

THE WEEK

Only 5 countries, including North Korea, vote against U.N. resolution condemning Russia

GRAYSON QUAY

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Simon & Garfunkel once described a scenario in which "friends just can't be found," and one can easily imagine that, following Wednesday's United Nations vote condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin and company might find solace in listening to "Bridge Over Troubled Water" on repeat.

According to *The New York Times*, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning Russian aggression, with 141 countries voting in favor, 34 abstaining, and only five voting against.

The result matched the international outpouring of support for Ukraine seen around the world in the past week. Pro-Ukraine demonstrations sprang up in London, Madrid, Milan, Paris, Tokyo, Seoul, Cape Town, and several other cities. During President Biden's State of the Union address on Tuesday, many lawmakers waved small Ukrainian flags or wore Ukrainian flag pins.

The no votes on the resolution came from five authoritarian nations: Russia, North Korea, Eritrea, Syria, and Russia's close ally Belarus.

The Cato Institute's 2020 Human Freedom Index ranks Russia as the 115th freest country on earth. Belarus barely cracks the top 100 at 99th. Syria appears on the list as the 10th *least* free country in the world. North Korea and Eritrea, both one-party dictatorships, are not ranked at all.

Among the nations that abstained from the vote were Iraq, Iran, India, Pakistan, and China. In early February, China and Russia released a joint statement that, among other things, condemned NATO expansion but did not directly mention Ukraine.