**Failure of the UN and NATO to Build Peace**

**I believe that NATO failed its role when the war between Russia a Ukraine broke out.**

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We live in a time when there is reason to question the international, regional and national cooperation and defence organizations in preventing conflicts and wars, and handling issues when they occur. The United Nations and other multilateral organizations may have tried their best, as they see it themselves, but often not very effectively. The UN does have a very outspoken Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, who says the right things, alas often without required follow-up and implementation. There is an urgent need for major changes in the UN, which was established after WWII at a time when most countries in today’s world had not even become independent states. The UN Security Council (UNSC) is an outdated construction, but the powerful old states resist reorganization – until they realize it will also be in their own interest. Some alternative organisations may come up, but they cannot replace the world body.

I believe that the UN, even the way it is organized today, can do much more in preventing conflicts and wars, and play a more proactive role in creating a culture of peace in the minds of people and in the institutions of the member countries. Things will not change immediately and lead to resolving existing conflicts and wars. But the new focus should help prevent future disagreements turning into conflicts and wars.

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Again, the role of the UN and NATO is to prevent conflicts and do peace-building during and after conflicts and wars. The ongoing terrible war between Israel and Palestine in Gaza, which began five months ago on 7 October 2023, erupted because of issues having been left unresolved since the Oslo Agreements in 1993, over 30 years ago, and even decades earlier. Things went unresolved under the nose of the parties and the international community, certainly the stronger ones, Israel and the USA, and the neighbours in the Middle East. I am not being wise in hindsight, but rather I state the obvious: the situation was a time-bomb bound to explode. Even now during the war, we seem to be like ostriches, hiding our heads in the sand, unwilling to face the reality, not presenting realistic ways of creating a future non-conflict situation, maybe even peace and prosperity. The latter is not really discussed; the furthest the strong parties go is to say that they want a two-state solution, with little concrete about how, when, and all the practicalities about it.

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For the first time, I have begun to question if Israel can even exist as a state, indeed ever be a peaceful place for the Jews themselves and for the Palestinians in Israel and Palestine. Maybe we have to admit that it is more realistic to explore a one-state solution, yes, a Palestinian state where also Jews can live side by side with the majority Palestinians, with some degree of autonomy. This was a minority alternative when Israel was created in 1948. A one-state solution today cannot come in place of Israel, because that country has come to stay, well, maybe smaller, if not in territory then in recognition, and Israel may mostly become a land for the hard-liners.

A Palestinian state for all the people in the area would have to be built over some decades; also, for a long time the country would have to be under international supervision and policing, as would Israel. This kind of progressive Palestinian state is what is wanted, a land for Arabs, Jews, and others who would live in this kind of multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural land. To create such and open Middle-Eastern country, with hope and prosperity for all, would require hard work. But if implemented well, Palestinians, Jews and others would feel attracted to come back home and make it successful and be proud of their land. They must do it themselves, and isn’t it time we talk to do it, and talk about being proud and peaceful? If not, people would continue to leave, fight with each other, and let the tragic conflict go on forever.

[Experts suggest special zones to combat smog](https://www.nation.com.pk/01-Mar-2024/experts-suggest-special-zones-to-combat-smog)

The other unworthy war that we witness in shock and disbelief is the Russian war in Ukraine, with hundreds of thousands of soldiers dying on both sides, especially on the Ukraine side, and many more maimed and cripples, physically and mentally. Their families and communities are scared for decades to come. Millions of civilians have become internally displaced in Ukraine and in other countries.

Now when the full-scale war has gone on for two long years, I wonder if it was right of Ukraine to fight back the way it did, with the West encouraging and supporting it militarily, in reality making it a war between Russia and the West. Instead, there should have been immediate negotiations when Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February 2022, and the earlier Minsk Agreements concerning the eastern provinces in Ukraine, should have been honoured. At least since 2014 when Russia annexed Crimea, there should have been serious negotiations between the two countries, and NATO should have played an entirely different role than it did. Also, it is said that it was a mistake of Russia to let Crimea become a part of Ukraine when the country became independent in August 1991, when it would have been possible to find a peaceful solution to that issue if the Russian leaders had not been careless and negligent about it.

[FIA arrests human trafficker](https://www.nation.com.pk/01-Mar-2024/fia-arrests-human-trafficker)

I believe that NATO failed its role when the war between Russia a Ukraine broke out, although technically it was Russia that invaded Ukraine after yearlong escalation of the conflict. NATO should have foreseen the tragedy and prevented it from happening, in dialog with Russia and Ukraine. It should be stressed that the huge and increasing military budgets of the NATO countries should have been used for preventing the war and building peace and democracy within and between the vast and resource rich country of Russia and the powerful West. The EU must also take its share of the blame for the failures.

In future, NATO – and certainly the UN – must reallocate main portions of its resources to fulfil their tasks and work for peace and prosperity of people. They must contribute directly to educating children, youth and adults to develop peaceful mindsets, values and actions. Today’s warmongers, short sighted and old fashioned thinking and leaders, must be retired and replaced soonest. If we fail to do this, we may not repair what is wrong in our world, possibly even take descend into deeper tragedies. Ordinary people everywhere want to coexist in peace. In this Leap Year, it would really be a leap ahead if we all really considered these issues during the Christian fast, Lent, which has already begun, and during Ramadan, which is coming in a week’s time. With God Allah’s guidance and power, we will find the right way ahead.

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