the part of Ukraine. When a nuclear power made a claim of this magnitude, the least the international community should have done was to find a way to accommodate such. It was the failure to do this in Ukraine that propelled the current war. The seriousness of the war is underscored by the fact that three months into it, the UN Secretary-General avers pointedly that the use of nuclear weapons, 'once unthinkable, is now back within the realm of possibility' (Guterres, 2022b).

The second clash relates to the conflicting national interests of the two foremost global (nuclear) powers in the world – USA and Russian Federation. The refusal of the US to recognise what, to all intents and purposes, constitutes Russia's legitimate claims in Ukraine derives from Washington's determination to prevent Moscow, in the words of US Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, Wally Adeyemo, from projecting power globally (Adeyemo, 2022). This is in conformity with the Wolfowitz Doctrine that sought the retention of the post-Cold War global system in its unipolar orientation, with the US as the only legitimate hegemon. The implied denial of equivalency here, on the part of Washington, is quite important. Both the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 and the experience of the Cuban Missile Crisis speak to the legitimacy of such a claim as Russia is wont to make in this regard.

Thus, conflicting with the US position is a counter motivation predicated upon Russia's nostalgia about the global profile of its precursor, the USSR. There is a feeling in official circles in Moscow that the defunct Soviet Union and those who led it in its twilight years made mistakes, which propelled the disintegration of the Soviet empire. Having succeeded in restoring order in Russia – regarded as the legitimate successor state to the Soviet Union, brought back its economy on track, and inspired Russians to be proud once again of their noble history, President Vladimir Putin felt the time had come to begin to correct the wrongs of history in relation to how the West activated internal contradictions in the old Soviet Union to propel its disintegration. A natural starting point in this strategic agenda are the countries that emerged from the former Soviet Union, as well as the former eastern European countries – all of which, taken together, would constitute a legitimate sphere of influence for a renascent Russia. The conflicting nature of these two convictions on the part of the two greatest global powers, is what is currently playing out in Ukraine.

Also discernible in the war in Ukraine is the clash between identifiable cohorts of states, on the desirable shape of an incipient post-Cold War

international order. Whereas NATO members in North America and Western Europe do not consider the eastern expansion of NATO as being at variance with Russia's interest, Russia perceives such a move as worrisome; and in relation to how it plays out in Ukraine, an existence threat. NATO is a security alliance, basically oriented to collective self-defence, effectuated by its Article Five. It is suggested that to that extent, whatever happens in the security alliance should ordinarily not be Russia's concern, except the latter harbours aggressive intensions over its members, especially the newer ones that once existed under the old Soviet orbit. Moscow's counter claim points to conflict situations all around the world – Bosnia, Libya, Syria, etc. – where NATO emerged technically and indisputably as the aggressor.

The fourth layer of clash involves technical ability in statecraft on the part of the leadership of Russia and Ukraine, and their allies. The clash in leadership capacity as expressed in the naivety of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on the one hand, and a much more strategic Putin on the other, is evident in the conflict over Ukraine. Projection of Ukrainians' long-standing, ethno-nationalist fervour was undertaken by President Zelensky in a way that betrays a lack of understanding of the nuances of Great Power relations. The positions his government took on a wide range of issues related to the conflict were evidently predicated upon some assumptions that proved to be wrong. He had assumed it would be possible to have the US and other members of the Western alliance put 'boots on the ground' in his support in the event of a war. He imagined NATO could declare a 'no fly zone' over his country to shield it from Russian air power. He evinced unimpeded access to virtually all types of weapons from NATO members that he would require to prosecute a war with Russia, in the event of one breaking out. He also probably was not really persuaded that a Russian invasion of his country was imminent. The war happened, and three months after it started, it has inflicted damages in the range of half a trillion dollars on Ukraine; thousands of Ukrainians are dead; and more than six million are displaced. Thus, that the war in Ukraine eventually happened, and is turning out to be such a damaging one for the country, conveys the reality of a leadership that is quite short on statecraft. It failed to recognise that Ukraine is but a mere pawn in the chessboard of two sparing nuclear powers – with the US determined to 'see Russia weakened' (Ryan, and Timsit, 2022), while Moscow seeks a recasting of post-Cold War global order in which the US carries around as the sole hegemon. It is intriguing that it does not seem to matter to the leadership in Kyiv that in these strategic considerations, Ukraine counts for little in the estimation of both the US and Russia.

On the other hand, is Putin, a strategic thinker and ranking spook (not a comedian like Zelensky) who became president; and has dominated the political space of his country since the last day of 1999. Putin has remained in power longer than any Western leader; has dealt with a slew of Western leaders over the years; and is not seriously constrained by many democratic pretensions. Above all, the

Russian leader has the unique record of stanching the collapse of his country, brought order, and returned it to the path of stability and renaissance. On his watch, a country once in practical disarray after the collapse of the former Soviet Union, has become the holder of the largest number of nuclear warheads in the world – 6375, to US' 5800 – as at January 2021 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2021). The careful manner in which he has set at his goal, including the seizure of Crimea in 2014, through his 'special military operations' over the whole of Ukraine, to his limited objective of dominating only the Donbas and southern regions of Ukraine, are instructive. Above all, how Putin has leveraged Russia's dominance of the global energy sector, and limited the impact of Western sanctions on his country, retained the support of the world's two largest countries – China and India – all suggest clear strategic leadership on the part of Putin that cannot be lightly regarded.

The profound impact of the war in Ukraine on the global economy derives from Russia's dominant position in oil and gas production globally; and the fact that 36 countries depend on the two warring nations, Russia and Ukraine, for more than half of their wheat imports (Guterres, 2022). Wheat and maize prices have gone up by 30% since the outbreak of the war; oil prices by 60%; and natural gas and fertilizer by 50% (Ibid). The UN Secretary-General has noted the 'direct correlation between rising food prices and social and political instability'; with 'the most vulnerable people around the globe' fast becoming 'collateral damage' in a war, over which 'they bear no responsibility' (Ibid). It is exactly in this sense that the war in Ukraine speaks to Africa's development condition, which promises to be more critical, if the continent's responses to it are not well thought out and calibrated.

Positive Externalities of Ukraine for Africa

As noted, the UN Secretary-General had indicated that 'there is a direct correlation between rising food prices and social and political instability.' He added that 'the most vulnerable people around the globe' were fast becoming 'collateral damage in yet another disaster for which they bear no responsibility' (Ibid). While not discounting this general framework, as established by the UN Secretary-General, it is trite that there may actually be some positive dimensions to the war for Africa. Such would include the possibility of greater attention to countries on the continent with capability in oil and gas, for possible expansion of the sector, and substitution for Russian supplies. The Russian President has actually indicated his desire to have Russian oil and gas routed through Africa, in a move that would arguably be more beneficial to his country strategically rather than economically. African countries that are willing to sustain good relations with the West may also latch onto playing the *Russian card* - using Moscow as a bogeyman, to eke out better opportunities and relational terms from the Americans. Ultimately these are issues related to development, including the right positioning for African states to leverage

upon opportunities afforded by the war in Ukraine. All of these are in tandem with the advertised goals of *SDG 2030*, and Africa's *Agenda 2063*.

State of African Development Enterprise: By Way of Conclusion

The *MDGs*, *SDG 2030* and *Agenda 2063* are forms of development planning, and thus constitute a repudiation of the negative attitude of neoclassicism to same. Moore's thesis that rent-seeking desires alone provide the motivation for state involvement in an economy is broadly representative of this school (Moore, 1989). This adumbration, however, fails to make a distinction between market-augmenting planning, and a market-repressing one (Youngil Lim, 1981).

Capitalist Developmental State

East Asia epitomises this development model, referenced in the literature as the capitalist developmental state (CDS). The overarching theme of CDS is the centrality of the State to the development process of newer countries, the type that populate the African continent. CDS 'rests on genuine private ownership of property but indirect state control of economic decisions' (Johnson, 1994). It is a development process that is state-guided and goal-oriented, but 'nevertheless committed to free enterprise, private ownership of property and the market' (Kim, 1994) - defined most pointedly by government control of investment decisions 'even in the context of private ownership of the means of production' (Mimiko, 1997: 241-267). It rejects the notion of perfection and infallibility of market mechanism, proposed by the neo-classical school. It rather positions the State as 'a standing force for the correction of market failures, through appropriate interventions' (Ibid).

It is also implicit that 'the CDS runs on the fulcrum of a strong state, that has hegemony, capacity and autonomy' (Ibid). This type of state is still largely lacking in Africa. What you have are personalised leadership forms that are rather convoluted in their functionality. Such states run on social exclusion; and the type of dominance they establish over the social space is not often directed at the ends of inclusive growth (Muzee and Mimiko, 2022).

Conclusion

Perhaps on a scale only comparable to the globally ramifying nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine underscores the nature of the logic of globalisation, which makes a collective approach to the agenda of development imperative. While the highly disruptive orientation of the war - especially in economics, energy, and finance, as aptly noted by the UN Secretary-General - are evident, the possibility of African countries taking advantage of some of its dimensions to deepen their involvement in the global supply chain exists. Such, may not, however, be realisable outside of a nimble state system that Africa does

not as yet present. The emergence and sustenance of such a state is, in the present circumstances, therefore, a critical desideratum if Africa must avoid the massive disruptive impact of the war in Ukraine on its own economy. Such may also make attainment of the objectives of *SDG 2030* and *Africa 2063* much more difficult to attain.

It is apposite to conclude that *SDG 3030*, and *Agenda 2063* recognise the integrated, indivisible, and mutually reinforcing nature of development. Both recognise that development has to be undertaken on a collective, rather than atomistic basis. In this manner, the two development initiatives underscore the integrated nature of the global political economy, to which the transnational nature of the impact of Covid-19, and the war in Ukraine attest. It is also crucial from the policy administration angle that both *SDG 2030* and *Agenda 2063* epitomise economic planning, and a repudiation of neoliberalism's distrust of state intervention, in the context of its commitment to the idea of market infallibility. It implies that for the ends of development to be met by African countries, which must operate within extant heavily skewed global economic system, it is critical that a State structure with the requisite capability for truly leading the development agenda, and emplacing market augmenting interventions be created and sustained.

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