

Russia-Ukraine War, AndThe Growing Divide BetweenGlobal North And South.

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Abstract

Since the start of the Russian-Ukraine conflict, it has been seen that the global south is showing certain reluctance when it comes to condemning Russia for its invasion. This has surprised many because the global south has always been the strongest block to advocating for respecting the territorial integrity of other countries, and has also led the same people to believe that Global South has become a supporter of the Russian invasion. Though, this belief is far from the reality as Global South still continues to be the strongest supporter of the territorial integrity of countries. But, there are some reasons driving this reluctance of the global south, ranging from the Western world too much obsession with its own problems while being immune to the issues of the developing world, to paying no attention to the violation of territorial integrity if the culprit happens to be among the countries of the developed world. If the global north is serious to remain an influential power in the global arena it is important that global north pays proper attention to these concerns of the global south.

Keywords- Global South, Global North, USA, Russia-Ukraine War, Sanctions, Covid-19, Energy Security, UN

Introduction

Since the beginning of the Russian-Ukraine war, Russia's share of crude oil export to India has multiplied, today it is the top exporter of crude oil to India, accounting for 25 percent of all crude oil imported by India, while prior to the conflict only 2 percent of Indian oil imports came from Russia.

Morocco, Tunisia and many other developing countries have increased their import of crude oil from Russia. Saudi Arabia, a major country of developing world, is buying Russian oil to meet its own energy needs while exporting its own oil to other countries.

African countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso have allowed a Russian security group for their security, while South Africa, has recently conducted the joint navy exercise with Russia.

Moreover, much to the disappointment of the western world, practically every country of the global south has refused to impose sanctions on Russia, and takes a pro west stand in the multilateral institutions including the UN.

An Economist Intelligence Unit survey concluded that two-thirds of the world's population lives in countries that have not condemned Russian invasion.

This neutral posture of the global south on the conflict has made western world question its commitment towards territorial integrity of other countries, rule based international order and, not least, its moral consciousness.

But this approach of global south can not be interpreted as its aversion to the territorial integrity of other countries nor does it mean that the global south has gone morally corrupt. In fact, it has always been the strongest block to advocate for respecting territorial integrity and morality in international relations. Furthermore, there is no basis to believe that the global south is pro-Russia.

Hence, there must be something else which has driven the global south to take this approach.

A few possible reasons are worth taking note of.

Israel has illegally annexed east Jerusalem, and Syria's Golan heights, and keeps building illegal settlements in the occupied west bank. As if to incentivise Israel for its this violation of international laws, US provides its shield to Israel at United Nation by vetoing the resolutions, brought by the other countries to condemn Israel, and there are no talks of sanctions on it while it continues to be the top recipient of economic and military aid of the US.

Also, why did not the question of survival of the rule-based order arrive, when the US went on to invade Iraq without bothering to take the authorization from the UNSC?

Why do refugees from developing nations, are turned down, and pushed into the Mediterranean sea to die while Ukraine's refugees get a warm welcome in Europe? Why nobody values the UN Convention on refugees, when the refugees happen to be non-white?

Even at this time, there are many countries in the global south, which are also engulfed with wars, since those war-ridden countries are non-western, there is not much discussion on them, in some cases sanctions have been placed but those sanctions in terms of severity is nothing in comparison to the sanctions on Russia. Why is not the same amount of attention against those wars? Are the people dying in those wars the lesser human being?

Why did at the time of Covid-19, the western countries hoard more Covid-19 vaccines than they needed while the people in the global south kept dying due to the unavailability of vaccines and remained silent on the call of waving of the intellectual property rights from Covid-19 vaccine, drugs and diagnostic devices. It is after more than two years since the development of Covid-19 vaccine, which resulted in the deaths of millions in poor countries, the partial waiver on intellectual property right on Covid-19 vaccine was given. Why was it not seen as the attack on the values of international cooperation?

Last year, when Ukraine was invaded by Russia, western countries jointly rushed to impose sanctions on Russia, these sanctions were clearly drafted keeping in mind the interest of the west. As sanctions were imposed in phases, and seaborne import of crude oil from Russia was banned as late as 5 December 2022, because for many EU countries it was difficult to survive without it, but hardly any concern of eastern countries were taken into account. As expected they got severely hit by it, which threatened their food and energy security, but still all the limelight remained on the Western world and its problems.

Moreover, the combination of Covid-19 and the Ukraine invasion has taken the challenges of the eastern block to new heights with many countries being on the verge of default, but western countries with their huge dominance on the global financial institutions are not doing enough to restructure the debt of debt-ridden countries while taming the global inflation by increasing the interest rate of their central banks.

Ukraine is at the centre of helping diplomacy of the western world, with the US alone giving \$75 billion to Ukraine since the beginning of the war. There is no reason why it should not be, but the total abandonment of the eastern world amid multiple serious crises, has only enhanced the suspicion of eastern block for western countries.

Having been affected severely by the war the global south is pushing hard for the end of the war through negotiations or ceasefire but western countries want nothing more than the total defeat of Russia, chances of which are very dim, and this rigid stand of the west only stretch the war, causing more pain to the poor countries.

Furthermore, no country of the global south wants to see the collapse of Russia. They have seen the ignorance of the US when the world was Unipolar, Russia as an independent pole gives them the strategic advantage.

Conclusion

The ignorance of the western world from the concerns of others is making it highly unpopular, and this in no way is a good news for the west, which is already threatened by the rising popularity of the China, and India in the global south. If the western world is serious to remain an influential power in the global arena, it is important that it abandons its long-held western centric view of the world, and accept that there is also a world beyond the periphery of Europe and Northern America.

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