Zelensky is right: The United Nations is useless

April 5, 2022

Editorial Board

The New York Post

<https://nypost.com/2022/04/05/zelensky-is-right-the-united-nations-is-useless/>

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky gave voice to a terrible truth in [his UN speech](https://nypost.com/2022/04/05/russians-burned-swastikas-into-victims-bodies-report/) Tuesday: The United Nations is an utter failure.

If the organization won’t actually work to end Russia’s Ukraine war, he said, it should dissolve itself.

“Are you ready to close?” he asked the assembled dignitaries, after pointing out that the brutal war violates the UN Charter’s first article.

He’s right to ask. Long fetishized by progressives around the globe as the last bulwark of civilization against unending war, the United Nations has proven singularly inept at actually preventing violence and isolating dangerous regimes. In fact, it often empowers them.

As Zelensky put it: “Where is the security that the Security Council is supposed to guarantee?”

Russia’s presence as a permanent member at the Security Council’s table — especially now, in the face of the sickening images of its [war crimes in Bucha](https://nypost.com/2022/04/05/satellite-images-show-bodies-have-been-strewn-in-bucha-for-weeks/) — makes a mockery both of the UN as an organization and the principles it claims to stand for. Zelensky correctly characterized Russia’s behavior as “no different” from that of ISIS.

The same might be said of China’s permanent membership. Beijing has been waging a brutal internal war against the[Uyghurs for years](https://nypost.com/2021/12/18/uyghur-women-recall-horrors-of-chinas-labor-camps/), while facing no real repercussions from a global body ostensibly dedicated to securing all human rights, everywhere.

Liberals in the US have rightly taken up Ukraine as a cause célèbre. But they’ve made no corresponding alignment in conventional wisdom around the toothless, autocrat-coddling institutions allegedly responsible for maintaining the postwar order.

The most Washington seems willing to do in Turtle Bay is try to call a vote suspending Russia from the UN’s Human Rights Council — a committee that is itself an utter farce, packed with member nations that themselves violate rights left and right.

This lame bit of theatrics proves Zelensky’s point all over again. Where has the HRC been as one of its member states bombs maternity hospitals and murders families? (Most likely preparing to bash Israel some more.)

Sovereign states can no longer rely for defense on the norms of international law, but only on the strength of their own arms, the Ukrainian president pointed out as he called for a wholesale reimagining of the UN.

Russia’s crimes in Bucha, [Mariupol](https://nypost.com/2022/03/23/video-shows-utter-devastation-in-mariupol-ukraine/), [Kharkiv](https://nypost.com/2022/03/24/ukrainian-pharmacist-reveals-horror-injuries-after-surviving-hit-from-russian-shell/) and beyond (back to Aleppo and Grozny) provide grim weight to his argument — and expose the hypocrisy that underlies so many groups claiming to defend human rights.

The United Nations is utterly incapable of succeeding in its mission. Believers in its principles should be seeking something better to replace it.