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Virtual Forum: Understanding the War in the Ukraine

The George and Irina Schaeffer Center for the Study of Genocide, Human Rights, and Conflict Prevention

The American University of Paris

May 9th and 10th 2022

We are living in a perilous historical moment. Already shaken by the Covid-19 pandemic, the world is now reeling from the war in the Ukraine. The news is catastrophic. Russia, a major nuclear-weapons power and a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, appears intent on conquering and destroying a sovereign democratic state, in clear violation of international law. The human cost of the war, due to indiscriminate bombing, is enormous and growing daily, with millions of refugees making their way to neighboring countries and a daily worsening humanitarian crisis in besieged cities.

The war, a strategic and moral calamity, has global implications. While outcomes are unclear, members of the global community of scholars and activists need to come together, to reflect, to understand, and to act. What are the sources of Russian conduct? What pathways can be imagined to end the conflict? In a divided international community, what are the implications for the trajectory of world politics? How can we foster cooperation and meet the challenges of the human cost of this conflict? How can we make sense of these tragic historic events?

We hope to provide a forum for scholars from multiple disciplines and humanitarian activists to process the causes and consequences of the war in the Ukraine. Because of the urgency and ongoing nature of the conflict, we are not expecting polished academic presentations but short (10-15 minutes) thought pieces that help to elucidate various aspects and interpretations of the war. A primary aim is to give Ukrainian and Russian scholars the opportunity to express themselves and their point of view.

Participants should send short a statement describing their thought pieces (no more than 300 words) and a short bio (100 words) by April 13th to schaefferforumukraine@gmail.com. Presentations will be given on zoom. Because the situation is volatile and changing, we expect that papers might change as the situation evolves and hope that presenters will be prepared to adjust arguments accordingly to be
able to address the situation in early May.

Organizing committee: Philip Golub, Morgan Phillips, and Brian Schiff