The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine

The situation in Ukraine is of grave concern. Events that have been stirring for several years now but have only just come to a glaring fore over the past 6 months have formed the basis for the most violent aftershocks of the Cold War. Specifically, the areas known as Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk have become the epicentre of the political and military turmoil that is plaguing Ukraine.

Factors to consider regarding the occupied territories of Ukraine:

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<th>Russia vs Ukraine Referendum</th>
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<td>Since the beginning of this issue in 1991, where Crimea became an autonomous part of Ukraine due to the partition of the Soviet Union, Several referenda have been held in Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk to determine the status of the region as a sovereign territory. However, many of these have been deemed illegitimate and thus have not lead to any solution for the problem. These referendum</td>
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Case Study (2014 Referendum):

Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 following a referendum, and administered it as two federal subjects of Russia. They also claimed it to be 'fully integrated' in July 2015. However, Ukraine and the majority of international governments continue to regard Crimea as an integral part of Ukraine.

Nevertheless, this referendum was not internationally recognized by most countries and was seen to be illegitimate. There were many reasons that led them to believe this, one of them being the fact that thee referendum was held during a Russian military takeover of Crimea.

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<th>Variety of cultures</th>
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<td>Russians make up almost 58% of the total population of Crimea, Ukrainians about 24% and the original inhabitants of the region, the Crimean Tatars make about 12%, after their mass influx in the early parts of the 21st century. Even the second and third most ethnically populous group put together barely make more than half the number of Russians in this region,</td>
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which encourages Russia to make Crimea part of its sovereign territory. Furthermore, Crimea suffers from a lot of issues and the region has a lot of disagreements due to it being so culturally diverse.

| Donetsk and Luhansk | The separatist “People’s Republics” in Donetsk and Luhansk have established dictatorial quasi-state structures but remain almost completely dependent on Moscow. Russia refuses to acknowledge its role as a party to the conflict. This is alarming as there are millions living along the line of contact experience terrible humanitarian suffering. As well as that, it threatens to establish a state of permanent poverty and underdevelopment in the regions affected by this conflict. |

**Consequences of the Issue**

Millions of Ukrainians depend on humanitarian aid for day-to-day survival. Russian aggression in eastern Ukraine has led to the destruction of thousands of homes, schools and hospitals since the conflict began in 2014. Services such as water and electricity are unreliable. Landmines and unexploded ordnance also threaten Ukrainian lives.

**Potential Solutions/Guiding Questions**

1. Should Crimea be allowed to join Russia?

2. Should the movement of Russian troops into Crimea be considered as an act of aggression?

3. Should an international referendum be moved on the status of these regions? Or should the decision lie with the sovereign territory of Ukraine?

4. Will it be right to deploy UN forces to intervene what could potentially be a war-like situation developing in Ukraine?

5. Member states should possibly consider giving more access of the region to international organisations in order to maintain the assurance of no human rights violations and aid people who need help.

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