**Unworthy Wars**

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We live in a competitive world, a time when inequality and fight for profit and power grow, when prices and inflation go up, and when the poor become poorer, sadly, even in our time when the world is richer than ever, when there is enough for everyone, maybe even plenty, if we just learnt to share and live in peace. We know how we could and should live, but we don’t seem to want to do it, for reasons that are difficult to understand, unless it is for greed and selfishness, which we know, though, that will destroy our soul, even if we win the whole world as the scriptures say. If we continue in many of the unsustainable ways we follow, we will leave the globe beyond repair and sustainability, the deserts larger and hotter, and the ice on the mountains and the rivers rarer and dryer. If we don’t share resources in fairer ways, the world will have more wars and conflicts, and the poor and ordinary people will suffer most. Those who must change are the big and rich countries, the rich and the wealthy people and the multinational companies, the big defence alliances spending enormous amounts on rearmament and wars rather than health and welfare for the needy. Everyone knows it today, as people have always known, that no one really wins wars, only that some few benefit.

[Leveraging Chinese expertise to help Pakistan expedite real estate growth](https://www.nation.com.pk/02-Feb-2024/leveraging-chinese-expertise-to-help-pakistan-expedite-real-estate-growth)

The two most visible wars today are the one between Russia and Ukraine, and the one between Israel and Palestine in Gaza and partly also the West Bank. They are unworthy and terrible scars on the humanity. None of them should have happened if we had all not slumbered and turned away, letting the leaders build up to wars and then starting them. In a few recent articles, related to the WEF Annual Meeting in Davos, I wrote about ‘rebuilding trust’, the theme of this year’s Davos event. War is the ultimate form of distrust, indeed in Ukraine and Palestine, but wars are always unavoidable, if there is will. Dialogue and negotiations should take place before a wars begin, and indeed during and after, to rebuild trust and creating lasting peace and prosperity for all.

We know that if the West, with NATO in the driver’s seat, had done its work better, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine could have been avoided, from 2014 and earlier, and certainly from the time of the full invasion from 24 February 2022. If the West had done its work better after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989-90, kept its promises and developed honest and true cooperation with Russia, things would have been different. Russia, too, should have done better and developed its democratic institutions, with the help of the West. The provinces in eastern Ukraine, now taken by Russia, could have been given a special, neutral status. The Minsk Agreements signed by Russia and Ukraine before and during the conflict and war, should have been implemented before the Russian invasion in 2022, and the invasion might not have happened. The West should have assisted Russia and Ukraine in implementing the agreements rather than advising and facilitating Ukraine to fight back militarily.

[Karachi receives early morning rain](https://www.nation.com.pk/02-Feb-2024/karachi-receives-early-morning-rain)

In the last two years, Ukraine has lost hundreds of thousands of people, soldiers and civilians, although official figures are not available. More than twenty percent of its people is internally displaced (IDPs), or they have become refugees spread all over Europe. Recently, Ukraine has said it needs half a million more recruits into the army. The figures are unbelievable, and this happen in our time. It would not have come to this had not the West encouraged – and equipped – Ukraine to fight back. Russia, too, has lost tens of thousands of soldiers, maybe many more, and high numbers of soldiers on both sides have been injured. Russia’s miscalculation was that it had expected the invasion on 24 February 2022 to be over in the matter of weeks or months.

Few people are brave enough to say that Ukraine should have surrendered upon the invasion, or rather, called for immediate peace talks, finding temporary or lasting political and military solutions to Ukraine’s provinces in the east, and also Crimea. Professor Emerita Randi Rønning Balsvik (85), a retired Norwegian historian at the University of Tromsø, has spoken about this, taken the risk of being accused of siding with Russia. NATO’s and the West’s story telling should not stay as the only truth about the conflict and war.

[PTI leader moves court to restrain police from harassing supporters](https://www.nation.com.pk/02-Feb-2024/pti-leader-moves-court-to-restrain-police-from-harassing-supporters)

The terrible war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza and the rest of Palestine is certainly unworthy, and people saw it coming, yet, closing the eyes for what was almost inevitable. If the ‘two-state solution’ and the Oslo Agreements, signed thirty years ago, had been pursued actively, the current war would not have begun. Hamas would not have been provoked to take the desperate action it did on 7 October 2023, and Israel’s ongoing overkill revenge would not have taken place. Some world leaders have begun talking about reviving the two-state solution plans. Alas, it may be too late, knowing, inter alia, that Israel has over 300 illegal settlements in the West Bank, with some seven hundred thousand Israeli people, who don’t accept Palestinian rule but keep their own rule. The current Israeli PM and government do not accept the two-state solution, or any other peaceful solution for that matter, it seems. That means, it does not accept Palestine’s existence. I should add that there are some questions about whether the two-state solution, built on ethnic and religious differences, can be accepted in principle. The principles for the creation of Israel in 1948 would not have been accepted today.

[Divisive Nationalism](https://www.nation.com.pk/02-Feb-2024/divisive-nationalism)

Other, new solutions have not been found, and one can also question if the two-state solution is really believed to be a durable, even by those who advocated it today. The only superpower in our world today, USA, keeps supporting Israel. In future, the neighbouring countries, and other world powers, such as Russia, China, EU, and others, are essential in finding solutions. Strange, even contradictory, would it be if we place our trust in Donald Trump, a quite unpredictable populist, should he again become the next American president from January 2025. But it is likely that his administration may at best come up with new approaches and peace proposals for Israel and Palestine, and especially for Russia and Ukraine, ending weapons support. I don’t know if this is something to look at in a positive light, but if we would not, then it is urgent that the ‘old world’ and all peace-loving forces take other urgent peace initiatives to end the unworthy wars in our time. Alternatively, a onestate solution for Israel and Palestine should also be explored, but it would need UN and other international control and policing, at least for several decades, but neither parties, and certainly not Israel, would be likely to accept that. I hope we all will do our utmost in the young year of 2024 to contribute to creating peace and fairness everywhere in the world – God willing, Insha’Allah.