International Relations · GS - II

Examine the humanitarian and strategic implications of missile and drone attacks on urban centres during the Russia–Ukraine conflict. How can international law and diplomacy help reduce civilian suffering?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 22/10/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Russia–Ukraine conflict; urban warfare; civilian protection; international humanitarian law; principle of distinction; proportionality; critical infrastructure; air defence; United Nations; diplomatic settlement

Model Answer

Introduction

Missile and drone attacks on urban centres demonstrate how modern warfare exposes civilians and essential infrastructure to serious risks. Explosions over Kyiv highlight the importance of civilian protection and compliance with international law.

Humanitarian Implications

- **Civilian casualties:** Attacks and falling debris from intercepted projectiles can cause deaths, injuries and displacement.
- **Infrastructure damage:** Electricity, healthcare, water and transport systems may be disrupted.
- **Psychological impact:** Repeated attacks create insecurity and long-term trauma among affected populations.

Strategic Implications

Air-defence systems help protect population centres and critical infrastructure but require sustained resources and technological support. Attacks can also intensify retaliation, prolong hostilities and increase regional instability.

Role of International Law and Diplomacy

International humanitarian law requires distinction between civilian and military targets, proportionality in attacks and feasible precautions to minimise civilian harm. The UN Charter provides the broader framework governing the use of force. Humanitarian assistance, prisoner exchanges, monitoring mechanisms and sustained diplomatic engagement can help reduce suffering.

Way Forward

All parties should comply with international law, protect essential civilian services, facilitate humanitarian access and pursue credible negotiations.

Conclusion

Military measures alone cannot ensure lasting security. Civilian protection, accountability and diplomacy remain essential to a sustainable resolution of the conflict.

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