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A Comparative Analysis of the Sudan and Ukraine Conflict Using the ABC Tool

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Abstract

Since 2022, the conflicts in Sudan and Ukraine have intensified, posing significant threats to global peace and security. These conflicts have severe humanitarian and political ramifications, with the Ukraine conflict leading to over 8 million refugees and the Sudan conflict displacing more than 4 million people. Understanding the underlying issues of these conflicts is crucial for effective management. This paper employs the ABC conflict analysis tool to compare and analyze the conflicts in Sudan and Ukraine, focusing on attitudes, behaviours, and contexts. The study uses a qualitative methodology, relying on news reports and academic literature. The paper is structured into sections that outline the ABC tool, provide an overview of the conflicts, apply the ABC tool for comparative analysis, and summarize findings with recommendations. The ABC analysis reveals that both conflicts are deeply rooted in historical grievances, ethnic divisions, and geopolitical interests. In Sudan, the civil war is driven by political and ethnic tensions exacerbated by foreign involvement. In Ukraine, the conflict centers on national identity and sovereignty against Russian aggression, influenced by historical and geopolitical dynamics. Both conflicts involve extensive use of military technologies and have severe humanitarian impacts, including widespread human rights abuses. The study concludes that effective conflict management requires addressing these underlying attitudes, behaviours, and contexts.

Keywords: *ABC conflict analysis tool, Sudan conflict, Ukraine conflict, Ethnic divisions, geopolitical interests.*

INTRODUCTION

Since 2022, Sudan and Ukraine have experienced heightened levels of mass-scale violence, which have portended grave consequences for global peace and security. Much concern with these conflicts derives from their humanitarian and political implications. The Ukraine conflict, described as second only to World War II in scale in Europe, has triggered refugee outflows of more than 8 million people (Neuman & Hurt, 2023). Similarly, the conflict in Sudan has made the country, which is Africa's third largest by landmass, home to the highest number of internally displaced persons globally because of the displacement of more than 4 million people (Harding, 2023; UNOCHA, 2023).

The 2014 Euromaidan protests in Ukraine marked a pivotal moment in the lead-up to the country's conflict. The decision by then-President Viktor Yanukovich to forego a historic association deal with the European Union in favour of tighter ties with Russia served as the

impetus for these protests. Yanukovich was overthrown and a pro-Western government was installed as a result of the Euromaidan protests, which were fueled by pro-European enthusiasm. Russia saw this change as a direct challenge to its regional dominance. In March 2014, Russia retaliated by annexing Crimea, a move that was strongly denounced by the international community and regarded as a breach of international law. The War in Donbas began after pro-Russian rebels in the eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk declared their independence after Crimea was annexed (Ray, 2025). Even though Moscow denied direct military involvement, Russia secretly supported the separatist forces for the course of the following eight years. During that time, thousands of people were killed and displaced. Despite ceasefire agreements such as the Minsk Protocols, which attempted to put a stop to the fighting but were unable to establish a sustainable peace, this conflict generated a frozen war in the eastern half of Ukraine, with sporadic flare-ups. The issue remained unresolved, and Russian-backed separatist in the Donbas region persisted in endangering Ukraine's territorial integrity.

When Russia began a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the conflict reached a new and devastating level. Months of military buildup along Ukraine's borders preceded the invasion, and Russian officials, especially President Vladimir Putin, spoke increasingly aggressively about NATO's expansion and Ukraine's possible membership as unacceptable. Russia's objectives seemed to be to topple the Ukrainian government, destroy Ukraine's armed forces, and make sure Ukraine would never ally itself with the West or join NATO. Missile assaults and an attack from various directions, including the Crimean Peninsula to the south, Russia to the east, and Belarus to the north, marked the start of the invasion. Despite initial expectations that Russian forces would quickly seize the capital, Kyiv, and overthrow the Ukrainian government, Ukrainian resistance proved to be far more resilient than initially believed. The Ukrainian military fought a brave war, particularly in Kyiv and other key cities, with the aid of volunteer fighters and substantial international military support.

On the other hand, concerning Sudan, General Abdel Fattah el-Burhan and General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the leaders of the Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, had played important roles in the overthrow of Bashir and had collaborated in the transitional government. Still, their relationship soured as they fought for control of Sudan's political and military future. The conflict between the Sudanese

Armed Forces (SAF), led by al-Burhan, and the RSF, led by Dagalo, quickly escalated into widespread violence, especially in the capital, Khartoum, and other major cities. General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the leaders of the Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, had played important roles in the overthrow of Bashir and had collaborated in the transitional government. Still, their relationship soured as they fought for control of Sudan's political and military future. The conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by al-Burhan, and the RSF, led by Dagalo, quickly escalated into widespread violence, especially in the capital, Khartoum, and other major cities.

Extant literature is replete with studies on Sudan and Ukraine conflict. Some have dissected the Sudan conflict, looking at the history of colonialism, ethnic marginalization, militarization, and inadequate governance institutions (Johnson, 2011; De Waal, 2015). Others by examining long-standing tensions between competing military elites (El-Tom, 2021). For Ukraine, scholars like Charap and Colton (2018) and Snyder (2022) draw attention to the conflict's origins in national identity, sovereignty, and regional autonomy. The literature is lacking a comparative analysis of both conflicts, despite the intersection of the actors' attitudes, behaviors, and conflict contexts not receiving sufficient attention. It is to this task that this study lends itself.

The consequences and political implications of both conflicts extend beyond the regions where the countries are located, making it imperative to manage them effectively. To do so, it is crucial first to understand the underlying issues. This paper utilizes the ABC conflict analysis tool to examine the conflicts in Sudan and Ukraine. The paper's analysis concerns a research question: "How do the attitudes, behaviors, and contexts of the Sudan and Ukraine conflicts compare, and what insights can be drawn from this comparison using the ABC Analysis Tool?"

Structurally, the paper is organized into three parts. In the first section, the paper presents a conceptual exploration of related terms, specifically the ABC Analysis Tool, followed by a theoretical framework and a literature review. In the next section, the paper provides a brief overview of both conflicts to articulate their nature and identify key actors. In the third section, the paper applies the ABC Tool to discuss both conflicts. Given the comparative nature of the study, this analysis also examines the similarities and differences between the two case studies. The fourth section presents a discussion and summary of the

study's findings. In the fifth section, the paper concludes and summarises its discussion, and proffers recommendations.

In examining these case studies, the paper employs a qualitative methodology, chosen due to the textual and non-numerical nature of the data. Given the ongoing nature of these conflicts, the paper extensively utilizes news reports from international media, complemented by academic texts. The scholarly literature is sourced using a literature search strategy that combines keywords related to the topic with Boolean operators to extract relevant literature from academic databases, such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, and Taylor & Francis. In relation to exclusion and inclusion criteria, this paper adopts for analysis data that dwells on the attitudes, behaviour, and context of both conflicts that form the crux of the subject matter here. This implies that other aspects and dimensions of the conflict will not receive extensive attention, as they fall beyond the scope of the paper.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

ABC Analysis Tool

The Attitude, Behaviour, and Context (ABC) Triangle is a conflict analysis tool developed by Johan Galtung. The triangle, articulated in extensive detail in Johan Galtung's 2009 text, "*Theories of Conflict: Definitions, Dimensions, Negations, Formations,*" presents a meta-analysis of conflict situations to map the aspects comprehensively. It relates to Galtung's definition of conflict as "a dynamic process in which structures, attitudes, and behaviours continuously change and affect each other." (Ercoskun, 2021, p. 5). This conflict analysis tool seeks to establish how "attitudes influences behaviours in conflict contexts." (Obi, 2019, p. 71).

The triangle illustrates that psycho-social factors underpin conflicts, and that conflict analysis must not be conducted independently of the psychological and behavioral tendencies of conflict actors, given that these correspond to the conflict. As Cui explains,

Actors with unrealized goals may feel frustrated, and if these goals appear to involve basic needs and core interests, that frustration may turn inward, leading to attitudes of hatred. In violent conflicts, the parties are particularly liable to develop demeaning stereotypes of each other. Their attitudes are often influenced by emotions such as fear, anger, bitterness, and hatred, and all of these can lead to aggression.

Further, the frustration may turn outward and result in behaviour involving verbal or physical violence. (Cui, 2014, p. 288).

Applying the ABC conflict analysis tool to the Sudan and Ukraine conflicts is considered pertinent because it provides a comprehensive overview of the various actors involved in these conflicts, enabling the mapping of their diverse perspectives and positions, as well as the underlying motivators of their actions. (Oliva & Charbonnier, 2016).

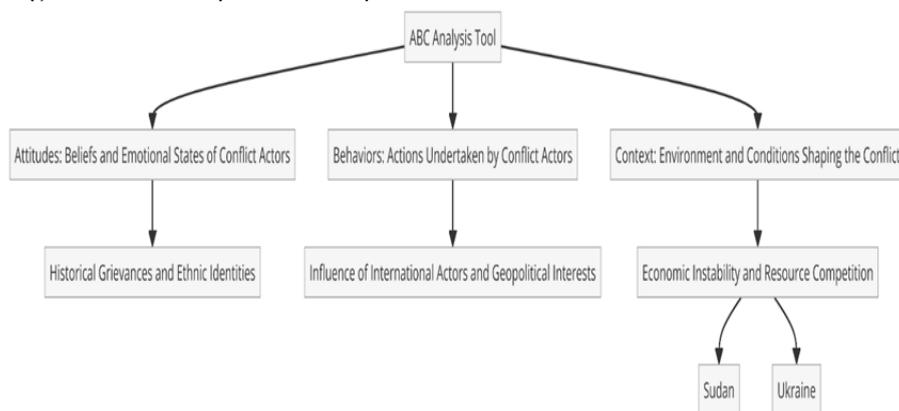
Consequently, the conflicts are dissected into the following components:

- (i). Attitudes: The beliefs and emotional states of the major conflict actors.
- (ii). Behaviours: The broad spectrum of actions undertaken by conflict actors.
- (iii). Context: The environment and conditions that shape the conflict in Sudan and Ukraine.

In using the ABC analysis tool, the paper assumes that:

- (i). Attitudes shaped by historical grievances and ethnic identities significantly influence conflict actors' behaviours and escalation patterns.
- (ii). International actors and geopolitical interests heavily influence the behaviours of the conflict actors.
- (iii). The context of economic instability and resource competition plays a crucial role in sustaining the conflicts.

Figure 1: This Paper's Conceptual Framework



In the next section, the paper elaborates on these assumptions by providing an overview of the historical background of the Sudan and Ukraine conflicts to identify the major actors.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Constructivism is the theoretical framework used in this investigation. Constructivism emphasizes how concepts, identities, and standards influence global affairs. It highlights how social constructions and national identities affect how states and individuals behave. National identity is a significant factor in the conflicts in both Sudan and Ukraine, and this framework helps explain why these conflicts have proven so intractable.

Constructivist philosophy emphasizes the significance of regional, ethnic, and religious identities in the conflict in Sudan. Divisions between Arab Muslims in the north and non-Arab, non-Muslim tribes in the south and Darfur have been at the heart of the conflict, despite the country's diverse population. President Jaafar Nimeiri and Omar al-Bashir's implementation of Sharia law in the 1980s deepened these divisions, causing animosity and the start of a civil war. Conflict is still largely caused by the Sudanese state's inability to forge a cohesive national identity that unites all of its disparate communities.

Identity plays a major role in the crisis in Ukraine as well, especially when it comes to the division between the pro-Russian east and the pro-European West. Following the 2014 Euromaidan demonstrations, many Ukrainians have become increasingly identified with Europe and the West. Constructivist theory helps explain the development of Ukrainian nationalism. Nonetheless, a sizable section of the Ukrainian populace, especially in the east, continues to identify as Russian. It is possible to see the annexation of Crimea and the ensuing fighting in Donbas as a struggle between opposing national identities, with Ukraine attempting to show its sovereignty and conformity to European standards while Russia aims to demonstrate its power by highlighting common cultural and historical ties.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The war in Sudan and Ukraine are now major topics of discussion. This section examines academic and institutional contributions to the investigation, comprehension, and settlement of these two conflicts by reviewing and synthesizing the body of extant material.

The history of colonialism, ethnic marginalization, militarization, and inadequate governance institutions are highlighted in the literature on the conflict in Sudan (Johnson, 2011; De Waal, 2015). Long-standing

tensions between competing military elites fighting for control in a precarious post-revolutionary state are thought to be the cause of the violence that broke out in April 2023 between the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF)(El-Tom, 2021).

On the other hand, post-Soviet geopolitics, identity problems, and regional power struggles are frequently used to analyze the conflict in Ukraine. Russia's challenge to Western influence and NATO's growth has been interpreted as reflected in the takeover of Crimea in 2014 and the full-scale invasion in 2022 (Mearsheimer, 2014; Kuzio, 2022). Scholars like Charap and Colton (2018) and Snyder (2022) draw attention to the conflict's origins in national identity, sovereignty, and regional autonomy.

Disparities in international responses to the two conflicts are a major area of scholarly interest. In addition to extensive sanctions on Russia, the European Union, the United States, and NATO allies have coordinated military, financial, and humanitarian assistance for the conflict in Ukraine (Walt, 2022). International engagement in Sudan, on the other hand, has been more reactive and dispersed, with little media coverage and sluggish diplomatic reactions (International Crisis Group, 2023).

According to academics such as Acharya (2022) and Mamdani (2023), these variations reflect a global hierarchy of conflict visibility, where racial and strategic factors influence the prioritization of diplomatic and humanitarian efforts. The body of research urges a reconsideration of international standards that downplay the gravity of African conflicts.

Serious humanitarian disasters have resulted from both conflicts. The violence in Sudan has resulted in attacks on humanitarian workers, widespread hunger, and the loss of health infrastructure, displacing more than 7 million people (Médecins Sans Frontières [MSF], 2023). The conflict in Ukraine has resulted in thousands of civilian deaths, nearly 6 million refugees, and extensive damage to vital infrastructure, including as schools and hospitals (UNHCR, 2023).

Scholarly study on Sudan has concentrated on the militarization of aid and the failure of humanitarian access, whereas work on Ukraine has highlighted EU solidarity and refugee integration strategies (Lutsevych, 2022). The disparity has influenced the funding and extent of humanitarian efforts in global attention. There have been significant obstacles to peacebuilding in both situations. Due to elite capture and the exclusion of grassroots and civil society actors, peace processes in

Sudan, including the 2020 Juba Peace Agreement, have mainly failed (El-Tom, 2021). Academics support inclusive peace frameworks that acknowledge the contribution of excluded groups and women to peacebuilding.

Ukraine viewed the Minsk agreements as having flaws, and they finally fell apart because to fresh aggression (Charap & Colton, 2018). The need for viable post-war reconstruction models that tackle concerns of identity, governance, and regional autonomy is emphasized by current literature (Kuzio, 2022).

State failure, neo-patrimonialism, and hybrid governance perspectives have been used to examine the Sudanese conflict (Young, 2012), emphasizing the part played by informal power structures and non-state armed players. The conflict in Ukraine, on the other hand, has rekindled discussions about international law, realism, and the future of world order (Mearsheimer, 2014; Walt, 2022). Given the biases in academic and media attention as well as the unequal valuing of lives and sovereignty, both conflicts add to the rising appeal for a decolonized approach to international affairs and conflict studies (Mamdani, 2023; Acharya, 2022).

Essential insights on contemporary combat, international relations, and humanitarian catastrophes can be gained from the literature on the conflicts in Sudan and Ukraine. Despite their differences in scope, prominence, and geopolitical setting, both events highlight serious flaws in the international response framework. It is necessary to adopt a balanced academic and policy-oriented approach that acknowledges the agency of local players in influencing conflict and peace, approaches African and European problems with equal importance, and encourages inclusive peacebuilding.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SUDAN CONFLICT AND UKRAINE CONFLICT

Sudan

The Sudan Conflict (referred to hereafter as the Sudan Civil War) is ongoing triggered on April 15, 2023, by armed clashes between rival factions of the Sudanese state security structure, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The civil war is an evolution of internecine power struggles between Mohamed Hamdan 'Hemedti' Dagalo and General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan to control state power and associated privileges (Centre for Preventive Action, 2024),

which were accentuated by fragile power-sharing arrangements instituted by both parties on the back of their overthrow of Omar Al-Bashir's regime after more than three decades of ruling (Lodhi, 2024)

The leaders of the Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, had been instrumental in the overthrow of Bashir and had worked together in the transitional government. However, their relationship soured as they fought for control of Sudan's military and political future. The battle between the RSF, under Dagalo, and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), under al-Burhan, swiftly turned into a bloody fight, particularly in the capital, Khartoum, and other important cities such as Darfur and Port Sudan, albeit with devastating human and social implications that have reverberated across and beyond the country.

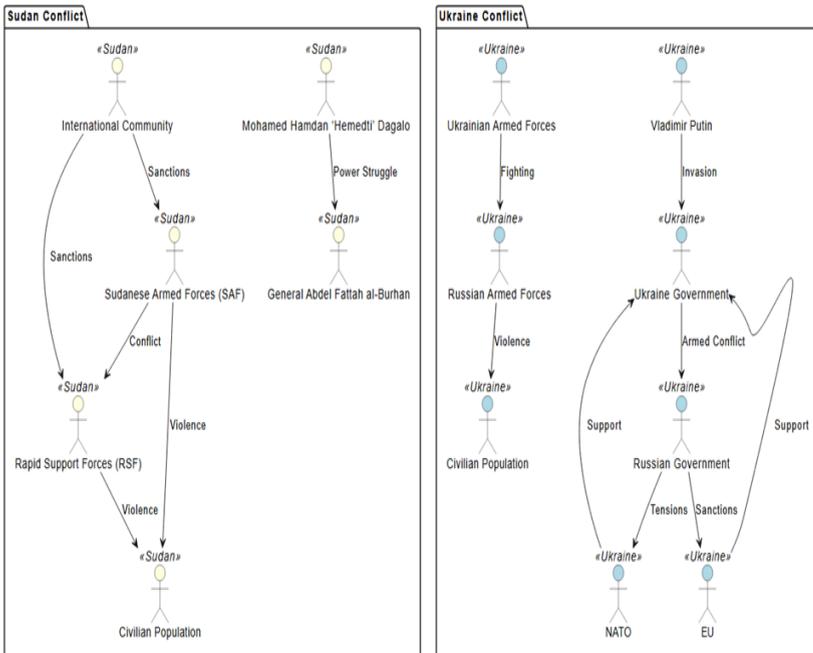
Ukraine

Unlike the Sudanese Civil War, the Ukraine conflict is an ongoing inter-state conflict between Ukraine and Russia. The conflict began on February 22, 2022, with the Russian military's invasion of Ukraine following the declaration of a 'special military operation' by the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, couched as a response to grave threats posed by Ukrainian state policies (Osborn & Nikolskaya, 2022). An important turning point in the development of the war in Ukraine was the Euromaidan protests in 2014. These protests were sparked by then-President Viktor Yanukovich's decision to forgo a historic association agreement with the European Union in favor of closer ties with Russia. The Euromaidan protests, driven by pro-European fervor, resulted in the removal of Yanukovich and the installation of a pro-Western government. Russia viewed this shift as an open challenge to its hegemony in the region. The international community vehemently condemned Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014, which was seen as a violation of international law. Pro-Russian separatists in the eastern Ukrainian districts of Donetsk and Luhansk declared their independence following the annexation of Crimea, sparking the start of the War in Donbas (Ray, 2025). Thousands of people were killed and displaced over the next eight years as Russia covertly backed the separatist forces, despite Moscow's denials of direct military involvement. This conflict resulted in a frozen war in the eastern half of Ukraine, with periodic flare-ups, despite ceasefire accords like the Minsk Protocols, which sought to halt the fighting but failed to create a lasting peace. The problem was yet unsolved, and separatists supported

by Russia continued to threaten Ukraine's territorial integrity in the Donbas region.

The conflict reached a new and terrible level in February 2022 when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Prior to the invasion, Russian authorities, particularly President Vladimir Putin, spoke increasingly forcefully about NATO's expansion and Ukraine's potential membership as unacceptable, and months of military buildup along Ukraine's borders preceded the attack. It appeared that Russia's goals were to overthrow the Ukrainian government, destroy Ukraine's military, and ensure that Ukraine would never form a Western alliance or join NATO. The invasion began with missile attacks and an attack from several directions, including Belarus to the north, Russia to the east, and the Crimean Peninsula to the south.

Sudan and Ukraine Conflicts - Key Actors and Information



ANALYSIS OF THE SUDAN AND UKRAINE CONFLICTS USING THE ABC ANALYSIS TOOL

Attitudes

Sudan

Key actors in the Sudan civil war have expressed distrustful attitudes denominated in polarising ethnic and political tensions, which stretch as far back as the colonial era and 20th-century Sudan politics. Historically, Sudan has been riven by conflicts, arguably representing "mobilizational differences in ethnicity and religion." (McCauley, 2017).

In the current conflict, political tensions have appeared to regulate the actions of conflict actors, significantly interfering with attempts to bring both sides to the negotiation table. Particularly, mediation attempts by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) met a dead end, arising from the Sudanese Armed Forces' (SAF) chief reluctance to accept the authority of the institution due to a lack of trust in the institution's neutrality (Lodhi, 2024). The divisive character is also evident in the way each actor frames the other. Whereas the SAF has branded the RSF as a renegade militia, the head of the RSF has tagged the Sudan army chief as an anti-democratic criminal (Al Jazeera, 2023). The hardline character of attitudinal dispositions taken by conflict actors presumably reflects foreign influence, which has emerged to prop up both sides. The RSF has received significant logistical support from the United Arab Emirates (Walsh et al., 2023), while the Sudan Armed Forces have been backed significantly by Iran (Hendawi, 2024).

Ukraine

National identity, historical grievances, and geopolitical interests shape key actors in the Ukrainian conflict. The Ukrainian government and the population have consistently framed the conflict as a tussle for sovereignty against Russian aggression. In his speeches just before the Russian invasion and subsequently at the United Nations General Assembly, the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelensky, has consistently projected these sentiments, asserting that Ukrainians would face their aggressors head-on (Al Jazeera, 2022; Al Jazeera, 2023). On the other hand, Russian President Vladimir Putin has consistently portrayed his actions as cumulating in the defense of Russian national identity, describing his soldiers as heroes (BBC News, 2023). Again, this projection has overlapped with geopolitical considerations, given that the Russian state has often rationalized its actions as a check on the tensions created by Western powers in the region, often framing Ukraine as "a proxy state" of Western powers (Atlantic Council, 2023).

The binary perceptions adopted by both sides reflect memories and dynamics connected to 20th-century politics, which have shaped contemporary events that culminated in the current all-out war between Russia and Ukraine. For instance, Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, which built on historical resentment of the dissolution of the Soviet Union within Russia's political class (Centre for Preventive Action, 2023), triggered a series of immensely devastating sanctions by the United States and its European allies (Aslund & Snegovaya, 2021), creating complex Russo-Western geopolitical relations defined by tensions that were brought to a critical point by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 (Masters, 2023).

Behaviours

Sudan

Widespread clashes between RSF and SAF have dominated Sudan's civil war. Both sides have made keen use of technological tools, such as unmanned aerial vehicles, in defensive and offensive capacities. For the Sudanese Armed Forces, the use of Iranian drones has given it a tactical advantage, enabling it to gain military successes in Omdurman, especially (Abdelaziz et al., 2024). Several targeted attacks on public infrastructure have damaged government buildings and national cultural assets, including the Omdurman Old Market and the Mohammed Omer Bashir Centre for Sudanese Studies (Jedicke, 2023).

Beyond this, there have been widespread human rights abuses orchestrated by targeted acts of violence against certain demographic clusters. A prominent culprit has been the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which has been indicted by Human Rights Watch as culpable for various campaigns of extermination directed at non-Arab communities in Darfur, including rape, torture, and looting (Human Rights Watch, 2024), with documented instances of gender-based sexual violence that have victimized both Sudanese and non-Sudanese females committed by both parties to the conflict, including the Sudanese Armed Forces, and resulting in the commercialization of 'survival sex' (Pietromarchi, 2024).

Ukraine

Russian and Ukrainian militaries have engaged in large-scale skirmishes, and the war state continues to alternate between periods of stalemates and tactical advantages for one side. Both sides have routinely pursued set military objectives by various means. The Russian military has been

credited with extensive attacks against civilian infrastructure and has orchestrated severe attacks against critical Ukrainian national infrastructures such as power plants (Gall & Kramer, 2022), alongside rights abuses, including sexual violence (Macias, 2022). On its part, Ukraine has also attacked Russian oil refineries deep inside Russia using drones (Liebreich et al., 2024).

Context

Sudan

The Sudan Civil War plays out in a society fractured by social divisions. Such divisions have been racially and economically rooted (Ali & Mann, 2023). Such divisions, which have stimulated violent conflicts, have been accentuated by horizontal disparities in economic conditions and a history of authoritarian rule and instability.

The absence of well-developed liberalized governance regimes, occasioned by more than three decades of rule by Omar Al Bashir, created significant deficits in state capacity, particularly concerning effective conflict and economic management. Al-Bashir's personalistic regime weakened important political actors. It tied their fates to his own, contributing to racial division in Sudan (Hassan & Kodouda, 2019) through a deliberate Arabization policy that sharpened non-Arab and some self-consciously 'African' identities in Sudan, contributing to the growth of an ideology of Arab cultural and racial supremacy (Sharkey, 2007). This policy created parallel security structures such as the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a major actor in the current conflict. Indeed, this contextual dynamic explains the numerous targeted campaigns of massive violence against ethnic communities perpetuated by the RSF in the Darfur region of Sudan. Furthermore, in the post-Bashir era, the relatively frail conditions have intersected and overlapped with various social contradictions and economic challenges whose resolution was beyond the capacity of the successive military-civilian governments (Denisova, 2022).

Ukraine

The war in Ukraine extends from the dynamics set by the post-Soviet, especially the renegotiation of the political order. The dissolution of the Soviet Union triggered several events, which culminated in Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Significant trigger points in the conflict can be traced to Russia's moves to reassert its dominance in the Eastern

European region, which has been cited as a major source of conflict (Padan, 2023). The collapse of the region had particularly exacerbated ethnolinguistic divisions within Ukraine, which date back to the 10th century. The Eastern region retained filial ties with Russia, in contrast to the Western part, which developed a wary view of Russia and pivoted towards closer ties with Western powers (Hayda et al., 2022).

The conflict's fractious character materializes in readings of it as "a culture war," wherein The Russia-Ukraine War is a culture war, with the Russian military 'erasing Ukrainian culture' and Ukrainians preserving their cultural heritage and identity through folk culture, street art, music, and song (Hong, 2023).

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This section summarizes the findings derived from the ABC analyses of the Ukraine and Sudan conflicts. Firstly, regarding attitudes, the conflict in Sudan is characterized by entrenched distrust and polarizing attitudes among key actors, primarily the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). These attitudes have hindered mediation efforts by regional bodies like IGAD, reflecting a reluctance to accept external authority due to perceived biases. Foreign involvement, with the UAE supporting the RSF and Iran backing the SAF, further complicates the conflict dynamics, intensifying the militarization and exacerbating human rights abuses, particularly against marginalized communities in Darfur.

Conversely, in Ukraine, the attitudes of key actors are underscored by an aura of national identity, historical grievances, and geopolitical interests. The Ukrainian government frames the conflict as a struggle for sovereignty against Russian aggression, rooted in memories of historical tensions and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. President Zelensky's rhetoric emphasizes resistance to perceived Russian encroachment on Ukrainian sovereignty, contrasting sharply with Putin's narrative of defending Russian national interests and countering Western influence in what Russia sees as its sphere of influence. This geopolitical contestation has escalated into a full-scale war marked by severe attacks on civilian infrastructure and allegations of rights abuses, including sexual violence.

Behaviourally, both conflicts have seen the extensive use of advanced military technologies and targeted attacks on critical infrastructure. In Sudan, the deployment of Iranian drones by the SAF

has provided tactical advantages, while in Ukraine, both sides have employed drones and conducted attacks deep into enemy territory, illustrating the high stakes and technological sophistication driving military strategies. Humanitarian consequences are severe in both cases, with widespread reports of human rights abuses, including ethnic and gender-based violence, perpetuated by state and non-state actors alike.

Contextually, Sudan's civil war is embedded in a fractured society exacerbated by economic disparities and a history of authoritarian rule under Omar Al Bashir. His regime's policies fuelled ethnic divisions and empowered parallel security structures like the RSF, aggravating existing social tensions. Post-Bashir governance challenges have compounded economic woes and ethnic strife, underscoring the state's fragility and inability to manage conflict effectively.

Similarly, Ukraine's conflict reflects a post-Soviet struggle for political redefinition and assertion of national identity, compounded by ethnolinguistic divisions and historical ties to Russia. The collapse of the Soviet Union triggered a renegotiation of Eastern European political orders, leading to Russia's military intervention in Ukraine, which has deepened cultural and geopolitical fault lines between East and West.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The application of the ABC conflict analysis tool to the Sudan and Ukraine conflicts highlights these complexities, revealing the interplay of attitudes, behaviours, and context. This approach provides valuable insights into the motivations and actions that sustain violence in both settings. The Sudan Civil War and the Ukraine conflict demonstrate the profound impact of historical grievances, entrenched divisions, and fragile governance on contemporary conflicts. Despite their differences, both conflicts highlight the urgent need for mechanisms to address underlying tensions.

Thus, it is recommended that, in Ukraine's case, there should be a conscious drive by political elites for inclusive identity policies to foster national cohesion. The state should promote inclusive cultural policies and language that reflects Ukraine's varied ethnolinguistic groups, especially the minorities with Russian ties. This will foster unity and undermine the legitimacy of foreign propaganda. For Sudan, the belligerents should sue for peace by establishing a civilian-led government that will comprise of representatives from all core political, regional and ethnic groups. Post-Bashir Sudan remains disunited.

Inclusive governance will dwindle elite competition and enhance national reconciliation.

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