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The Controversy Behind Japan's Proposal to The UN

Written by Ryan Sim



Japan's recent proposal regarding the disposal of contaminated waste has been approved by the UN. Unfortunately, not everybody is happy about this decision, both within and outside of Japan. This all began in 2011, when an extremely strong earthquake and tsunami hit Japan, impacting its nuclear plants. These natural disasters caused the nuclear plants in Fukushima to cool down and eventually fail. This failure caused the radioactive material to leak out due to pressure reliefs and contaminated thousands of liters of water. In order to alleviate the situation, the Japanese government attempted to pour thousands of liters of water onto the leaking reactor. However, because of the failure of their cooling system, the water ended up being a total waste. Due to hydrogen explosions and wind, nuclear fission particles were dispersed from all the nuclear reactors that completely melted down. In addition, in the second reactor, there was also an uncontrolled leakage that sent out the contaminated water to the Pacific Ocean. In order to handle this radioactive waste issue and make space for more intensely contaminated waste, Japan decided to pour 11,500,000 liters of water, containing 150 billion becquerels, directly into the ocean from the central treatment tank.

Not only did this disaster impact Japan's economy, but it also caused 30 km of that area to become uninhabitable and unsuitable for agriculture for at least 300 years. Additionally, Japan needed to ban fishing, one of their main income sources, in specific areas due to this contamination. Many of Japan's marine animals such as algae, crabs, and mussels have already absorbed the radioactive particles that have been blown into the ocean. Even though the casualties are relatively low compared to the death and injury rate of the earthquake and tsunami itself, the Fukushima nuclear disaster has been one of the biggest tragedies that have happened to Japan.

Furthermore, Japan has tried to alleviate this nuclear waste problem by creating a proposal on how they would dispose of their nuclear waste to the UN nuclear watchdog. Japan's proposal is: as they use water to cool down the nuclear plants that are in complete meltdown, they inevitably get contaminated water. In order to lower the stored contaminated water's tritium, which is a radioactive form of hydrogen, they will dilute it with other substances. Finally, Japan would release the contaminated waste after they decrease the level of tritium based on national standards.

Although the proposal was approved by the UN, it has received several pieces of criticism from local organizations and citizens as well as various countries outside of Japan. For example, China's diplomat has stated, "The harm caused by the discharge of nuclear water into the sea is immeasurable." Surprisingly, South Korea's government has not shown disapproval of this proposal, despite 80% of the public in South Korea being concerned about the contaminated waste being released into the nearby ocean. These concerns are only an example of the intense disapproval neighboring countries of Japan have expressed regarding this proposal. Additionally, the Japanese public is not fully in support of the plan either. According to a survey conducted by

Asahi Shinbun, 41% of the surveyed group does not support this plan even with the assurances from the Japanese government. Many environmental scientists and activists are also wary of this proposal, due to the lack of resources and research in this area. Marine biologist Robert Richmond, a professor at the University of Hawaii, stated "We've seen an inadequate radiological, ecological impact assessment that makes us very concerned that Japan would not only be unable to detect what's getting into the water, sediment, and organisms, but if it does, there is no recourse to remove it... there's no way to get the genie back in the bottle."

As you can see, the UN's approval of Japan's decision has a severe rate of disapproval both on the national and international levels. To address the various aspects of nuclear waste, it may be safer for Japan to conduct scientific research on the effects of ocean disposal before moving forward with the proposal. Since it is a shared resource between the entire world, it is important to deeply inspect the proposed plan for potential flaws and unexpected consequences that may affect the environment and people. Furthermore, Japan should collaborate with neighboring countries to structure this proposal and lessen the degree of disapproval. Additionally, Japan's government may benefit from creating educational videos about this issue not only for Japan but also for foreign countries with high concerns. This would provide other countries with sufficient information to collaborate and foster a better relationship between countries.

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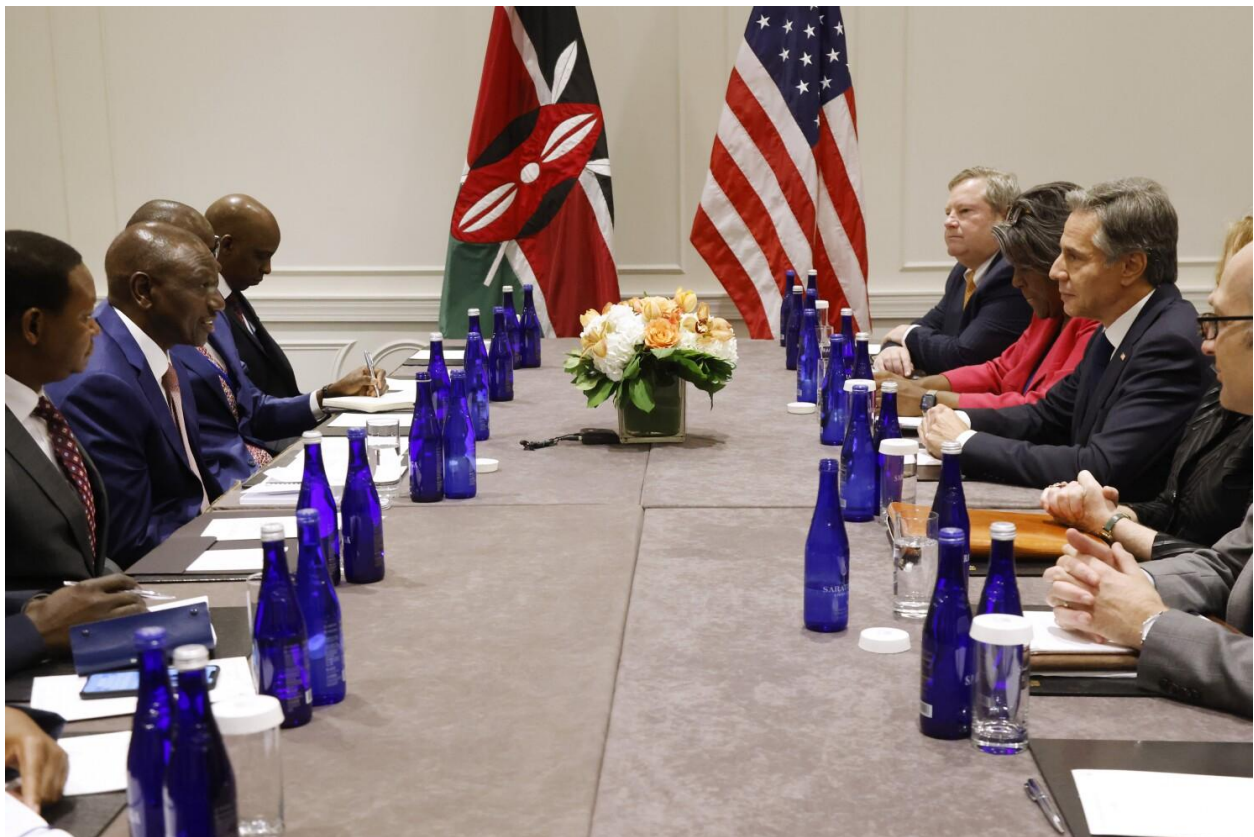
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U.N. Approves Kenya-Led Security Mission: Multinational Security Support

Written by Lexi Potente



In a world often rife with crises, when one nation's struggle echoes globally, international cooperation becomes necessary. Haiti, a nation faced with poverty, political instability, and the persistent challenge posed by criminal groups, has recently found hope in a United Nations (U.N.) approved security mission led by Kenya. This mission aims to help the Haitian government regain control over its streets and, in turn, foster stability and prosperity in this Caribbean nation. This article will explore the complex situation in Haiti and the significance of the U.N.'s decision to deploy a Kenyan-led security mission to tackle the issue of rampant gangs. The United Nations Security Council has given the green light for a multinational contingent to support Haiti as the country grapples with extensive gang-related violence. On October 2, 2023, the 15-member council registered a decisive majority vote, with 13 nations endorsing a mission to Haiti led by Kenya. The two remaining council members, China and Russia, refused to vote, expressing concerns about Haiti's experiences with foreign invasion. The U.N. resolution passed sanctions for establishing a "Multinational Security Support" (MSS) operation to strengthen Haitian law enforcement, reestablish security, and safeguard vital infrastructure. Kenyan President William Ruto characterized the result of the vote as a significant juncture in the history of worldwide multilateral cooperation. He also contended that it empowers nations across the globe to fulfill their collective moral obligation of ensuring justice and security for the populations of every nation.

Haiti has a tumultuous history marked by political instability and socio-economic challenges. One of Haiti's most pressing issues is the proliferation of criminal gangs. These gangs have taken control of various neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital, and other major cities, undermining the state's authority and causing havoc for the local population. The rule of law has eroded, and the government's ability to provide essential services, let alone security, is under constant threat. The violence in Haiti has had a severe impact on the population. Innocent civilians, including women and children, often become victims of these armed groups. Kidnappings for ransom have become rampant, with reports of people abducted. Those unable to pay often face brutal consequences, and the psychological trauma inflicted on victims and their families is immeasurable. Economically, gang violence has had a crippling effect on Haiti. Foreign investment and tourism, two potential sources of income and development for the country, have been severely hampered. Businesses have shut down, and the fear of violence has deserted the streets. The gangs' stranglehold on certain areas has further deepened the country's poverty and instability. Political instability in Haiti has only exacerbated the situation. The country has witnessed a series of governments toppled by protests, corruption scandals, and allegations of electoral fraud. These political crises have left a void in governance, making it increasingly difficult for the state to address the gang issue effectively. The political chaos has also affected the distribution of resources and hindered the implementation of much-needed social and economic reforms.

Recognizing the ominous situation in Haiti and its potential to destabilize the broader Caribbean region, the United Nations has taken a significant step by approving a security mission to combat gang violence in the country. Led by Kenya, this mission reflects a growing realization that international cooperation is necessary to address complex security challenges in the modern world. The Kenyan-led mission has been given tasks with several objectives. This mission will involve both direct action against the gangs and efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Haitian police and regain control over areas dominated by criminal gangs. It also aims to promote community engagement and development in these gang-controlled areas to address the root causes of the problem. The choice of Kenya to lead this mission is noteworthy. Kenya has experience in peacekeeping missions in various regions, including its involvement in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). This experience has equipped Kenya with the skills and knowledge needed to operate in complex and challenging environments. Kenya has a history of contributing to international peace and security efforts, and its selection as the lead nation for this mission highlights the U.N.'s confidence in its abilities. The decision to deploy a Kenyan-led security mission to Haiti underscores the importance of international cooperation in addressing global security challenges. Haiti's situation is not isolated; it reflects the broader reality of interconnected threats. Criminal networks and transnational organized crime groups often operate across borders, making it imperative for nations to collaborate on security matters.

The deployment of a U.N.-approved mission underscores the international community's commitment to supporting nations in crisis. The U.N.'s approval of a Kenyan-led security mission in Haiti represents a significant step towards addressing the country's complex issue of gang violence and instability. It is evidence of the importance of international cooperation in tackling global security challenges and the recognition that the well-being of one nation can impact the entire world. As the mission unfolds, it will face numerous challenges, but it also provides hope for the people of Haiti and a potential path toward a more secure, prosperous future for the nation.

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Maui Fires in Lahaina Hawaii

Written by Kristina Kuryndina



Maui is an island in Hawaii known for its beaches, beautiful nature, and resort hotels perfect for vacationing with family and friends all year round. Although this destination may seem like your perfect paradise, the island has always been prone to wildfires due to its specific geography. On August 8, 2023, one of the worst wildfires in the United States occurred in a small town on the northwest coast of Maui called Lahaina. Lahaina holds historical significance for Hawaii and has, in recent years gained popularity as a tourist destination.

When the fire erupted the town of 13,000 residents was completely engulfed in flames. Amid people fleeing to safeguard their lives, protect local businesses, and assist their loved ones, chaos ensued. By August 12, when the last embers were extinguished, the town had been utterly consumed and reduced to ashes. Approximately, 2,000 acres of land and 2,200 structures were lost, along with 97 lives, the total damage amounted to \$.5.5 billion.

Nevertheless, numerous questions persist without answers. What ignited the fires? Why did no one intervene to halt them? And, most crucially, what measures can prevent a recurrence? To begin, there is still no official cause. However, the theory with the highest probability suggests that the strong winds caused power lines, installed by Hawaii Electric, to topple and ignite the the devastating blaze in Lahaina. The fires subsequently extended their reach due to severe drought affecting 16% of Maui county, coupled with the exceptionally hot weather, presumably a result of climate change. Following the ignition of these fires, extinguishing efforts were hindered as firefighters discovered that the fire hydrants had run completely dry. For the longest time, Maui has grappled with a prolonged water shortage, which is why the fires were ultimately extinguished when they reached the ocean.

At this point, many people began to realize that there were a multitude of avoidable factors that contributed to the Maui wildfires. This is why I believe the Maui fires should serve as a model for Hawaii to develop a comprehensive wildfire management strategy. We can examine the root causes and consequences to mitigate the likelihood of similar future incidents.

As mentioned before Maui and other places in Hawaii are at risk of wildfires due to geography and specific weather conditions. To elaborate, Hawaii is home to several active volcanoes, so if one were to erupt, the scorching lava could ignite combustible materials like wood. In addition to that, Hawaii boasts abundant agriculture and lush vegetation. Nevertheless, during drought periods, when the land and vegetation become parched, fires can rapidly spread. However, drought season hasn't always been an issue. Lately, due to CO2 emissions and the burning of fossil fuels, Hawaii, like other nations, has encountered unusual weather patterns where a hot, humid, and drought-prone climate has sadly become the prevailing norm.

Despite the fact that these environmental circumstances cannot be put to a stop, it is important to consider them when creating a wildfire management plan. This plan should work

out strategies and tactics on how to protect structures, agriculture, and most importantly the community. Moreover, there should be people and necessary tools always ready to aid the community in case of a wildfire; and lastly, people should be educated about the topic: like what to do and what not to do.

If these measures had been taken during the wildfires in August, more individuals would be currently experiencing a sense of tranquility. Particularly considering the exorbitant cost of land and property residents engaged in local businesses, hospitality and tourism find it challenging to reclaim the land that originally belonged to them. Sadly, real estate agents and developers are attempting to acquire land from those who have recently weathered a crisis, but the local residents are persistent in the fight for their motherland! Even the government has intervened by declaring that certain areas in Maui will not be available for sale for a period.

On the other hand, this conflict between realtors, the government, and Lahaina natives could have been entirely avoided if the Maui fires hadn't gone out of control in the first place. Specifically for Maui, water should have been in hydrants and the people should have evacuated immediately. Unfortunately, because these steps were not taken, the U.S. now has a community that is displaced. Withal, there is an upside to hindrances. Hopefully, the government will be able to look at the causes and effects and make life better for the citizens of Hawaii. Above that, they will see how many problems layered onto one another which began one of the nation's most violent wildfires; and then reduce the chances of history repeating itself. Because it is always better to work on one of the roots of the issue than none.

I strongly believe that it is crucial to protect the islands of Hawaii because of its one-of-a-kind history, exclusive wildlife, and breathtaking nature. Nonetheless, other towns, cities, and countries are also worth protecting. Not only from wildfires (which can be either man-made or natural) but also from other natural disasters like earthquakes and tsunamis.

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Using AI for the Purposes of Healthcare

Written by Haeun Vivian Choi



Artificial Intelligence (AI) in healthcare has the potential to bring about a paradigm shift in the way medical treatments are delivered – however, with great power comes great responsibility. The World Health Organization (WHO) has officially published a guide for countries to establish different AI systems regarding healthcare with safety and effectiveness. Regulatory considerations such as clear documentation, risk management, and committing to data quality can help ensure products and services stay within control. When making the AI regulations, the WHO encourages collaboration with the public, patients, healthcare professionals, and the government.

AI technology has been proven to have a huge impact on the efficiency of the healthcare sector, especially when used correctly. For instance, we could train AI to look over different medical diagnoses, recognize what patient has what, and enhance the knowledge and different skills of health professionals. Not only will this help solve our current issues in where we lack a number of doctors in a certain field, but also be able to help the future generation of healthcare through the help of AI.

Unfortunately, we need to keep in mind that AI isn't perfect. Artificial intelligence, too, has consequential risks that affect the health and well-being of end-users, including healthcare professionals and patients. Therefore, it is essential to have a robust regulatory framework in place to safeguard privacy, security, and integrity. But the real question is, how do we maintain such regulations?

In order to address the different concerns of the public, WHO has released different types of rules and procedures to maximize the use of AI to its core but also to keep it safe and under control. Their first course of action is to promote and encourage transparency when documenting. Afterward, programmers constantly check the AI and track its development process, making sure that the AI is kept as simple as possible. WHO also stresses on how AI will clearly define its intended use and have a commitment to data quality. Additionally, training AI to manage different risks that could happen within helps assure the safety of the general public by externally validating data.

Along with WHO's precautionary steps, there should be no problem fostering collaboration with AI with the world, especially when they can help ensure various products and services will stay compliant with regulations throughout.

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Canada and India: How One Man's Death Plummeted A Friendly Relationship

Written by Claire Zhang



Canada and India. Two of the most seemingly peaceful countries in the world. Two friendly governments who have developed a strong bond over mutual relationships with the US, a growing Indian diaspora in Canada and shared concerns about China. No one would have imagined a feud between the two trading partners, especially one as serious as murder allegations and violations of international relations norms. Yet, on September 18th, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused the Indian government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of assassinating a Sikh leader on Canadian soil.

Three months prior, Canadian Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar was shot dead outside the Sikh temple he led in British Columbia. Security footage shows Nijjar's car being blocked by a white van on his way towards the parking lot exit as two hooded men jumped out and began automatic gunfire. But who was Hardeep Singh Nijjar and why is he important? The 45-year-old was a Sikh separatist or someone who believed in creating an independent Sikh homeland named Khalistan in India's Punjab region, the religion's place of origin. In 1997, Hardeep Nijjar fled to Canada to escape ongoing conflicts between the Indian government and Sikh separatists. Back home, the Indian government accused Nijjar of leading a militant separatist group and labeled him as a "wanted terrorist" in 2020.

Although Nijjar's death accusations may have sparked this new rivalry between the two nations, it only exacerbated an already vulnerable point in Canada-India relations. While the two countries have a history as strong trading partners, the Indian government also has a history of criticising Canada, amongst other nations, for providing Khalistani terrorists shelter. Canada is home to around 770 thousand Sikhs, the largest community outside of India, and Trudeau even appointed four Sikh ministers to his cabinet when he was first elected. However, India views this inaction against Khalistani extremists, such as Nijjar, who "threaten India's territorial integrity" as an attack on the nation's sovereignty.

In his speech, Trudeau also stated "[a] foreign government killing a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil is an unacceptable violation of our sovereignty." Furthermore, he mentioned that Canadian intelligence agencies have reason to believe that Indian government agents are linked to Nijjar's killing. To solve this ongoing investigation, he encouraged the Indian government to collaborate with Canada. In addition, foreign minister Melanie Joly expelled a senior diplomat in Canada, Pavan Kumar Rai, claiming them as being the de facto head of India's intelligence agency in China. Not only that, but Canada has also paused trade negotiations with India and canceled a trade mission visit to India that was originally planned for October. In response, Prime Minister Narendra Modi denied Trudeau's allegations calling them "absurd", before accusing Canada of sheltering Sikh terrorists and "providing funding to create Khalistan". In a tit-for-tat move, India expelled and gave a five-day notice leave to a senior Canadian diplomat. Since then, India has also suspended visa applications by Canadian nationals. Although Canada

has not done the same, Indian students and immigrants worry their visa applications will face heavier scrutiny by Canadian authorities.

A month after the allegations first broke the news, the diplomatic spat between Canada and India has continued and shows no signs of simmering down. If anything, relations have deteriorated further and Kim Richard Nossal, an Emeritus Professor of Political Studies at Canada's Queen's University, described the situation as a "doom loop". Due to the heavy allegations put on the table by both sides, neither will want to back down. Despite the strain India's concerns about the Sikh separatist movement have had on their relationship, Canada most likely will not take action due to diaspora diplomacy. This is due to the current state of the Canadian political landscape where many politicians seek the Sikh diaspora's votes.

The third key player in this dispute has been rather quiet as the Biden administration has yet to take major courses of action. On one hand, Canada is the US's neighbor to the north and one of their oldest and closest allies. On the other hand, the US has been courting India for the past few years as they play a major role in America's Indo-Pacific policy to counter China. Since the start of the feud, the United States only responded via a statement by John F Kirby, a spokesman for Biden's National Security Council. In the briefing, he stated the administration is "deeply concerned" and called for the investigation to lead to justice. However, Kirby also emphasized India's ties to America and the country's importance to US international policy. After the briefing, the council quickly followed up with an email condemning and taking action against the practice of "targeting dissidents in [foreign] countries."

As of now, all eyes are on the Biden administration which is torn between two allies stuck in a "doom loop" that is bruising them and poses a threat to other countries as well.

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The Russia-Ukraine War: A Country Unraveling

Written by Evan Zhang



It began on February 24th, 2022. What happened after became known as the Russo-Ukrainian War. The past two years have seen destruction, death, nuclear threats, diplomatic corruption, civilian casualties, and more - all direct results of the conflict between the two neighboring Northern European countries. Western nations have generally allied with Ukraine, with the United States being a strong supporter and provider of military aid for the attacked country. However, a strong relationship between China and Russia has been forged in recent times as well, leading to a political division between global superpowers on the issue. The war's developments in October mirrored those of previous months, with fighting continuing and more horrors unfolding.

The United States' involvement has continued. Just last week, on October 23rd, a delivery of long-range missiles exported from the United States to Ukraine caused massive damage to Berdiansk and Luhansk, two Ukrainian cities, in an effort to destroy Russian airpower. The Armed Forces commander-in-chief posted a video online, with footage of the missiles being launched. Due to the ambiguity of the US military assistance to Ukraine, the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) aerial weapons have confirmed their undying support. With an extremely long range spanning 100 miles, Russia will be forced to retreat and move its defenses away from the battlefield, inhibiting their airpower..

In terms of democratic aid, President Biden has implemented a relief package worth up to 106 billion USD that is being donated almost directly to Ukraine. Russian concern for the United States' loyalty has grown too. This was evident when Minister Sergei Shoigu stated that the United States was "undermining the basis of international security" with its support of Ukraine. Paranoia and distrust have arisen, with a Russian man being accused of being an undercover Ukrainian spy. Even so, the United States is not the only lifeline of the Ukrainian army. The Netherlands has notably sent state-of-the-art F-16 aircrafts, expected to arrive in the country in about two weeks.

One current event that is taking both countries' media outlets and the general public by storm is the murders of the Kapkanets family in the Eastern village of Volnovakha, Ukraine. On October 27, the family of nine was discovered fatally shot in their own house. It has been surmised by the Ukrainian government that they were killed by a Russian military group after keeping ownership of their home during the occupation. Many have been physically forced to evacuate their abodes by Russia's armed forces, and it appears that the Kapkanets household was no different.

The town of Volnovakha has been occupied since the dawn of the Russian invasion. By now much of the village has been lost. Despite Kyiv's efforts at taking back some of the aforementioned occupied lands, its counter-offensive has been all but successful. Avdiivka is a city that has garnered international attention as of late because it is surrounded by Russian

troops. A fierce battle is taking place, with the Ukrainian defensive soldiers combatting the encircling army. Ukraine's media and government coverage has maintained that Ukraine still has control over the area, with personnel claiming that a record amount of Russian forces have been destroyed insofar. The surrounded town of Avdiivka still inhabits over 1,600 citizens who haven't fled.

Yet another important area is a body of water located in the Kherson region, the Dnipro River. Reports from eyewitnesses detail the Ukrainian army's crossing of the river and into three of the bay villages along its bank - Krynky, Poyma, and Pishchanivka. Periodic raids were launched by said army in the summer, and it is unclear what will happen next. Ukraine is not backing down with its counter-offensive, a fact that Russian forces have been made aware of. In the Bakhmut region, Russia has increased manpower and offensiveness in an attempt to prevent Ukraine's hopes from becoming a reality.

Finally, worries that Russian views are infiltrating Ukraine are at an all-time high. A new law is being approved by the Ukrainian parliament to prevent Russian religious associations from operating in the country. The church that the legal action is targeted at appears to be the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, a branch of the Russian Orthodox Church. Regardless of the church's claims that they have terminated communication with their Russian counterpart, the government is still highly skeptical. On the Russian side, the law has been accused of exploiting religion as a means to fulfill a specific political agenda. A UOC representative went so far as to declare the bill unconstitutional.

With these recent events and many more that will take place in the near future, the end of this multi-year-long war seems ever distant. Nevertheless, as bystanders of horrors such as the Kapkanets family murders, shows of allyship from the United States, and regional battles like those in Kherson, it may be beneficial for people to find organizations to help people with what we are able to do. Digital means of support, including Change.org, can be a way for us to make the war victims' load just a little lighter.

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