



ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSE OF THE BALTIC COUNTRIES TO THE CONFLICT BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Date received : 29 Mei 2022 Revision date : 14 Juni 2022 Date received : 23 Juni 2022 Keywords: <i>Baltic States; Security Dilemma; Foreign policy; Russia-Ukraine; NATO.</i>	<i>This study aims to see the response of the Baltic countries in dealing with the Russia-Ukraine conflict through their foreign policies, where these countries are part of the European Union. The baltic countries also felt a significant impact due to the heating up of relations between the two countries. The Baltic states consisting of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia gave some of their responses to the Russo-Ukrainian conflict by strengthening cooperative relations with NATO. This response is a form of the security dilemma experienced by the Baltic countries. The response of other Baltic countries is also shown by several foreign policies such as stopping the import of Russian gas into their country. Even though their country is very dependent on Russia for their domestic gas energy needs. This dynamic will be discussed in this research using related theories and concepts. This study uses a qualitative method by obtaining data from related sources such as official websites, journals, news portals and official documents from related institutions.</i>

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INTRODUCTION

Ukraine is the only largest country in continental Europe and the country is located in the Eastern European region which is directly adjacent to Russia. Ukraine and Russia were formerly part of the Soviet Union which during the Cold War was one of the superpowers in power at that time. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the two countries have become breakaway states of the Soviet Union with Russia as the main country inheriting the Soviet Union and Ukraine itself becoming independent on August 24, 1991. where the two countries respect and recognize each other's independence

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(Hidriyah S., 2022). The relationship that exists between Ukraine and Russia is marked by the agreement of the two parties in the field of diplomatic relations which was signed on February 14, 1992, marked by the presence of Russia and Ukraine sending each other's ambassadors to each country. In addition, bilateral relations between Russia and Ukraine were also enhanced by an agreement formed in 1977 to be precise on May 31, 1997, regarding the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership and Cooperation between Ukraine and Russia which became the basic foundation of cooperation between Ukraine and Russia in various fields such as cultural, political, social, especially in the economic field (Hidriyah S., 2022).

Bilateral relations between Ukraine and Russia have not always run smoothly and have often experienced internal conflicts between the two. The conflict between Ukraine and Russia reached its peak in 2004 when there was a confrontation carried out by the Ukrainian people due to corruption by the then president, Leonid Kuchma, so the public asked Leonid Kuchma to step down from the position of President and Leonid Kuchma was replaced by President Viktor Yushchenko. However, the change of President Viktor Yushchenko has drawn contra from pro-Russian Ukrainian community groups because Viktor Yushchenko places more emphasis on cooperation with the European Union, especially the desire of Viktor Yushchenko to join the European Union. This desire was rejected by the pro-Russian Ukrainian community because its policies no longer lead to cooperation with Russia (Hidriyah S., 2022).

Furthermore, in 2006 there was a dispute in which Russia was one of the main primary suppliers of gas needed by Ukraine and Ukraine became one of the gas supply routes to the European Union. The dispute started because Ukraine was unable to pay its fines and debts to Russia because Russia continued to increase the price of exports to Ukraine so that on January 1, 2006, Russia stopped supplying gas to Ukraine. Relations between the two countries often experience ups and downs, where the subsequent dispute in 2014 then President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych was a pro-Russian president, causing protests for the pro-European Union community where one of Viktor Yanukovych's policies was to establish trade cooperation with Russia so that The pro-EU community held a confrontation to remove Viktor Yanukovych from the post of president. However, this made Russia intend to invade Ukraine because it did not accept Viktor Yanukovych's ouster (Hidriyah S., 2022). One of the pro-Russian regions in Ukraine is the Crimea region because there are still many ethnic Russian communities in the Crimea region so that Russia makes this moment a form of their invasion of Crimea and the invasion has resulted where on March 16, 2014, Crimea officially fell into the hands of Russia (Hidriyah S., 2022).

The Ukraine-Russia conflict heated up in February 2022 where there was an intention of Ukraine to enter the military defense organization, namely NATO (*North Atlantic Treaty Organization*) where NATO itself was founded by the United States with

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the aim of maintaining the defense and security of its member countries where NATO has principles that if one NATO country is attacked then it is the same as attacking all NATO member countries. Ukraine's desire to join NATO has disturbed Russia as a former Soviet Union country because NATO has expanded its defense and military expansion in Ukraine, thus endangering Russia's security and defense (Hidriyah S., 2022). As a result, Russia carried out a military invasion of Ukraine which had an impact on several regions in Ukraine by carrying out blockades and bombings besides this bombing resulted in material losses such as a lot of destroyed infrastructure, economic crisis, and also a humanitarian crisis. Reporting from Kompas, this military invasion resulted in more than 700 people being injured and more than 300 civilians being killed, and about 1.5 million people fleeing to neighboring countries, one of which was to Poland (Falahi, 2022). The conflict between Ukraine and Russia is still continuing until now when Ukraine is now asking the European Union countries and other countries to take sides and help restore Ukraine's sovereignty.

1. Relations of the Baltic States with Ukraine and Russia The

Baltic is a country located in the Northern European region which is located on the east of the Baltic Coast, where the Baltic region consists of three countries namely Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. One of the relations between the Baltic countries and Ukraine is that these countries are part of the European Union membership. In addition, these Baltic countries are also small countries that came from the former Soviet Union, but since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the three countries, namely Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, declared their independence. These Baltic states joined NATO in 2004 (NATO, NATO, 2020). The purpose of joining the Baltic countries in NATO is to obtain guarantees for the defense and security of each country.

Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania's relations with Russia can be seen in terms of gas exports from Russia to the three Baltic countries. Russia, which is one of the largest gas suppliers in the world, also exports gas to the European Union and to the Baltic countries, namely Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. The dependence of the Baltic countries on Russia in terms of gas is considered by the European Union as a tool to regulate the Baltic countries which aim to achieve Russia's own national interests. Therefore, the European Union formed a program called PCIs (*Project of Common Interest*) which aims to maximize the internal energy market from the European Union which at that time was useful so that the Baltic countries did not have a dependence on Russia the Baltic countries did not influence by Russian interests. In addition to the European Union counteracting the influence of Russia on the Baltic countries, the European Union also has its own reasons where the European Union wants to spread liberal democratic values in the European continent (Carnelian, Purnomo, & Nugroho, 2017).

This conflict between Russia and Ukraine affects the foreign policy taken by the Baltic countries. Among them, there is a policy of stopping gas imports from Russia to

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the Baltic countries, one of which is Lithuania where they decided to stop importing gas from Russia which is carrying out an energy war because Lithuania did not approve of Russia's military invasion of Ukraine. The energy war was carried out by Russia on the basis of maintaining its power as a superpower in the world. The energy war that was carried out was also aimed at reducing western values that affected the countries of the former Soviet Union so that Russia would continue to increase gas production as a form of trade and economic cooperation. This energy war is a threat to the Baltic countries and also the European Union caused by the power of Russia (Carnelian et al., 2017). Reporting from VOA Indonesia on March 23, 2022, the Baltic countries close to Ukraine, namely Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, which have joined NATO since 2004, asked NATO to tighten and deploy their military forces on the borders of the Baltic countries to maintain military defense. the Baltic states (Indonesia V., 2022).

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method by obtaining data from related sources such as official websites, journals, news portals, and official documents from related institutions. This research is in the form of a description which displays more research than data in the form of numbers such as tables, graphs, or other forms. The data collection in this study was sourced from the internet and also digital books written in the bibliography section.

Conceptual Framework

1. *Security Dilemma*

This research will discuss how the response of the Baltic countries to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. With the tension of conflict around the country, making the Baltic countries also act to increase their security. One framework that can explain the actions of the Baltic states is the security dilemma. The security *dilemma* in political science is an action taken by a country to increase the security of their country as a form of reaction from other countries, which in turn leads to a decrease from the initial increase in state security (Wivel, nd). The security dilemma can be said to be part of the defensive realist because for the defensive realist it is a security dilemma that allows countries to cooperate with countries outside the alliance in the face of a common enemy. (Tang, 2010). According to Robert Jervis, he explained there is a link between the security dilemma and the opportunity for state cooperation. Jervis said that there are several things that can increase the country's willingness to cooperate in the midst of security dilemmas. Basically, one of the things that drive why the security dilemma occurs is the motive of a state to seek security for its country. When the state seeks to seek the security that is driven by the security of force, a security dilemma occurs (Tang, 2010).

The security dilemma in international relations is defined as a situation that encourages countries to strengthen their defense and security systems which can

influence the reactions of other countries to take defensive actions and can also create strategic cooperation with other countries that are stronger (Suharman, 2019). Talking about security dilemmas, the sources of threats to security for a country can be militarily and non-military in nature. Sources of threats from a military perspective can come from civil wars and ethnic wars that can threaten the national security of a country. While non-military, these threats can come from the environment that can endanger human life (Perwita, 2008).

2. Foreign Policy Theory

This study uses *foreign policy theory* as an analytical framework to see how the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on the foreign policy of the Baltic countries. Since the treaty of Westphalia and the end of the First and Second World Wars, the international system has witnessed an increasing growth in the development of nation-states, this is what led to the creation of interactions between these nation-states. In addition, the formation of the United Nations and the decolonization process which freed many countries to become sovereign gave impetus to the creation of reciprocal relations between countries. That is with the aim of determining and identifying decisions, strategies, and interactions between a country and other countries (Held D, McGrew A, Goldblatt D, Perraton J, 1999).

Foreign policy theory is an analysis of foreign policy that includes the process and results of decision-making. This is in accordance with Tayfur's opinion which states that foreign policy is a form of official activity formulated and implemented by official agents of a sovereign state as an orientation, plan, commitment, and action aimed at the external environment of the state (Tayfur, 1994). Furthermore, foreign policy can also be interpreted as a policy consisting of various state efforts in achieving goals, values, decision making, and actions taken by a country's government against outside parties or the external environment (Webber & Smith, 2002). Meanwhile, according to Joseph Frankel, foreign policy consists of decisions and actions, which to some extent involve relations between one country and another (Frankel, 1968). Thus, foreign policy involves a series of actions carried out within national boundaries, which are directed against forces that exist outside the national boundaries. This foreign policy consists of the formulation and implementation of a set of ideas that govern the behavior of states when interacting with other countries to defend and enhance their national interests.

Foreign policy theory has five main models in its approach, one of which is a *rational choice* or *rational action theory*, or it can also be called a strategic model in foreign policy making. According to Lloyd Jensen, this model emphasizes the efforts of states to maximize the achievement of their goals based on rational calculations in the international political system (Jensen, 1982). Here, Jensen also emphasizes that the focus of this model places more emphasis on transactions/interactions between the parties involved, and the continuity and change of foreign policy are also explained based on the

strategic objectives of policy makers (Cottam, 2019). (Elster, 1989) stated the essence of the rational model when he said that "when confronted with some course of action, people usually do what they believe will give the best overall outcome. The 'rationality' defined by the rational model adopts a more specific approach and narrow, which simply means that an individual (simply) acts as if balancing costs with benefits to arrive at actions that maximize his personal benefits (Friedman, 1953). In the foreign policy assumptions, this model sees that the state will prefer act rationally to maximize the benefits that will be obtained by the country or fulfill *national interests*.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Russia-Ukraine relations with the Baltic States Before the Conflict (2014)

Russia, Ukraine, and the three Baltic countries – Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia – were states that were part of the Soviet Union. During the Soviet Union era, the Baltic states were geopolitically very important to the Soviet Union, this was because the geographical location of the Baltic countries provided a barrier between Russia and Western Europe, so this could help protect Russia from western invasion (Matthews, 2020). It was this geopolitical importance of the Baltic states that led to the Baltic being brought into the Soviet Union and stripped of its independence in 1940, as well as adopting a communist economy. But considering that the national culture of the Baltic states is more closely related to the culture of Western Europe than that of Eastern Europe and Russia, the Baltic states have the intention of becoming a western capitalist state once they gain complete independence from the Soviet Union.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the Baltic states gaining full independence from the Soviet Union, they sought to pursue closer ties with western countries, such as joining NATO and the European Union. The severance of relations between the Baltic states and Russia in the post-Soviet period was seen in the refusal of the Baltic states to join the *Commonwealth of Independent States* (CIS), which is an organization of former states or the commonwealth of the Soviet Union. The Baltic states refusing to join the CIS are a source of concern for Russia. Russia lost its sphere of influence in the Baltic states after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The westernized Baltic states and sharing a border with Russia, poses a new military, political and economic threat to Russia. Relations between Russia and the Baltic states then experienced tension and the emergence of territorial disputes. (Vakar, 2015).

Before Russia started its aggression against Ukraine, including the annexation of Crimea, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia had felt a higher level of security because of their membership in NATO and the European Union. However, the outbreak of the crisis in Ukraine at the end of November 2013 which led to the annexation of Crimea and the occurrence of a military conflict in the Donbas, caused chaos not only in Ukraine but also in Europe and beyond, especially the Baltic countries. The annexation of Crimea and the

outbreak of war in Ukraine in 2014 weakened the sense of security in the Baltic countries, especially the fear of Russia's propaganda campaign targeting the Baltic countries. According to some analysts, the Baltic states are considered to have great opportunities as targets for the next Russian intervention (Giles, 2016). Russia's argument for annexing Crimea was to defend ethnic Russians and the rights of Russian-speaking speakers there, this resulted in the Baltic countries' concerns about their Russian-speaking population. In response to this, the Baltic governments are trying to adopt countermeasures such as Latvia and Lithuania that prohibit the appearance of Russian media in their countries.

During the 2014 Crimean annexation crisis, the Baltic states emphatically showed their support for Ukraine (Javed, Muhammad & Rahim, Nazim & Khan, Assad, 2019). This relates to the main foreign policy goal of the Baltic countries since independence in 1991, namely integration with Western countries. After joining NATO and the European Union in 2004, the Baltic countries broadened their foreign policy focus, namely supporting other post-Soviet countries by offering assistance so that these countries can achieve full democracy from a political and market economy perspective. The Ukrainian crisis has provided the opportunity for the Baltic states to demonstrate their unity on the international scene on a much larger scale (MILEvSKI & Milevski, 2017).

The three Baltic states have vocally supported Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity in the ongoing crisis, and condemned Russia's actions through all diplomatic channels. Baltic countries' assistance to Ukraine includes providing financial assistance, project support, reform expertise, aid humanitarian services provided by the government, and involvement in supporting civil society organizations (Vilson, 2017). In accordance with the *rational choice in foreign policy theory*, the Baltic countries prefer to act rationally, namely fully supporting Ukraine as a post-Soviet country so that it is free from communist influence, and the advantage gained by the Baltic countries is their stronger influence in the Union. Europe, NATO, as well as in the international arena. However, although the Baltic states and other western countries fully support Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea and the military conflict that occurred in Ukraine is seen as the incompetence of the West and the collapse of the European security system (Dalia Grybauskaitė, in Easton, 2014).

2. Russia-Ukraine relations with post-conflict baltic states (period 2022)

The war that occurred between Russia and Ukraine had an impact on the Baltic countries (Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania). These three countries have had different responses to their relations with Russia and Ukraine. In 2022, especially after the war, the two Baltic countries, namely Lithuania and Latvia, decided to reduce their diplomatic relations with Russia and ordered the Russian ambassador to leave the two countries. Vilnius as the capital of Lithuania also closed the Russian consulate in the city of Klaipėda. Not long after that, the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Edgars Rinkēvičs, also did the same thing, namely Riga would reduce diplomatic relations with Moscow (Rmol.id, 2022).

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The Baltics themselves are working on their diplomatic ties in Europe to impose sanctions on Russia and its oligarchic elite, and the individual member states' decisions to violate previous policies and send lethal aid to Ukraine has felt like a victory in the Baltic states. Then, the European reaction was a strong counter-attack against Russia regarding the "zones of special interest" in the former Soviet territories and the important perception of Eastern Europe as a zone of limited sovereignty. With Russia's actions that can be said to be aggressive, these three countries are worried and worried about their fate. They feared for their fate that they might become targets of the next invasion by Russia. Meanwhile, relations between the Baltic and Ukraine have been good since Ukraine's independence (FPRI, 2022). With the war in 2022, the three Baltic countries are helping Ukraine with social or financial action. As of 13 May 2022, there was a petition submitted to the Russian embassy by the Estonian people regarding "*Free Ukraine*" which was signed by 1,700 people. On the previous day, Estonia also helped to rebuild Zhytomyr Oblast in Ukraine. Not only that, but Estonia also helps in military terms as well as for Lithuania (World, 2022).

3. The Baltic States' Response to the Russo-Ukrainian

Conflict The conflict that occurred between Russia and Ukraine in 2022 is nothing new between the two countries. Previously, Russia and Ukraine had been involved in a conflict when Russia's military intervention in Ukraine also included a series of armed conflicts. This resulted in the annexation by Russia of one of the regions in Ukraine, namely Crimea, which occurred on March 18, 2014, in (Widiasa, 2018). Since the incident, some experts have assumed that when the Baltic countries are countries that have the potential to become victims of further Russian intervention. With the crisis in Ukraine, it became a big challenge for the foreign policy of the Baltic countries at that time (Vilson, 2017). This, of course, has become a threat to the security of the Baltic countries, considering that these three countries are part of the Soviet Union so they have the potential to be intervened by Russia.

After the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine broke out again in February 2022. Relations between the two countries experienced several ups and downs, starting with the change of leader of Ukraine which brought the country closer to the West thereby reducing the role of Russia. Ukraine also has a desire to join the European Union and there is a desire for Ukraine to become a member of NATO which actually poses a threat to the significant role of Russia itself (Hidriyah S., 2022). The conflict between the two countries has caused many reactions from various countries in the world, one of which is through the provision of economic sanctions. For the Baltic countries, this conflict certainly threatens the three countries considering that in the opinion of experts the Baltic countries have the potential to become Russia's next target (Vilson, 2017).

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With this, it is possible that the Baltic countries will become the next target (Indonesia C., 2022). Apart from Ukraine, Poland has also shown concern for its country and the Baltic states. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki fears that Russia will attack Poland, Finland, or even the Baltic states after Ukraine. According to him, Vladimir Putin will develop an aggressive invasion policy. The statement refers to Russia's actions against Georgia in 2008 to date that have occurred in Ukraine (Kompas, 2022). Some of the former Soviet Union countries have shown their concern.

One of the reasons why the Russia-Ukraine conflict is experiencing high tension is of them the presence of the *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (NATO) on the Russia-Ukraine border. This has provoked Russia's action to use its military power in the region (Indonesia C., 2022). It is known that so far, it has been recorded that 28 European countries have become members of the defense pact (NATO, Nato. int, 2020). This is a threat to Russia because NATO itself has several military bases, one of which is in Eastern Europe. Russia is one of the countries with the best military strength in the world. The presence of NATO is certainly a challenge for Russia.

The Baltic countries are European countries that are also members of NATO. The Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia along with Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia officially became members of NATO on March 29, 2004 (NATO, 2004). The reason why the three Baltic states (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) joined NATO from a historical and political point of view is that they are desperate to join the alliance and accept formal security guarantees under Article V which explains that they feel that they need defense from threats. Russia in the future (Hyde-Price, 2000). If we look at the dynamics of relations between the Baltic countries and Russia, Russia's policy towards the Baltic countries in recent decades has been cooperative and confrontational in several respects. However, the dominating nature of Russian policy largely has an impact on the efforts of the Baltic countries to decide to join NATO (Kramer, 2002).

If we look at some history, we can understand that the reason why the Baltic countries decided to build an alliance was to minimize threats mainly from Russia. Currently, in the midst of the tension between Russia and Ukraine, the Baltic countries are starting to show their concern over the impact that could happen to the region around them. This is evidenced by the Baltic countries whose military power has long been minimized by Russia, urging NATO to establish their presence and role permanently in their territory after Russia invaded Ukraine. The three Baltic states have long been considered by some NATO members to be the most vulnerable. The three countries also felt anxious when Moscow began to exert influence in the Eastern European region. However, these three Baltic countries also believe that by strengthening their joint alliance NATO can respond to the invasion by Russia against Ukraine (Indonesia V., 2022).

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Regarding the position of the Baltic countries, Russia has expressed concern over the concentration of NATO in the Baltic region, this is due to reports by Western think-tanks that the Baltics could become a confrontation area between the West and Russia. In response to this, officials from the three countries asked the West to take strong action against Russia (News, 2021). Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkevics also asked NATO to expand its role and presence in the region. This is done in order to ensure security for people in the Baltic region (Indonesia V., 2022).

If we look back at the explanation of the security dilemma, the actions of the Baltic countries who want to strengthen the alliance with NATO are evidence that these countries are experiencing a security dilemma. The source of the threat to the security of the Baltic countries comes from the Russian invasion of Ukraine militarily. The Baltic countries feel a security dilemma when the three countries have close ties to Russia. In 2007, ethnic Russian minorities had a rebellion in Estonia. In fact, a quarter of the total population in Latvia and Estonia are ethnic Russian minorities. The Russian ethnic minority once protested against the government's plan to relocate the Soviet war memorial. This is certainly related to the power of Russia when ethnic Russian minorities protested in one of the Baltic countries. Of course, this is a consideration for the Baltic countries regarding their security (Kumparan, 2022).

Apart from Estonia and Latvia, Lithuania also seems to be experiencing a security dilemma. Lithuania shares a border with Russian territory, the area is where the Baltic Sea fleet is based there, namely in Kaliningrad. The Baltic country also borders Belarus, which carries out military exercises with Russia (Kumparan, 2022). The people of the Baltic countries expressed their concern because of the possibility that Putin would take power over the former Soviet Union countries. Russian President Vladimir Putin has not expressed his ambition to control the Baltic states. However, the public shows these concerns.

The concerns experienced by the Baltic countries clearly show that these countries are experiencing a security dilemma. There is a security dilemma that at any time the Baltics will have a fate like Ukraine. With these concerns, the Baltic countries are increasing their alliances with Western countries through defense cooperation, namely NATO. With these concerns, as a member country in the same defense pact, Joe Biden as President of the United States announced that he would deploy a number of troops to Europe. As for some of the military assistance provided, such as 800 infantry soldiers, F-35 fighter aircraft, and Apache helicopters (Kumparan, 2022).

To overcome this security dilemma, the leaders of the Baltic countries also asked NATO to immediately place its permanent deployment in the region to confront Russian forces. According to the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, the permanent deployment will be considered by reviewing NATO's larger defense posture (Indonesia V., 2022). From the efforts of the Baltic countries to increase their cooperation with NATO

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and ask for the placement of safeguards for the country's security, it is clear that the Baltic countries are doing cooperation and alliances to reduce the level of security dilemmas they experience. In addition to establishing cooperation to reduce security dilemmas, the Baltic countries have also responded to the Russia-Ukraine conflict by carrying out several foreign policies to reduce conflict tensions between the two countries. This foreign policy is more directed at the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

Several foreign policies issued by the Baltic countries to respond to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine can be seen from an economic and diplomatic perspective. Lithuania, as one of the Baltic countries, imposed economic sanctions on Russia after its invasion of Ukraine. This sanction was conveyed by the President of Lithuania, Gitanas Nausėda that gas from the invasion onwards, Russian gas no longer exists in Lithuanian territory (Tempo, 2022). In addition to refusing imported Russian gas, the sanctions are also part of another policy, namely Lithuania's refusal to pay in rubles, namely the Russian currency. Another foreign policy carried out by the Baltic countries is to push for an embargo on Russia. According to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, Gabrielius Landsbergis, he said that sanctions against the energy sector are inevitable considering that oil is a large source of revenue for Russia's budget (Tempo, 2022).

The foreign policies of the Baltic countries were also shown from a humanitarian perspective in responding to the invasion by Russia against Ukraine. This is shown by the three Baltic countries (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) supporting Ukraine politically, economically and militarily (CEPA, 2022). In addition, the people of the Baltic countries also gave solidarity support to Ukraine during times of conflict. This is demonstrated by the presence of donations, volunteers, and willingness for Ukrainian refugees, and participating in the delivery of logistics goods for the needs of the Ukrainian people (CEPA, 2022).

Another response issued by the Baltic countries to Russia's invasion of Ukraine is the increase in state readiness for its military capabilities. The Baltic states are committed to increasing their military budgets by more than 2% of their gross domestic product for defense purposes. In fact, Latvia increased the percentage of the budget to 3%. The Baltic states continue to voice their response to the conflict by imposing sanctions on Russia throughout the regime and boycotting Russia. The Baltic states also voiced military support for Ukraine and continued efforts to discuss the granting of EU candidate status to Ukraine. The Baltic states are also ready to assist Ukraine in preparing for this. The Baltic states also gave support to Ukraine's reconstruction plan after Russian troops left the country (CEPA, 2022).

The Baltic countries also responded to Russia's invasion of Ukraine from a diplomatic point of view. The Baltic states are trying to pressure Europe into expelling Russia from *The Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication* (SWIFT). The Baltic states continue to pursue diplomatic relations with Ukraine through the

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provision of military assistance such as Latvia and Lithuania providing Stinger aircraft to Ukraine and Estonia providing anti-tank Javelin weapons. The Baltic countries continue to provide assistance in the form of weapons, personal equipment, and medicines (FPRI, 2022). Another diplomatic response was when the Baltic states decided to expel 10 Russian diplomats from their country. Lithuania expelled four diplomats from Russia, while Latvia and Estonia expelled three diplomats from Russia each. This action is a response to Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine. This is a form of solidarity from the Baltic countries toward Ukraine (Reuters, 2022).

This response is a form of foreign policy decided by the Baltic countries. This is said to be a policy because the Baltic countries are trying to achieve their goals, where the Baltic countries are trying to improve their security by continuing to establish relations with their alliance, namely NATO and to show their solidarity with Ukraine. This foreign policy involves the three Baltic countries who are trying to defend and enhance their national interests, namely to maintain national security and to show a sense of wanting to help a country that is currently facing an invasion, namely Ukraine.

Looking at the response of the Baltic countries to the foreign policy model, we can understand that the response is part of a rational model in the formation of foreign policy. This is because the state rationally seeks to maximize the achievement of its goals with rational calculations. The rationale here can be seen from the interactions carried out by the three Baltic countries with each other and also with the alliance, namely NATO to work together in improving their security in the face of Russian power. The Baltic countries acted rationally to continue to strengthen cooperation with NATO in order to support the capacity of the Baltic countries in strengthening their country's security in dealing with Russia. Meanwhile, the Baltic countries are also maximizing their foreign policy to strengthen their solidarity with Ukraine by providing various aids and pursuing diplomatic measures. Therefore, the foreign policy that was born from the Baltic countries was born from the rational thinking of the country that national security is an important thing to be improved through cooperation with defense alliances and also to achieve its goal of helping Ukraine face the invasion from Russia.

CONCLUSION

Problems between Russia and Ukraine have been going on since 2004 regarding the issue of corruption by the leadership at the time and differences of opinion with pro-Russian Ukraine. In addition, they also had a conflict in 2006 namely a dispute where Russia as a gas supplier to the European Union and Ukraine was unable to pay its fines and debts to Russia. Then, the next dispute, namely in 2014 regarding the President of Ukraine who was pro-Russian, caused protests for the pro-EU community where one of his policies was to establish trade cooperation with Russia so the pro-EU protested. The culmination of this problem is the conflict in 2022 in February where Ukraine wants to

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enter and become a member of NATO. This of course made the Russian side angry that Ukraine was threatened by Russia and invaded the military into Ukraine. Also, Russia does not want NATO to expand its defense and military expansion in Ukraine. This conflict has made the Baltic countries, which are located not far from Russia and Ukraine, panic. Baltic relations were originally part of the Soviet Union but due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, they separated themselves from Russia. The Baltic countries have also become members of NATO so that their defense is stronger than any invasion, including Russia. Even so, the Baltic States continue to cooperate both economically and diplomatically. Also, Baltic relations with Ukraine are also very good because they support Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity in the ongoing crisis and often help Ukraine. Also, with this post-war event, the three Baltic countries have reduced their diplomatic relations with Russia. As with Ukraine, the three baltic countries helped to get to the bottom of the financial problems and the damage that Russia had done. This shows the Baltic response that is more pro to Ukraine as well as the anxiety of the Baltic position of an attack from Russia.

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(2022)

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Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Science

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