

GREAT DECISIONS

1918 • FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION

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Topic 2: War crimes: what are they? how can they be prosecuted?

Acronyms and abbreviations

ECtHR- European Court of Human Rights.

ICC- International Criminal Court.

ICJ- International Court of Justice.

ICTR- International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

ICTY- International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

IMT- International Military Tribunal.

ODIHR- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

OSCE- Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

UNWCC- United Nations War Crimes Commission.

Glossary

Geneva Convention of 1864- First of four treaties of the Geneva Conventions. It defines “the basis on which rests the rules of international law for the protection of the victims of armed conflicts.”

Geneva Convention of 1949- Updated terms to the previous treaties of the Geneva Convention. Largely influenced by World War II.

Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907- First formal statements of the laws of war and war crimes.

Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928- International agreement on peace in which signatory states promised not to use war to resolve disputes.

Nuremberg Trials- Trials held by the allies against the defeated Nazi Germany for war crimes committed during World War II.

Paris Peace Conference of 1919- Meeting that set the peace terms for the defeated Central Powers after World War I.

Rome Statute of 1998- Treaty that established the international criminal court.

Treaty of Versailles of 1919- Peace treaty that ended the state of war between Germany and the allied powers after World War I.

Vladimir Putin- President of Russia from 2000–08 and from 2012–present.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy- Ukrainian president since 2019.

WAR IN UKRAINE

Several of our articles this year touch upon the ongoing war in Ukraine. For this reason, we are providing a map of Ukraine with its surrounding geography in order to give the reader a sense of some of the major developments since the war began in February 2022.

Russian forces invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022, after Russian President Vladimir Putin announced a “special military operation” with the goal to “demilitarize” and “denazify” Ukraine and to protect Russians in Ukrainian territory. The invasion has been widely condemned internationally and has resulted in charges that Russians have committed war crimes. The war has affected energy shipments to Europe, which was a major customer for Russian oil and gas, and has led Europeans to attempt to cut back on the use of Russian energy, and led to

the abandonment of the NordStream 2 gas pipeline. Another effect of the war is that shipments of grain from Ukraine and Russia have been slowed or halted, which in turn will increase food insecurity in many parts of the world. The United States and many other countries have imposed sanctions on Russia in an attempt to discourage the continued war in Ukraine. There is concern that China might be emboldened by Russia’s attempt to annex Ukraine and move on Taiwan. The repercussions from the war in Ukraine are being felt all over the world.



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