

Ukraine – questions for reflection and discussion



The following questions are offered for individual reflection or for group discussion and study.

The briefing on Ukraine produced by the Joint Public Issues Team provides information and analysis to help church members better understand and reflect on the crisis in Ukraine. These questions below are by no means exhaustive but may aid reflection on tricky and sometimes contentious issues covered in that briefing. Readers are encouraged to search for resources from diverse sources to broaden their knowledge of these issues. Our prayer is that as a result we may be better resourced to take action in our world using the resources, intellect, interests and gifts granted to us by God.

Considering the war in Ukraine

- How has your church been touched by the conflict in Ukraine, and how has it supported those directly affected by it?
- The UN Charter expressly prohibits a state from invading the territory of a neighbour and claiming that territory as its own. How do you think the international community and the United Nations should respond when this principle is violated? Do you think there can be any exceptions to this fundamental principle in international law?
- Some church leaders have condemned Russia's invasion as 'an act of great evil'. Do you agree? Do you think using this kind of language is helpful?
- Many Russians (and indeed people elsewhere) would not perceive NATO as a defensive alliance or a benign force. What should the UK and other NATO-member states be doing to provide Russia with reassurance?
- Sanctions can reduce the scope for an aggressor to invest in arms and persuade a government to negotiate terms for peace. Sanctions on Russia have been imposed by the UK, United States and European allies and the threat of secondary sanctions have required many other states to join in. But these were put in place without an explicit UN General Assembly endorsement (although there have been two votes in the UN General Assembly condemning Russia's actions). What are the pros and cons of sanctions in this case?
- Why do you think the UK government treats those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine differently from those fleeing war or persecution in other parts of the world?
- How do you think the conflict in Ukraine will end?
- What most worries you about the future of security and prosperity in Europe?
- How could Christians across our continent be working together for peace?

Considering peacebuilding in a wider perspective

- Military budgets are increasing across the world. Pope Francis has described the billions spent on nuclear weapons as “theft from the poor”. What are some of the things that we might do to re-direct the efforts and resources of governments towards prevention of conflict?
- What might be the impacts (both positive and negative) of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on the global campaign to achieve nuclear disarmament?
- Many Ukrainians are taking huge risks in resisting the Russian occupation. What risks should we be taking?
- What examples of active non-violence have led to peace and the restoration of justice? What organisations can we go to, to learn more and take action?
- How might we better incorporate our calling to be peacemakers into our worship and study in our local church?

The JPIT briefing on Ukraine is available here: - www.jpit.uk/ukraine