

CONSTRUING THE NUCLEAR THREAT: The Relevance of Deterrence Theory in the Russia-Ukraine Conflict

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Abstract

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine was heating up. Russian military attacks succeeded in taking control of Zaporizhzhia, the major Ukraine Nuclear Power Plant. This mastery drew world criticism, especially from the West with its NATO, and was responded to by Russia by threatening to use nuclear weapons if another country intervened in the conflict. Threat imposed by Russia is relevant to be assessed by employing the Deterrence Theory. The aim of this study is to analyze and describe the relevance of the Deterrence Theory amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict. More specifically, this study is to conceive the possibility of the outbreak of nuclear war amidst the Russian threat. Qualitative methods are used in this research. The interpretation of the data becomes the basis for the analysis that comes from a series of interviews and based on literature studies. Collection of previous reference journals, books, and news from internet sources, all of which are used as secondary data. Conclusion of this study, bearing in mind mass destruction possibly caused by nuclear war, the outbreak of nuclear war between Russia and the NATO alliance is unlikely. The threats and bluffs paid off, at least for a time.

Keywords: Deterrence Theory, Nuclear, Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Introduction

The world's proliferation of nuclear weapons has a long history rooted in World War II. The initial development of nuclear weapons was indicated for the first time by Nazi Germany, which indicated

that it was developing an atomic bomb to achieve world domination and defeat its enemies in World War II. Based on the fears of the allied bloc over the possibility of the successful development of the atomic bomb by Nazi Germany, the United States, which at that time was led by President F. D. Roosevelt, then secretly formed a partnership with Britain to build an atomic bomb organized in a project called the "Manhattan Project" (Charnysh, 2006).

The success of the United States in developing its first atomic bomb occurred when Nazi Germany had been declared defeated in WWII in May 1945. With the defeat of Germany in WWII, the United States' concern over the threat of the German atomic bomb should have ended. However, the United States decided to "test" its atomic bomb against Japan in August 1945. In August 1945, "Little Boy" which is a uranium bomb and "Fat Man" which is a plutonium bomb was launched by the United States in the city of Hiroshima in Nagasaki city (Charnysh, V, 2006).

Within 72 years of the development of the world's nuclear arsenal, the possession of nuclear warheads in the world has reached a very large number. It was very worrying bearing in mind the devastating capabilities of the atomic bomb that was first developed by the United States detonated in Japan has received global testimony as something terrible and sad. Over time, the nuclear weapons-producing countries have technically succeeded in developing the capabilities of their nuclear warheads, both in terms of the long-range of the warhead's launch range as well as the strength and radius of the nuclear explosion (Ismunandar, 2021).

Even though nuclear weapons have a harmful humanitarian impact, many countries in the world have instead chosen to develop nuclear weapons. Most of reasons for countries to develop nuclear weapons is national security. However, many countries in the world are carrying out nuclear research and development to bring benefits to humanity. One of them is for development of nuclear power plants. Nuclear reactors are able to provide more than enough nuclear energy with obvious advantages for the environment. Nuclear power causes less pollution as it does not contribute to global warming and acid rain) compared to conventional power generation. Therefore, nuclear power installations are worth choosing and can be proven safe and quite economical. In addition, nuclear energy requires relatively low operating costs and is stable, so it is not a financial disaster (Gatot, 2006).

However, it should be kept in mind that even though there is a small chance for an accident to occur, a nuclear accident disaster is still counted as a catastrophe with a large impact. This ever happened in the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, namely the melting of the core of a nuclear reactor which caused the escape of radioactivity. The radiation accident at the Chernobyl reactor leak, which caused

thyroid cancer in children, has sparked protests in the wider community, with criticism centered on the failure of the reactor to meet western standards in safety. The Chernobyl accident was the only reactor where the graphite core melted completely in a nuclear power station. The accident left 31 people dead and 300 people hospitalized, releasing radioactive elements throughout the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Scandinavia and Western Europe (Gatot, 2006).

While recently, there has been an armed conflict that occurred involved Russia and Ukraine, and World responded with the phrase “Russia invaded Ukraine”. In the course of time, the invasion was carried out, until the movement of Russian troops succeeded in controlling the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. This is the first nuclear power plant controlled by Russia after previously succeeding in taking over the Chernobyl nuclear reactor. The position of Zaporizhzhia as the largest nuclear power plant in Europe has attracted Russia's attention. Russia decided to cut off Ukraine's power supply by attacking its nuclear power plants. President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russia was trying to carry out nuclear terror and repeat the Chernobyl disaster. Zelensky said, no country other than Russia has ever shot at a nuclear power plant unit. This terrorist country is using nuclear terror (cnnindonesia.com).

The occupation of Zaporizhzhia was a serious blow to Ukraine and a serious threat to the world, which is still resonating with the Chernobyl disaster. NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization) responded to this incident and urged the UN Atomic Inspector to inspect the Zaporizhzhia. The Russian attack on the plant can be interpreted as a serious threat to security and safety of these facilities and increases the risk of a nuclear accident. President Volodymyr Zelensky assesses that Russia's actions endanger citizens in Europe because they have the potential to blow up a nuclear reactor in Zaporizhzhia. Meanwhile, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Dmytro Kuleba, said the impact of the Zaporizhzhia explosion could be up to ten times bigger than Chernobyl (cnnindonesia.com).

Russia is not standing still. Russia has even threatened NATO and the West if they intervene in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Russian President, Vladimir Putin, has mentioned nuclear weapons several times since invading Ukraine starting February 24, 2022. This is a strong signal for western countries not to directly intervene in the battle with Ukraine. Putin's statement added to tensions with western countries which are trying to increase sanctions for the invasion of Ukraine (cnnindonesia.com). Previously, former high-ranking KGB (Soviet Union Intelligence Service) Oleg Kalugin, revealed

that Russian President Vladimir Putin has a character that tends to be dangerous, Putin could have used nuclear weapons in Ukraine recklessly. He also said, the threat of a nuclear attack could not be underestimated by western countries because Putin is an unpredictable figure. (cnnindonesia.com).

As we all know, Russia is indeed one of the countries that has nuclear facilities and even develops nuclear as a weapon. Of course, the threat of Russian President Vladimir Putin has become an international concern, not only for the West which has openly received this threat but also for the world which has horribly experienced the nuclear catastrophe. However, from an academic point of view, Putin's threat is considered as representative of the Deterrence Theory. Therefore, The aim of this study is to describe and further analyze ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine by employing the Deterrence Theory and to see its relevance to the conflict.

Researchers have collected several articles and previous studies that discuss the Deterrence Theory, nuclear development, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict (Hidriyah, S., 2022; Susetio, W., et al, 2022; Bramastya, R., & Puspitarini, R. C., 2022; Daenuri, A., 2022; Fajria, R., 2018; Meilianawati, S. , 2017; Buntara, S. A., 2016; Basrur, R. M., 2014; Sundari, R., 2013; Gatot, S., 2006; Charnysh, V., 2006). The phenomenon of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is getting hotter day by day. Military attacks have been launched by Russia causing cities in Ukraine to be destroyed and the lives of many of its people lost. This series of events can become a small spark to cause a bigger war because the threats to use nuclear weapons had been issued. The world community once again has to prepare everything in order to maintain human existence.

This research contains several sections. Part 2 contains a Literature Review which contains theory in research. Then Section 3, explains the method used in the study. Furthermore, Section 4, contains further analysis and discussion of the research. Finally, Section 5 concludes the overview of the research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Robert J. Art (2009) put his thoughts on the function of armed forces into an article entitled The Use of Force in a book entitled International Politics by Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis which mentions one of the uses of a country's nuclear possession as a deterrent to attacks. from another country. The deterrence mentioned by Art is known as the Theory of Deterrence. According to Robert J. Art, in an effort to deter attacks, a country must have a strategy to prevent war by discouraging the opponent, namely showing the threat or strength that we have with the aim of causing

enormous losses exceeding the expected gains if the opposition country insists. attack (Art, 2009).

Art (2009) says : "...The use of deterrence is a threat of reprisal. The goal is to prevent unwanted things from happening. The process of deterrence can be carried out by deploying military force in such a way as to prevent the enemy from doing something he does not want and that the enemy may be tempted to do and by threatening the enemy with unacceptable punishments if he does."

According to Fajria (2018) the aim of deterrence is prevent a war from occurring which results in fatal destruction. Thus, counterattacking the first attack is not the main goal of a country that is deterring other countries with the power of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Fajria explained that nuclear is a type of weapon of mass destruction that can be used as a tool for efficient deterrence. However, the existence of an arms race in order to deter an attack can create a "security dilemma" for each party involved.

Furthermore, Fajria (2018) describes the theory of deterrence with the requirements that must be possessed by a country with nuclear power to be able to apply deterrence. These conditions include: (1) deterrence theory views the rational state as a condition that must be applied by a state in carrying out deterrence. This is to avoid any abuse of authority related to the command system for launching nuclear weapons; (2) each country must have a second strike capability in the form of air, land and sea forces, all of which have the capability to launch nuclear weapons; (3) the history of each country must show the absence of direct involvement in armed conflict as a factor that explains the small number of conflict resolutions (Fajria, 2018).

Meilianawati (2017) defines deterrence is an effort to achieve international stability and world peace by carrying out defense efforts without carrying out military action or war. This concept was widely applied during the Cold War and became a way that could be taken in a country's efforts to avoid war while providing deterrence against opposing parties. The means used to carry out deterrence policies can be in the form of the use of WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction), conventional weapons, increasing general military capabilities, forming alliances, economic sanctions or embargoes, and threats of retaliation.

Furthermore, Meilianawati (2017) explains the concept of deterrence has been implicated through the cooperation of the United States and South Korea. South Korea took strategic steps to increase its potential and military power by entering into an alliance with the United States. USA-South Korea's security cooperation agreement,

namely the Mutual Defense Treaty Agreement in 1953, is a symbol of defense and security as the basis of the Extended Deterrence policy aimed at the North Korean nuclear issue. The Extended Deterrence policy aims to prevent a large-scale military war between the two countries on the Korean peninsula (Meilianawati, 2017).

Furthermore, Buntara (2016) said that the development of nuclear weapons by countries actually prevents the use of nuclear weapons. This realist assumption is supported by the concept of deterrence. Deterrence means preventing the enemy from attacking by threatening retaliation. By using the concept of deterrence, countries that both have nuclear weapons will not attack each other. This is because realism believes that the state is a rational actor who knows that if a country with nuclear weapons attacks a country that also has nuclear weapons, then the attacked country can strike back, causing equally severe losses for both parties.

This thought is called the mutually assured destruction (MAD) doctrine which explains that no country will win a nuclear war because the countries involved in a nuclear war will experience the same destruction as the countries involved in the war. The MAD doctrine explains why the Soviet Union and the United States were able to maintain "peaceful" conditions by not using their nuclear weapons during the Cold War (Buntara, 2016).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is an exploratory qualitative study that examines the theory of deterrence in the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict with secondary data collected. The research method used in this study is document-based qualitative research or in other terms, literature-based qualitative research (Bakry, 2016). This secondary data includes previous reference journals that have been collected by researchers, literature that has references related to research and news documents from trusted internet sources. The cnnindonesia.com website was used to collect the news documents.

The qualitative research used is a deductive qualitative research that looks at the relationship between the concept and research data. To explain a certain phenomenon, deductive research is structured based on a specific analytical framework. This study tries to combine the analysis of primary data and secondary data (Bakry, 2016). This study uses a normative juridical research method by examining data sources from the legal literature and literature review. This research uses literature study. The literature review procedures are organize, synthesize, identify, and formulate.

The analysis of this research wants to see the relationship of relevant keywords, namely Deterrence Theory, Nuclear, and Russia-Ukraine

conflict. The analysis of this research wants to describe a series of events that can be interpreted as representative of Deterrence Theory. The purpose of this research, the researcher wants to further analyze Deterrence Theory and how relevant it is to the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, the researchers want s to try to describe the course of the conflict that occurred between Russia and Ukraine and its relevance of Deterrence Theory to that conflict.

Russia-Ukraine Conflict

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine is being discussed all over the world. The causes of the Russia-Ukraine conflict have existed for a long time. The armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine had occurred since early 2014 when Russia invaded and annexed Crimea Peninsula, and followed by separatist rebellion supported by Russia in Donetsk and Luhansk. Recently there has been another conflict between the two countries which started in February 2022 and has not yet shown signs of ending. Both of them are still involved in armed contact in almost all regions of Ukraine since the war began in February.

International relations were shocked by the Russian invasion to Ukraine in February. Ukraine, which is located in Eastern Europe, is one of the countries whose position is very strategic for both Russia and the European Union. Its location on the border between the European Union and Russia is a geopolitical attribute that is hard to ignore. As a result, Ukraine strategically contributes to geopolitical consequences in the region. It is due to this geopolitics that makes Ukraine is important for Russia's national interests. During the era of President Viktor Yanukovich Ukraine was still in harmony with Russia's national interests so Ukraine became an important partner for Russia. At least Ukraine is an important channel of energy from Russia to the European Union. The importance of this energy pathway makes the European Union is highly dependent on Russian energy. The gas pipeline crossing Ukraine creates inflicts an energy security dilemma for Russia (Bramastya & Puspitarini, 2022).

In the course of history, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia and Ukraine stood alone and became independent countries. The two countries mutually recognized the sovereignty of their respective countries. On February 14, 1992, Russia and Ukraine established diplomatic relations by signing a protocol establishing diplomatic relations between the two. Russia and Ukraine sent their country's ambassadors as a symbol of diplomatic relations. However, in 2004,

there were a series of protests and political events that took place in Ukraine from late November 2004 to January 2005. These massive demonstrations in Ukraine occurred because of the corruption that was entwined during the years of President Leonid Kuchma's administration. This caused Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma to resign and was replaced by president Viktor Yushchenko who won the presidential election in 2005. Since then political relations between Russia and Ukraine have often experienced ups and downs. This is because Viktor Yushchenko is directing his relations with the west and reducing Russia's role in its partnership relations. Relations between Russia and Ukraine began to strain. This is related to the policies taken by Viktor Yushchenko. One of them is Ukraine's desire to become a member of the European Union (Daenuri, 2022).

Relations between Russia and Ukraine began to improve again since the Ukrainian presidential election in February 2010, in which a pro-Russia, Viktor Yanukovich was elected as the owner of the most votes. Vladimir Putin, President of Russia immediately favored Ukraine and was friendly with Yanukovich. However, it turned out that the alliance between Ukraine and Russia sparked the disappointment of the Ukrainian people, who finally held another massive demonstration to overthrow President Viktor Yanukovich. The Russian side continued to vehemently oppose Yanukovich's ouster until March 1, 2014. Russia carried out maneuvers by demanding and winning the approval of its country's parliament to invade Ukraine. After the fall of the Yanukovich regime, Ukraine held general elections to replace the old president and a new Ukrainian president, Petro Poroshenko, was elected to avoid a power vacuum. The new President Petro Poroshenko is more inclined to increase Ukraine's cooperation with the European Union than with Russia. The trend toward the European Union was continued by the current President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who is also close to and close to the European Union. This made Russia furious and carried out an armed attack on February 24, 2022 (Daenuri, 2022).

Tensions in relations between Russia and Ukraine have actually occurred since 2014. At that time, the people of Ukraine who chose to be more independent overthrew the pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich. The pro-EU demonstration occurred as a result of rejection of Viktor's policy of preferring trade relations with Russia. Viktor's overthrow caused conflict in the Ukrainian government which divided it into two factions, pro-European Union and pro-Russia. Pro-Russia comes from the people and politicians of Crimea. Unfortunately, Russia's interest in resolving Ukraine's internal conflict has become an attempt to use Russia to gain territory from Crimea. The strategic location of Crimea seems to have been used by Russia to strengthen its influence in the Eastern and Central European Regions. In the end, the Crimean parliament conducted a referendum

when the Crimean crisis ended on March 16, 2014, by joining Russia and breaking away from Ukraine (Hidriyah, 2022).

After the Crimea crisis, the ups and downs of relations between Russia and Ukraine continued until February 2022. The crisis started when NATO was trying to expand its membership to Eastern Europe by attracting Ukraine as a target. Russia considers this to be a threat as well as a violation, and as a result, President Putin has not let Ukraine get away with it. This is natural for a Russian president who does not give up his "brother in arms" to leave. Therefore, the Russian spokesperson denied accusations from the West that his country was planning to invade Ukraine and considered these accusations to be just provocation attempts to escalate tensions (Hidriyah, 2022).

After the World War II era, the biggest attack by one country against another in Europe was the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin revealed that the reason for going to war with Ukraine was because of a request for help from the leaders of the separatist groups in eastern Ukraine. That's what triggered him to decide to hold a special military operation. Russia demilitarized Ukraine and prosecuted those who committed many bloody crimes against peaceful people, including Russian citizens. Its aim is to protect people who were subjected to harassment and genocide by the Kiev regime. (Susetio, W., et al, 2022).

Reasons that became the cause of Russia's war against Ukraine are (Susetio, W., et al, 2022):

1. Historical reasons

Russia regards Ukraine as "our people", one nation, one race and one language sharing the same traditions. Initially, Kiev was once the capital of Russia in the 10-11th centuries AD. Apart from that, past glory is one of the theories that should be highlighted. This was reinforced by the rhetoric of the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, a few days before the attack. Putin said that Ukraine is an old part of Russia. Putin also said that Russia had been "stolen" when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Putin also accused Ukraine of being a "colony" of the United States. Russia has also actually been trying to intervene politically in Ukraine for a long time, but since Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, politics in Ukraine has tended to oppose Russia.

2. Political reasons

Another reason Russia is concerned about is NATO. Russia has long resisted Ukraine from joining NATO. Russia was worried if NATO brought weapons to the Ukrainian border, so that big Russian cities

could become easy targets. However, NATO still opens the door if Ukraine wants to join. On the other hand, Ukraine also wants to join NATO.

Since Victor Yanukovich regime was replaced by the Ukrainian National Legislature in 2014, his successor Petro Poroshenko was pro-western and was continued by Volodymyr Zelensky who wants to join the EU and NATO. A real threat became evident in 2008 when George W Bush stated that Ukraine would join NATO. Since then, Putin has had the political ambition to strengthen Russia's position in the regional geopolitical arena, as well as to form a new road map for Great Russia in the Baltic region.

3. Economic reasons

Ukraine is a strategic country in terms of Russia's economic traffic with western Europe, including Russia's oil and gas pipelines to western Europe (50% of West Europe's gas needs are supplied from Russia). Ukraine has abundant natural, mining, and agricultural resources, such as oil and gas, nickel, wheat, and sunflowers, the world's largest supplier of wheat and sunflowers. As well as Ukraine has strategic ports on the Black Sea.

4. Security reasons

Geographically, Ukraine is directly adjacent to the western territory of Russia. Since Ukraine's independence in 1991, Ukraine has tended to join Europe Union, and NATO as well. In addition, being Russia's gateway in the western region Ukraine is a buffer state against Western threats.

5. Separatism

Previously, Russia also supported separatists in Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. And recently, Putin recognized the sovereignty of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Vladimir Putin also sent troops to the two areas, even though the international community still recognizes the two areas as integral part of Ukraine, so that Putin's move is automatically equated with bringing troops to Ukraine.

The Relevance of Deterrence Theory in the Russia-Ukraine Conflict

The Russia-Ukraine conflict exposes the world to a new threat. While gun smoke still floating in the air across Ukraine, a new concern emerged: nuclear. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on March 1, 2022, threatened the West. He said that if the West (US, France and Britain) intervened in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Russia would not hesitate to use nuclear weapons. Suddenly the world trembled. It reminded the world of the horror of Hiroshima-Nagasaki in World War II. In fact, days before Russia occupied Chernobyl, a former nuclear installation complex that has ever exploded in 1986. That's not enough for Russia to pose threat to the world. A few days later,

Russian troops invaded and seized the nuclear installation in Zaporizhzhia, Europe's largest nuclear power plant. Based on events that occurred, researchers want to construe and analyze the nuclear factor in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

The international community's collective memory of the use of nuclear power in war has always connoted a terrible horror: mass destruction. But experts on international relations and war strategists almost agree: a tool of war (nuclear is included) can actually be a tool to avoid war (a bigger war, or nuclear war itself). Thomas Schelling, a nuclear strategist from Harvard University, USA, says in his classic theory of deterrence (*Arms and Influence*, 1966): diplomatic use of force and coercion (in the form of statements) is a way to 'change the behavior of the enemy'. That is, the enemy under threat will think twice about attacking back if they know the risks that will be faced.

Apparently, this theory was applied by Putin in his conflict with Ukraine. When the West imposed economic sanctions on Russia, Putin retaliated and threatened. Days after ordering his troops to invade Ukraine, Putin bluffed the West. He ordered his nuclear experts to put his nuclear weapons on high alert. Putin was not playing words only: he ordered his nuclear army to be part of a special combat unit in the Russia-Ukraine war.

Applying the deterrence theory, Putin's threats and bluffs are seemingly paying off. At least for a certain period. One may recall that the world was very worried at early time of conflict. Anticipating a severe attack by Russia, NATO has prepared military personnel and equipment in advance to help Ukraine. Russia issued an ultimatum that if the West intervened physically and directly in Ukrainian soil, Russia would use nuclear weapons. It was believed that the Russian threat was effective as the news said that NATO seemed to be hesitant to help Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Zelensky himself has publicly expressed his disappointment with NATO's response. Zelensky felt being left out, complaining that NATO only gives false hope, faltering to deploy military equipment. Although in the end NATO, the US and the European Union were willing to help, the assistance was provided indirectly. It was later discovered that NATO's war equipment aid for Ukraine was only deployed and stationed on alert in Eastern European countries bordering Ukraine.

At this point, one may argue that NATO's hesitation to support Ukraine shows how the nuclear factor plays a role in suppressing the possibility of war. To understand the nuclear threat in the Russian-Ukrainian war, one may perceive it at least from two perspectives.

First, from the perspective of the politics of war. Although the horror caused by nuclear is extremely terrible, nuclear is considered capable of protecting the country from mass destruction like the Hiroshima-Nagasaki tragedy.

International security analysts are of the view that nuclear war will never happen again because of the existence of an international regime that limits the development of nuclear weapons, namely the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty). In the 1970s analysts estimated that by the end of the 20th century at least 20-30 more countries would possess nuclear weapons in addition to the five existing nuclear states (US, Soviet Union, UK, France, and China). However, in fact, until the 2000s, only four countries had nuclear weapons: Pakistan, India, North Korea and Israel (Kaplan, 2005).

It is argued that the NPT is quite effective in smothering nuclear possession, which in turn also reduces the risk of nuclear war. Indeed, after 1945, the world has never again experienced a nuclear war. However, that doesn't necessarily mean that there is no war after 1945. History records that conventional wars still occur today. Bearing in mind the deterrence theory, nuclear as an instrument of deterrence is eventually only able to avoid the recurrence of such nuclear weapons as in Hiroshima-Nagasaki. However, it is unable to play its role as a deterrent factor to avoid conventional war.

Second, from the perspective of nuclear politics. When it invaded Ukraine, Russia also occupied the former Chernobyl nuclear installation complex and the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. Even though the current Chernobyl installation is no longer functioning, the international community is still worried. The Chernobyl reactor still contains very dangerous uranium fuel. Nuclear waste and building materials that were contaminated with radiation at the time of first explosion can increase radiation levels if explosion occurred again. Nuclear tragedy could happen again if armed contact between Russian and Ukrainian troops breaks out in the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. That potential danger would certainly be an international concern.

It was within that context that on 2-3 March, 2022 the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) held a special meeting, to issue a resolution. There were two purposes of the meeting. First, to determine the political stance of member states towards the Russian invasion, and second, to ensure that the Russian-occupied Ukraine nuclear installations are in a safe condition. The resolution was approved with 26 countries agreed, 2 countries rejected, and 5 abstentions. The resolution deplored Russian occupation of Ukraine's nuclear installations. The IAEA also urged Russia to immediately stop all actions against the occupied nuclear installations so that the Ukrainian nuclear authorities can regain control of the operation of the nuclear power plant.

As a member of the IAEA, Ukraine certainly has the support of the IAEA in terms of nuclear security and safety oversight. If IAEA inspectors are given access to provide security and safety assistance to Ukraine's nuclear installations, a nuclear incident due to the Russian occupation is unlikely. Russia and NATO also fully understand the risk of nuclear war, namely mutual destruction.

History teaches, Europe has horribly experienced the agony of World War I and II, which at that time was still using conventional military equipment. One cannot conceive the misery the world would suffer from if nuclear war erupts caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict. However, those who are worried about the outbreak of nuclear war in the Russia-Ukrainian conflict, they may have to recall the very message of deterrence theory: the nuclear threat can avoid nuclear war itself.

CONCLUSION

The concept of Deterrence Theory is about preventing potential "aggressors" from attacking "deterrent" countries, or preventing their own countries from being attacked by potential "aggressors", as well as preventing potential "aggressors" from attacking allied countries, alliance members or countries under the influence of "deterrent". Researchers observe a series of nuclear threats issued by Russia to avert retaliation or aggression by Ukraine and its alliance. It is argued that the case of Russian nuclear threat is a relevant illustration of the application of Deterrence Theory. The threats and bluffs seem to be paying off, at least for a time. It is believed that Russia's threat is effective because NATO seems hesitant to help Ukraine. Viewed from the perspective of political war and of nuclear politics, the researchers conclude that the Russia-Ukraine conflict apparently inflicted a concern that it will develop into a nuclear war. However, the world also must remember the very message of the Deterrence Theory, that a pronouncement of nuclear threat can avoid a nuclear war itself.

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