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## Letters: vulnerable Ukrainians need non-Nato support

The UN could authorise non-Nato forces to protect pregnant women, babies, elderly and disabled people under attack



An injured pregnant woman is carried from the maternity hospital in Mariupol, Ukraine. Photograph: Evgeniy Maloletka/AP

To avoid dangerous opposition on the ground from Russian forces, it is essential for protected humanitarian support to [Ukraine](#) to come from non-Nato countries, thereby reducing the risk of escalation of military action, including possible nuclear warfare.

If the UN general assembly provides support for humanitarian forces entering Ukraine and if President Zelenskiy's government invites such support, secure humanitarian aid, including medical assistance for pregnant women, babies, severely ill children, injured, elderly and disabled people might be achieved. Such support could include protected humanitarian corridors, protection of hospitals and other health facilities and safe medical evacuation when needed. We are not aware of any legal reason against this approach and it avoids the UN security council issue of a Russian veto.

In 2019, the World Bank reported that 138 non-Nato countries/territories have a total of 21,748,000 military personnel (minus Russia and Ukraine). These countries combined have the economic strength, expertise in humanitarian missions and the military capacity to provide secure humanitarian protection for Ukraine.

The question is whether, if requested by Ukraine, the UN would be willing to lead and, also, whether countries would be willing to work together to provide international forces to secure protected humanitarian assistance in Ukraine as a matter of urgency.

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