

Green Energy for World Peace

What is the issue?

The territorial control over resource rich regions has been a driving force for the episodes of war, disruption and inflation.

What is the role of fossil fuels in causing wars?

- Large quantities of fossil fuels are concentrated in tiny geographical pockets.
- The urge to control these regions rich in reserves of coal, oil, and natural gas forms the sum and substance of foreign policy worldwide.
- Conflicts also suddenly start when there is a temporary change in the balance of power, breaking the earlier equations of peace.

Historical overview

- **Occupation of the Ruhr (1923-1925)** - French and Belgian troops occupied the mineral and industrially rich Ruhr region, as Germany had stopped sending coal to France.
- This led to the crash of the German currency and the economy, which eventually led to the start of World War II.
- **Invasion of Kuwait** - Ownership of petroleum became the focus of another global conflict when Saddam Hussein invaded neighbouring Kuwait.
- **Annexation of Crimea (2014)** - The Russian invasion of Crimea was related to control over oil and natural gas reserves in the Black Sea region.
- **Russia-Ukraine War** - The Donbas region has rich coal reserves.
- The Dnieper-Donetsk region and the Black Sea of Azov are a rich source of natural gas, an important input for manufacturing fertilisers.

What are the impacts?

- **Energy prices** - Russia and Ukraine claiming rights over these territories have led to highly volatile energy prices, hurting the world economy.
- **Stagflation** - The Yom-Kippur war of 1973 and the subsequent Saudi embargo, leading to worldwide stagflation.
- **Inflation** - During 1974, the inflation in U.S. skyrocketed as there was a second oil crisis in 1979 with the start of the Iran-Iraq war.
- **Appreciation of dollar** - Many countries including Pakistan, Sri Lanka, UK and Argentina are suffering because of an appreciating dollar, an outcome of a hawkish monetary policy.

How do renewables contribute to world peace?

- Unlike fossil fuels, which are characterised by the uneven geographical distribution of natural reserves, renewable energy is abundant across regions.
- By decentralising the energy structure, the energy autonomy of countries can be improved thereby reducing the current conflicts and preventing the new ones.
- A transition to renewable energy can support better institutions and governance structures through energy democracy.
- Energy democracy goes beyond national security of energy supply to bringing energy resources and infrastructure under public or community ownership or control.
- The renewable energy transition will benefit the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which in turn will contribute to the maintenance of peace.

What lies ahead?

According to UN Secretary-General António Guterres, renewables are the peace plan of the 21st century.

- A five-point plan has been proposed by UN Secretary-General to boost renewable energy around the world.
 1. Renewable energy technology must be made a **global public good** by removing intellectual property barriers to technology transfer.
 2. Global **access to supply chains** for renewable energy technologies components and raw materials must be improved.
 3. The **red tape** that holds up solar and wind projects must be cut off and **fast-track approvals** and more effort to modernize electricity grids are needed.
 4. The world must **shift energy subsidies** from fossil fuels to protect vulnerable people from energy shocks and invest in a just transition to sustainable future.
 5. **Investments in renewables** must be tripled.

References

1. [The Hindu Businessline | Green energy for world peace](#)
2. [United Nations | The need for a renewable revolution](#)
3. [Medium | Renewable energy as a catalyst for peace and justice](#)