

SEP 25, 2022

# Russia Escalates Ukraine War

*This is The Weekly Letter for September 25, 2022. [About this newsletter](#)*

Because I will be in the process of moving—from Texas to New York—I am taking two weeks off from the newsletter. The next issue will be out on October 16.

## Big Story

It was a strange split-screen: as world leaders spoke at the UN General Assembly—a gesture of diplomacy and global cooperation—a war of aggression that goes against everything the UN stands for was being escalated.

In an [address](#) on Wednesday, President Vladimir Putin of Russia announced a partial mobilization of troops to bolster Russian forces in Ukraine (the Ukrainian military has recently made significant inroads in retaking Russia-controlled land). According to *The Guardian*, Putin "also said he would support the votes scheduled for this weekend to join Russia in the parts of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia regions that are under its control." The referenda, denounced as a sham by Ukraine and its allies, raise the stakes of the war. If support for joining Russia in the four regions is claimed, Russia could consider further Ukrainian military efforts in the areas—backed by the U.S. and European countries—an attack on Russia itself. In an apparent reference to nuclear weapons, Putin said in his address, "when the territorial integrity of our country is threatened, to protect Russia and our people, we will certainly use all the means at our disposal," according to *The Guardian*.

Protests were held in Russia following Putin's announcement of partial conscription, with 1,300 arrests reported. Vehicles have lined up along the Russia-Georgia border including men fleeing conscription, and tickets for flights out of Russia have spiked in price or sold out. ([BBC](#))

In his remarks in New York, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has not sugarcoated the state of the world. In his [address to the UN General Assembly](#), Guterres pointed out areas of progress, but did not shy away from accounting the multiple ongoing conflicts and crises, including the war in Ukraine and its impact on global food insecurity.

[Speaking](#) to the UN Security Council on Thursday, Guterres lauded the [Black Sea Grain Initiative](#) but said there is more to do to fight food insecurity: "If the fertilizer market is not stabilized, next year could bring a food supply crisis. Simply put, the world may run out of food. It's essential that all states remove every remaining obstacle to the export of Russian fertilizers immediately."

### Read more:

[Putin flirts again with grim prospect of nuclear war - this time he might mean it](#) (The Guardian)

[Five key takeaways from Joe Biden's UNGA speech](#) (Al Jazeera)

[UN rights experts present evidence of war crimes in Ukraine](#) (AP)

## Opinion

**Kamran Bokhari:** Ukraine's allies can put pressure on Putin [without exacerbating global food insecurity](#). (Al Jazeera, 9/20)

**Shawan Jabarin:** Israel is trying to [close down](#) Palestinian civil society organizations. (NY Times, 9/23)

**Also last week**—Young activists called for climate justice during Friday's [global climate strike](#). (Reuters)

Have some thoughts about a current event? Want to reply to an opinion article featured in the newsletter? To create a conversation about the news, all are encouraged to share their views. Send your letter along with your name and where you're writing from to [theweeklyletternewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:theweeklyletternewsletter@gmail.com) or reply to this email. Please be aware that the newsletter is published on the website [theweeklyletter.ghost.io](https://theweeklyletter.ghost.io) and sent by email to subscribers. Letters that are hateful or contain misinformation will not be published.



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