

Increasing Urgency of Unconditional Ceasefire in Ukraine Conflict to Avoid Nuclear War

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While the many-sided destruction that has taken place and is taking place in the Ukraine conflict is a matter of deep concern, there are two related matters which should cause even higher worry and concern.

Firstly, it is deeply worrying that despite 16 months of conflict having passed, there appear to be no signs today of any breakthrough for bringing peace.

Secondly, many well-informed analysts have repeatedly voiced the warning that the more this war gets prolonged, the greater the risk of the proxy war between Russia and the USA/NATO escalating into a direct confrontation between the two biggest nuclear powers, and hence into a nuclear war and a third world war with the ultimate destructive potential of ending most of the life on earth.

Many people think that world's leaders can never be so non-rational as to allow such a stage to be reached, but then they should also consider why such warnings have been more frequently issued in the context of the Ukraine conflict by several eminent and well-informed persons.

One important factor here is that you can manage high-tension conditions between the biggest nuclear weapon powers for some time, but if high-tension conditions are prolonged for an indefinite period then the chances of these getting out of control, even if unintentionally, increase (due to misunderstandings or mischief by someone or suspicions or sudden circumstances or technical flaws in offensive and defensive weapon system management).

It is an elementary and very basic rule of safety that one should avoid doing anything or getting entangled in anything in which there are chances of excessively high destruction.

This basic rule of safety has been violated by world leadership that has thereby also violated its mandate for ensuring the most basic safety conditions in world.

Hence the greatest urgency now is of avoiding the possibility of a very big catastrophe in the near future, apart from stopping the ongoing destruction. This is best achieved by an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, to be followed by prolonged negotiations till various contentious issues can be sorted out.

Unconditional ceasefire is extremely important at this juncture because if you start bringing in conditions, then the positions taken by the two sides on some important issues are so different that a ceasefire will simply will not be achieved. At the same time, if there is no ceasefire, if fighting goes on, the destruction goes on, then each passing day of conflict increases bitterness, reduces the possibilities of peace and increases the possibility of catastrophe.

Yes, conditional ceasefire was possible in March-April 2022 when at an initial stage very credible peace efforts to negotiate peace between Russia and Ukraine were made but these were sabotaged by the USA and the UK.

Now if conditions relating to territory and NATO membership etc. are raised then the stated positions of the two sides differ so much that ceasefire will simply not be possible. Hence a beginning has to be made by ceasefire and then other aspects can be sorted out over prolonged negotiations without any actual fighting taking place.

The role of the UN is of course supposed to be very important not only for peace between Russia and Ukraine but also for avoiding a much bigger catastrophe, but unfortunately the UN has been marginalized so much in matters of such critical importance that there is not much hope from the UN for securing an unconditional ceasefire, although there can be some hope still for the role of the UN in implementing it.

A related question is whether the Ukraine regime is currently proceeding on the basis of careful protection of safety and welfare of the people of Ukraine, or is it guided by narrower considerations of the power of certain sections which are unduly hostile to the very idea of making stable peace with Russia. Do these sections derive their power to a large extent from the USA/NATO? How long will the USA push and support them on a path of permanent hostility towards Russia?

Can the USA be prevailed upon to shift to a less aggressive role that has more space for peace proposals such as unconditional ceasefire? Can some of its western allies convince the USA to move towards such a role, or will they merely follow what the USA says? Can the peace movement within the USA and at world level make a contribution to bringing early peace starting with unconditional ceasefire? Can some neutral countries make a contribution to peace?

These are just some of the questions that people committed to peace must be asking and exploring. What is really very important and must be the first priority is to try to achieve an unconditional ceasefire and then keep working for improving goodwill and other conditions necessary for a negotiated settlement of other issues. Ceasefire and peace must be maintained even if negotiations take a long time.

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