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Ukraine-Russian War: Challenges and Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

Our world has always faced numerous issues, driven by both natural cycles and states' egoistic desires. Global organizations struggle to prevent human rights violations and environmental damage, as international structures from the early industrial era have become ineffective. A new Cold War has emerged, shifting from military to psycho-material spheres, with a focus on AI, drones, cybersecurity, and nuclear weapons. In the northwest of Eurasia, a new military intervention among Slavs is in full swing. Two forces, each stubbornly refusing to capitulate, fight against each other, raising questions about the morality of their actions. Every people, ethnicity, or nation has the right to self-determination, but these conflicts often lead to significant geopolitical tensions. Ukraine, a sovereign state, is at the heart of this global tension. It has the right to decide what is best for its people and to choose its own path of development. However, in our globalized world, every action can have far-reaching consequences, much like the "butterfly effect." Ukraine must consider the interests of its former partners and modern neighbors to navigate this complex landscape. At this critical juncture, Ukraine must reflect on its choices, asking itself: "What did we overlook?" The country's decisions are pivotal, not only for its future but also for global stability. Every move in this geopolitical chess game has the potential to alter the balance of power, making Ukraine's choices crucial in shaping the outcome of this new era of global relations.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary world we can observe there are multitude number of problems including discrimination, wars, diseases that happened in 2020. Moreover, to begin with 2024 there are political dynamics become swift as a result tracking each event get difficult. One of the main issues today world is long-term conflicts such as Russian – Ukraine War (West-East) which is continued around 3 years where rudiment began in 2014 "Euromaidan". Europe or European union is one of the most significant rivals against Russian expansionism, with support of USA. The Monroe Doctrine was articulated in 1823, putting the obligation on European countries not to hinder United States' interests in the Western Hemisphere. The phrase "America for Americans, Europe for Europeans" remained just a slogan, despite the fact that the USA is very sensitive and does not grant access to European powers. Understandably, they have always taken a particular interest in their closest neighbors and shown deep concern about the political and social situation in the eastern side of their adjacent neighbors. After establishing The European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, which was first step toward unification of European states with identical law and orientation. All of these advancements of the merit of two representatives "Schuman declaration" French foreigner minister and politicians Jean Monnet. As a result, six European countries created rudiment for new era of partnership. While, Cold War between two nations proceed, European powers deeper integration process in various fields, they formalize new two treaties, which are implemented EEC and the Euratom. Begin with 90s Maastrix treaty became

last accord to unify all European states come together.

Key Reasons for the Ukraine War

To analyze the reasons for the Ukraine war, we can consider several levels:

Mental Level

This involves Putin's personal ambitions and his belief in the weaknesses and corruption of Ukrainian politicians. Additionally, there is a conviction in his own strength and greatness, particularly after the annexation of Crimea.

Politics and State of the Country

Ukraine's orientation toward Western cooperation (NATO and the EU) contrasts with Russia's militarization and assertive military strategy. This includes an arms race and ambitions related to the restoration of the Russian Empire.

Global Politics and Standards

There is a struggle for hegemony in Eurasia, heightened by increasing tensions between the U.S. and China, which creates a fertile ground for dissatisfaction. In this context, Russia stands in the way of China's interests, particularly concerning North Korea, which could lead to conflicts with the U.S. The division of the international relations system into blocs also plays a significant role.

Post-Soviet Transition and Influence on Ukraine and the World

The Euromaidan protests that took place in Ukraine can indeed be seen as part of a broader issue related to cultural identification, particularly Ukraine's position at

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the intersection of Eastern and Western cultures, and its proximity to Russia. After falling USSR, Ukraine like other former Soviet republics, gained their independence but saved his “russianism” governmental structures.

Regarding Ukraine’s foreign policy during the presidency of Leonid Kravchuk in 1991, it is important to note that Ukraine has always been a focus of international attention. Western countries, particularly the United States, expressed deep concern about nuclear missiles and their disarmament in Ukraine, aiming to reduce their quantity, ultimately leading to their complete elimination. One mandatory aspect of the new era of geopolitics is the concept of “Rod States,” which are essential for supporting and maintaining superpowers. A rudimentary example is the United States, which has been supported in the West by European countries, specifically by the United Kingdom and France. Turning to the East, Japan has played a significant role after its defeat in World War II. The main point in mentioning “Rod States” is that, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia began to struggle to find companionship among Islamic countries. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia not only lost its bulky power but also its ideological dopamine, leading to a political crisis in its relations with its “Near Abroad.” However, the communist legacy persisted for several years before a refreshment of judicial politicians throughout the entire government.

When President Putin was inaugurated in 2000, he began the invasion of national television and several channels. These channels, which had illuminated the corruption and political harassment at its apex, were shut down by the resisting and pressured side of the Putin government. Thus, Mass Media or third force transformed or closed for saving Putin prominent. There is no democracy as well many CIS Commonwealth Independent States, detention became ordinary case against liberal Mass Media initiatives.

As noted in the National Security Strategy for Russia, one of the potential threats is “Westernization” in sustaining cultural independency as well NATO

NATO’s success that can be explain by equality values and philosophy preconditions, which assist to sustain security of Western countries.

It’s valuable to explore the National Security Strategy of Russia, became with 2000 till today. Russia has always been ready to preserve its security including through military ways. It’s possible to utilizing military force for ensure national security. Under the military force, nuclear weapons and military force operations are not excluded. We can be absolutely sure, just exploring NSS began 2000 and speech by the president, this cannot be precluded. Any attempt at governmental overthrow will be met with military force, but there are also many solid hindrances, such as the presence of a Middle Ages monarchy in certain intrinsic parts of the federation.

Geopolitical Alliances and Trade Dynamics

Russia, which at first was a lone country, gradually found

a new ally that has economic power or the Asian Tiger. Trade turnover statistics for 2022 between partners reached up to 101 billion compared to after the collapse of the USSR Composition was Crude oil and gas China became a great power which are the main competitor against the USA. These tendencies became obvious in 2016 in the presidential election in the USA. Today, US policy is aimed at containing China’s rise in Eurasia and preventing it from becoming a global power, and it will use Japan as well as Seeking Korea to maintain its position in Asia. And Japan, despite showing respect and support for the United States, will side with China or be neutral. Only the desired Korea can prevent the rise of China, but the question is that the union of the two Korean states can change not only the geographical appearance but also the balance of power.

Despite the fact that China is loyal to Russia, but, it seems, only for a short time, China, Pakistan and Iran will receive a new geopolitical vector against the United States and India. One of the issues in China’s foreign policy is Russia’s dependence, especially in the field of energy transportation. It is critical that China sought to alternatives. Alternatives against Russia will be Central Asia states especially Kazakhstan which have unique location, we can call this “Asian vector” consisting three key states: China, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, these states will become communication routes of a new era between East and West, without any blackmail from Russian authorities. The Trans-Caspian line and prolonged path through the Caucasus Mountains, then through Georgia, continues its journey via Eastern Anatolia, reaching then Europe border Balkans, thus end up in the West Europe. The are giovani yet, consistently turnover and energy trade will reach apex by 2030 to this time third rail link with China will be completed, thus the rail link will boost freight capacity between the countries. On the other hand, European states will be willing to reconsider aspects of trade in order to avoid the divergence of products. The Russian establishment should sustain kindle of partnership with China while it is at war.

Turning point in United States policy was Obama’s speech at the East Asia Summit in Indonesia in 2011. Everything changed with Barack Obama’s arrival in 2011 and the failure of American policy in the Arab Spring, leading to a shift in focus towards Asia. Thus, as the first Pacific president, he sought to strengthen US relations in the region. This was underscored by the establishment of a systemic organization led by the US called “Trans-Pacific Cooperation”, aimed at promoting American values and principles such as intellectual property protection, labor rights, environmental protection, and transparency, which have irked Beijing

Beijing is now considering hostile Western approaches to encourage dissent in China with the aim of destabilizing the capital in order to dissolve the Communist Party, in addition to increasing unemployment through currency revaluation. Last but not least, the incitement of hatred between countries in the region against Beijing due to

China's efforts to take the lead in the South China Sea. Vietnam and Japan harbor deep suspicions regarding China's ambitions, so the US presence is a security guarantee for them.

US actions could prompt a response from other WTO countries and create the appearance of trade barriers that would negatively erupt in the war and on the way to eastern Europe. A trade war due to the mismatch of industrial structures will become a new depression in the world.

Nato and Ukraine: Strategic Shifts and Conflicts

When Russia entered a brutal and unprovoked war against Ukraine in February 2022, the allies agreed to reset NATO's deterrence and defense systems for the long term. Elevated to the rank of a strategic doctrine, NATO's transition to the practice of force (military) actions outside the bloc's area of responsibility and without the sanction of the UN Security Council is fraught with the threat of destabilizing the entire strategic situation in the world. Recent interview Carlson Tucker American cultivated political commentator with V. Putin in Moscow showed that the Russian invasion to Ukraine has been inevitable. Ad hoc of this invasion initial deep historical processes. Interview was attempted for justifiable for their acts and Putin's arguments were unsensible, this is violation international law, human rights but the most important it's violation and intervention independency separate states. Ukraine, linguistic using the Russian not giving them rights to conquer another country,

The Ukrainians must decide between west with USA and European Union or long-term neighbor. Neutrality? It's impossible to close their eyes after Russian invasion, as well as current president Zelensky has west-orientation which is making the alternative fatal. The European union led by the United States, spent billion dollars for sustain and enhancing military corps and weapons of Ukraine. Apart from it there are million people suffer from corruption, they are hungry, there is long-term conflict, they need shelter and support.

Approaching NATO to borders of Russia the crucial threats to Russian it's underestimate like a self-destruction. Imperialists in the government, like Zhirinovskiy, desire to recreate a union with Muslim states and with China to counter threats from the West. It may be right to say that today, Russia is moving straight towards this theory. The invasion 2008, 2014, 2022 recreate appropriate ambience for pushing anti-Americanism or westernization, but there is separation in society resemble post-Soviet period. Identification, modern issue in global world, multitude number of countries in order to avoid this matter choose one option between several. Part of them endeavor preserve isolation by choosing autocracy or liberal democracy at the end hybrid by gradually becoming formal democracy. The elections in Russia in 2024 and the US in 2024 are crucial, especially for Russians. The recent death of Russian opposition leader Navalny, who spent three years in the strictest prison in Russia known

as "Polar Wolf," along with the deletion of all data, serves as evidence of the rarity of an undemocratic regime under Putin.

Christian Club "EU" implement as before restrictive measures inimical to Russia as well as transient financial and military support for Ukraine's. The three main states French and Germany demonstrate hearty salvation, the President of France Emmanuel Macron in his speech repeated Russia defeat vital because the escalation of the conflict will hold Europe under deep chaos. Turning to the performance of Putin's in front of the Mass media his seems very confident, maybe we contemplate that NATO never legislate military operation against Russia. What we can say confidently that Soviet power which is associated in the west as backwardness already behind, today if we observe the statistic economical evolution, beginning 2020 Russia display durable growth which is last in today, these economic miracles attributed to China and India, China is exporting alumina, which has crucial military applications, in return Russia selling his energy. But in long term Russia may face with new threats, losing their economic independency. It would be right to mention that the Soviet Union collapsed the same reason, as we know the critical factor which is saved and refine the union was exporting oil and gas through Siberian pipeline. Without economic diversity, Russia will lose this war with massive consequences.

Furthermore, we should mention that GDP of Ukraine marginally went down than Albany even lower CIS (Commonwealth of Independent states) like Armenia, suffered economic crisis and dependence on Russia. It's not lucrative to consider Ukraine as part of the European Union though located in European region. Over 20 years Ukraine not able to consolidate ukrainians in common values and create steadfast economy. Occasionally, people living there behold the governmental structures simply influenced by Western neighbors "USA & EU".

In early 1994, after advent of President Kuchma dualism of Ukrainian foreign policy commence, thus, in official speeches Kuchma called Russia "strategic partner" but he in any case allege that the Ukrainians choose in ancient time their European direction as well as Russia is an outcast in the Asian expanses. Meanwhile, Russia put efforts into forming a multipolar world, while GUAM, which is comparatively weak today, became an opponent against post-Soviet integration formations.

West and East Part of the Ukraine

Historically, Western Ukrainians have spoken Ukrainian and recognized the power of the Pope. Their uniqueness lies in their nationalism. On the other hand, Eastern Ukraine is distinguished by a significant number of Russian-speaking people who have had opportunities to receive education in their own language. Crimea was predominantly inhabited by Russians before Khrushchev's transfer in 1954, which was essentially a gift to Ukraine. It is indeed true that Russia establishment has used the presence of ethnic Russians in Crimea and eastern

Ukraine to justify its actions in the region. The Russian government has argued that it has a duty to protect the interest and rights of Russians living abroad, and this context is reflected in National Security Strategy. The Russian's NSS emphasizes that Russia will use all means, including military forces, if necessary, to preserve and defend the rights of Russian people abroad.

Therefore, in the context of the XX-century, Russia severely expressed concerns about military threats near its border. The phrase "Si vis pacem, para bellum" highlight the idea that Russia was prepared to defend itself against potential threats, hence this concept has been playing significant role in Russian foreign policy in near abroad "Blizhnee zarubezhe".

Since 2000, the Russian government has consistently stated that the main threats to its security are the expansion of NATO and the potential establishment of military bases near its borders and it will cause political destabilization thus therefore increase international strain.

Like other nations, Ukraine suffers from with same disease known as "Finlandization." As a former part of the Soviet Union, despite gaining independence, Ukraine remains in a dependent position on its "Big Brother" Russia, which influences its foreign policy decisions. Treatment for this disease is very expensive, they will not be able to avoid or evade the fate from vicinity.

After the Cold War ended, Russia and the West should have found a balance between themselves and established separate spheres of influence. One scenario could have involved Russia giving permission for the European Union and NATO to enlarge into Central and Eastern Europe, including entry for Christian countries. In return, the West would refuse to expand NATO further eastward if Ukraine were to split into two nations.

Another factor to consider is the enticement of China into the Russia-Ukraine war. This could occur due to China's desire for hegemony in East Asia, as well as concerns about illegal migration of Chinese citizens to Siberia, which could pose threats to national security for both Russia and Mongolia.

Additionally, there is the issue of potential Muslim invasion and fundamentalism, which could present a challenge to Russia's national security.

To counterbalance China's growing power, Russia and India could strengthen their ties with Muslim countries. This could help prevent China from becoming a new era revolutionary force, not just economically but also in terms of military and nuclear power.

The joining of China with its strong economy, demographic potential, and military power to the "triumvirate" of Russia, the European Union, and the United States creates a complex dynamic in global affairs. Each player strives to gain control and influence worldwide, particularly in the Middle Gulf region, where they leverage their resources to bolster their manufacturing and socio-economic progress. This often leads to expansion efforts accompanied by attempts to reshape moral values and cultural norms.

Russia has historically been interested in East Europe and the Balkans due to their strategic importance as gate to the West and vulnerable place for possession vitally important vessels life because ensure their security. One significant wound for Russia post-collapse was the Bosnian Serbs, which were rejected demands of Russian authorities to reduce their vitality and comply with UN conditions. Solace Serbians reached after bombarding NATO forces hence Russia recovered their power on Serbians. This incident demonstrated how Russia managed to maintain temperate relations with Western countries.

Turning to the Ukraine, which is also situated at a strategic separation line and shares a cultural heritage with Russians, President Vladimir Putin has stated, "Russians and Ukrainians are one people, one whole" However, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky rejected this statement from Volodymyr Putin and has strived to deny this statement without providing evidence.

On the other hand, if we look at the Constitution of Ukraine, we can be convinced that Ukraine has retained the Russian language along with other languages of national minorities. "Україні гарантується вільний розвиток, використання і захист російської, інших мов національних меншин України". (In Ukraine, the free development, use and protection of Russian and other languages of national minorities of Ukraine is guaranteed) .

As we can behold that the "Blitzkrieg" of the Muscovites failed, and the war continues for two years already. Furthermore, the strain consistently intensifies by French government. Is a New Napoleon arising? It is difficult to denote that the French government will join the war? but it could be vitally important to demonstrate their power not only before Russia but also to the USA and take leadership in the Europe region. On the other hand, Germany maintains consolation and abstinence, with the exception of the military-technical helpline. There is a paradox. In the preface of the war, French administration pronounced that they would seek a solution using diplomacy. Therefore, they aimed to conserve Russian establishment interests. This swift change in their vision did not occur sporadically. The presidential election in the "Homeland of Democracy", Donald Trump, and his campaign show that he is not fascinated to see NATO troops in Ukraine, but Europe countries dependent on America guarantee. The recoil fact for their credible speech. The predisposition to use force and the persistence of the Russian establishment in dissolving any attempts to make peace and return balance only preserve their desire for retaliation.

Vulnerable Heart of Russia

The Soviet Union remnants pursue the Russia even after collapse. The "War in Afghanistan" poses a serious threat to security, especially along southern borders. The Tajiks put in a lot of effort to preserve equilibrium in the state, but Islamist radicals, who are recruited and trained in Pakistan deep and secret places, the drastic group hearts

have become perennial menace not only for Russia but also for adjacent states. One of the possible directions of action for the USA and Western countries could be to use these forces for inferior Russia from inside by stoking Muslim hatred to its peak against the capital. Hitherto, while supporting the Tajik government, Russia always remains vulnerable in inside.

There are fundamental changes in the direction of Ukraine's policy between 2007-2015 after Euromaidan, "The Revolution of Dignity," imposed imperative revisions and changes. To begin with, in 2007, Ukraine's Concept of National Security emphasized integration with the European Union, specifically the modernization and refinement of national structures as well as legislative and financial potential to the standards of the European Union "Copenhagen criteria." On the other hand, the word NATO was mentioned little, "just vital to creating conditions for becoming part of NATO." Cooperation with NATO and conducting joint exercises with military forces, as well as receiving state-of-the-art weapons for their arsenal, were highlighted.

Democracy in Ukraine has always distinguished it from other post-Soviet nations. In contrast, after Russia's invasion of Crimea in 2014, Russia became one of the enemies of the Ukrainians, "Public enemy number one." The conception and Ukrainian authorities, in order to shut their eyes to corruption and the digress of the people, endeavored to utilize the intrusion for their power and Western support. In the Concept of National Security, the crucial ally became the United States as a strategic partner, and we can also mention China, which is playing on both sides. The renunciation of non-alignment depicted the vulnerability of the Ukrainian establishment. Today, in 2023-2024, V. Zelenskiy suffers from a lack of aid from Western neighbors. After constitutional changes, the Verkhovna Rada and President can preserve their valid powers only for five years, and they can extend them only during a military regime. Unconducted elections remain a serious threat to the dictatorship of V. Zelensky because each day they are losing trust in the democratic regime. Zelensky is gradually losing support not only from his partners but mainly among the people.

It must be mentioned that strategy is not a balanced document that shows objective reality: aims and tasks to ensure national security rather than saying as tools and means of providing them. Therefore, the Concept of National Security must be considered a statement of position and political situation. Two options for solving the big problem of the cordon sanitaire are that Ukraine should either split or remain as a single entity, transferring the border regions, especially the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, Zaporozhye, and Kherson regions, to the Russian Federation. Why? As we know, there are many Russians living in Ukraine who can rebel and demand their rights based on the people's right to self-determination, as in Georgia, with the support of Russian militants.

The independence of Ukraine deprived Russia of the ability to preserve its dominance in the Black Sea, and Odessa and Kherson played a vitally important role in trade with Mediterranean states. Besides this, it limited Russia's geostrategic choices, allowing it to remain a Eurasian empire. Russia could have maintained its dominance in Europe even with the loss of former colonies like the Baltic states and Poland. But Ukraine was a line of unreality: no one even suspected it was a time bomb, as, unlike the southern and eastern colonies, which differed not only in ethnic origin but also in religious character, Ukrainians had the same roots and religion.

Seizing moments of instability and chaos in the political establishment, Ukraine advocated for freedom and the complete elimination of possible methods of restoring the USSR within its former borders. Shocked, Moscow tried to maintain influence in the lost regions. In addition to territorial losses, Moscow also lost or failed in the ideological war: the factor that once united everyone for a common front disappeared in an instant. Some states emerged from difficult times with the help of Turkey, while others with the help of Western allies. If you look at the geopolitical map of the world today, no drastic changes have occurred in terms of pressure and influence between countries, only the tremors from the epicenter have become very noticeable.

Zelensky, who never lost his smile, completely transformed into a brave warrior who is not afraid to confront a former superpower with many years of experience. His presidential activity is already coming to an end, but there is practically no suitable candidate to take over, and the people (60-70%) will clearly keep Zelensky at the helm. But the presidential elections did not take place in March 2024 due to martial law. According to the Law on Martial Law, Article 19, guarantees of legality under martial law: Under martial law, the following are prohibited:

- Amending the Constitution of Ukraine;
- Amending the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea;
- Holding elections for the President of Ukraine, as well as elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, and local governments;
- Holding all-Ukrainian and local referendums;
- Holding strikes, mass gatherings, and actions.

Thus, until the end of martial law, Zelensky will remain in the presidential seat. This is a disadvantage for him personally, as with Russia's advance westward, he loses motivation and trust among the population. The war is already transitioning to a stage of victory or a complete system reboot. But Zelensky will still remain in a winning position due to his Jewish roots, while Russia will have to play with its Asian neighbors for several more years, particularly with China, which may deteriorate due to the need for democratization, posing an existing threat to continued economic growth. Claims to world leadership will be greatly disappointed with the emergence of food and political crises.

Russia must consider that nations that rule or have ruled other nations cannot be happy. The US will never allow the strengthening of Russia or China in Eurasia, especially since Ukraine played a key role in maintaining the balance on the continent.

The war, which began in 2022, has become protracted and continues, exhausting the parties. The conflict will continue until social destabilization and a decline in the morale of the nation. As the economic situation worsens, the first signs of dissatisfaction may appear. However, we must not forget about the Russian armed forces, which it inherited from the Soviet Union. Fear of reprisals and rigged courts becomes commonplace when the state is isolated. Most media, as always, filter information and, by covering the truth, become accomplices. Ukraine, in turn, has transferred its entire defense system to Western countries, but has not yet been able to achieve certain results in diplomatic negotiations. One of the possible conditions for the negotiations was put forward in 2022, 10 conditions, among which the key is Ukraine's renunciation of the status of neutrality and considers its sovereign right to become a full member of NATO. From the point of view of international law, the state has the right to self-determination, but it is necessary to take into account the balance of power in the geopolitical sphere, where Russia is not ready to make any concessions. As already noted, without Ukraine Russia becomes only an Asian country. Despite ethnic ties with the Serbs, after the collapse of the USSR and the events in Kosovo, Russia weakened in the European part and became an unwelcome guest. Pacifists and supporters of the idea of a world government will remain dissatisfied. Russia will never become a member of NATO and will not simply hand over Ukraine to the United States for military bases. One of the options for resolving the conflict is to divide Ukraine into two parts along the 28th longitude in the center of Kyiv to Odessa, while both parts will retain access to the Black Sea and the entry of Western Ukraine into NATO. This will allow Russia to receive security guarantees from NATO. The issue regarding Crimea has already been resolved, given that most of the population is Russian-speaking, and it has a special status. The Russification of Eastern Ukraine is inevitable, but will likely occur without bloodshed, especially given that the region has a large Russian-speaking population.

This idea remains one of the most difficult to implement and can cause different points of view and controversy. Political, legal and geopolitical aspects need to be taken into account. From a fairness perspective, such a decision may not take into account the interests and positions of the parties and lead to tension. An agreement between Big Brother and himself. All this will lead to a change in the balance of power and an increase in the possible threat from Russia to the heart of Europe, despite security guarantees. The war will continue, and Russia will not be able to succeed and not reach Kyiv. In terms of efficiency, the special operation failed, and concessions and compromises will have to be made. The United States

will not allow a repeat of the Vietnam shame and will take revenge. No country will resort to nuclear forces, but the danger is not nuclear warheads, but nuclear power plants in Ukraine, especially the Zaporozhe nuclear power plant and others. Russia with its Odyssey will be able to reach Kyiv, but, probably, after confabulating with Western ally, the establishment will be coerced to withdraw its armed forces. The world will achieve peace by restoring balance or creating the fresh balance.

The use and deployment of modern weapons are further exacerbating the situation, and, as Putin mentioned in his speeches, the hour of retaliatory strikes is approaching. There is a lot of speculation among politicians that if we turn a blind eye to Ukraine, Putin will not stop and will aim to seize Poland and then the entire Balkans. Consequently, Poland has recently been busy training and preparing its military. And things are getting dangerous as global spending on nuclear weapons has increased by 13% recently. In particular, the USA and China took the lead, overtaking Russia. Due to the desperate situation and the impossibility of Ukraine winning on the battlefield against its former "Big Brother", NATO provides and allows the use of all its advanced weapons. The arsenal is not limited to only weapons; experienced instructors are also sent there. The West is so concerned that Stoltenberg has discussed the possibility of removing nuclear weapons from storage and putting them on standby. In response, Russia began provocative tactical exercises on the border with Belarus.

After Russia deployed military ships, including a nuclear submarine, to Cuba—an action described by Western commentators as a "bluff"—the U.S. and Canada promptly sent military vessels to the region. Following this, Putin visited Pyongyang and signed a "mutual security" pact with North Korea, committing both nuclear powers to defend each other in the event of an attack.

The meeting on June 19 between the leaders of North Korea and Russia culminated in the signing of the Pyongyang Agreement, signifying a new era of cooperation between the two nations. This agreement replaces those made during the Soviet era and serves as a foundational document for their future long-term relations. This strategic partnership is anticipated to forge a new alliance of strength.

As the war continues on Ukraine's eastern borders, countries are trying to provoke each other as they did during the Cold War. The agreement reached in 1985 between Reagan and Gorbachev that "A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" remains empty words for now. This neglect may continue for a long time, but it should be noted that no side refuses to use nuclear weapons first in a crisis situation, making miscalculations more likely.

It is also worth noting that missile warhead detection systems are not as advanced as those of the United States or their allies, so the risk of an accidental launch during a panic cannot be overlooked. The use of nuclear weapons, as seen in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, is

unacceptable because modern technology can strike and destroy millions, potentially wiping out all of humanity. In such a scenario, the question of whether one is Chinese, American, or Russian will become irrelevant. Therefore, the accumulation of nuclear arsenals now and in the future will be driven by the fear of attack, similar to the arms race.

The Use of Nuclear Weapons is Unlikely But Possible Only in Critical Moments

- If NATO becomes involved in the conflict, Russia might escalate the situation as a means of intimidation and self-defense.

- If Russia perceives a loss and feels a threat to its existence, this could lead to extreme measures.

- Errors or misinterpretation of data could result in mistaken actions, including the launch of nuclear weapons.

- If the conflict escalates into a broader regional or global conflict involving major nuclear powers, the risk of using nuclear weapons may increase.

- A change in government or a military coup in a country could raise the likelihood of unpredictable actions.

But we must take into account that continuing to play nuclear roulette is a lethal way forward. Thus, for now, all of this is just speculation!

There are initiatives from Brazil and China that can act as mediators. They issued a joint statement that “dialogue and negotiations are the only viable solution to the Ukrainian crisis.” Their proposal includes a six-point plan to achieve peace:

1. All parties should adhere to the three principles of de-escalation: not to expand the conflict, not to escalate hostilities, and avoid provocations.

2. It is necessary to create conditions for direct dialogue and achieve a ceasefire. China and Brazil support the holding of an international peace conference.

3. Efforts should be directed towards humanitarian assistance and crisis prevention. It is necessary to avoid attacks on civilians and protect them, and support the exchange of prisoners of war.

4. It is necessary to resist the use and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

5. Attacks on nuclear power plants must be prevented. All parties must comply with international law and prevent nuclear accidents.

6. The world should not be divided into isolated political or economic groups. There is a need to strengthen international cooperation in various fields to protect the stability of global supply chains.

Possible Pathways to Resolve the Conflict-Crisis (SCENARIOS)

The First Scenario is One of the Most Dangerous – Russia Uses Nuclear Weapons

The Kremlin could potentially employ nuclear warheads to defend and protect its territorial integrity. If Russia

incorporates part of Eastern Ukraine into its territory and amends the constitution and all subsequent national documentation, this is outlined in Article 27 of the Russian Military Doctrine:

“The Russian Federation reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in response to the use against it and/or its allies of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction, as well as in the case of aggression against the Russian Federation using conventional weapons when the existence of the state is under threat.”

The decision to use nuclear weapons is made by the President of the Russian Federation. This is one of the plausible, but unlikely, outcomes. It is the high level of determination from Putin, despite Western warnings of severe consequences, that raises the likelihood of this scenario.

Second Scenario: NATO War with Russia

Although Western countries are trying to avoid direct confrontation, they are indirectly participating in the conflict. It is no secret that NATO and its allies, as previously noted, supply weapons and ammunition and share advanced technologies. Additionally, Ukraine borders several NATO member states, which raises the possibility of military actions spreading into their territories.

Article 5 of NATO states that if one NATO member state is the victim of an armed attack, all other member states will consider this act of violence an armed attack against all NATO countries and will take necessary actions to assist the attacked NATO member.

Furthermore, Ukraine is actively concluding security guarantees with Poland, Luxembourg, and other countries. This facilitates long-term support in terms of equipment and training, including the preparation of instructors and training for Ukraine’s security and defense forces within the framework of the EU mission.

This scenario could come to fruition if Ukraine begins to suffer defeats on the battlefield and Kyiv is at risk. Countries may find a justification for opposing Russia.

Third Scenario: Ukraine Restores its Territorial Integrity

If Washington and its allies become actively involved, it may become possible to repel the enemy, but the process will be very lengthy (years) due to Russia’s vast ground forces. The war will likely extend to Crimea, as Russia will not overlook the loss of Crimea and will intensify the situation. Achieving a balance will be essential.

This scenario emphasizes the need for sustained international support, including military, economic, and humanitarian aid, to assist Ukraine in reclaiming its territory. The geopolitical implications of such an outcome could reshape regional dynamics and influence future relations between NATO, Russia, and Ukraine.

Fourth Scenario: “28th Longitude”

One possible solution recently proposed is the “28th Longitude” plan, which divides Ukraine into two parts

along the 28th longitude line from the center of Kyiv to Odesa. Under this plan, Kyiv could potentially be fully integrated into Ukraine, and both Ukraine and Russia would maintain access to the Black Sea. Russia would agree to Western Ukraine's entry into NATO, providing Russia with security guarantees from NATO that would settle Russia's claims for a long period.

The issue of Crimea, already resolved, would be difficult to revisit, especially as Ukraine, burdened with significant debts, needs to rebuild its territories (with estimated reconstruction costs currently at \$486 billion). Given that a large part of the population is Russian-speaking and Crimea has a special status, this scenario suggests that Russification of Eastern Ukraine is inevitable but likely to occur without bloodshed, given the large Russian-speaking population in the region. However, this scenario would violate international law and could lead to dissatisfaction from other states that remember the Kosovo precedent. This solution would also be an exception.

Fifth Scenario: War of Attrition

The war may drag on for an extended period, leading to a decline in Russia's military power and causing significant damage to the country's economy, potentially worse than during the Soviet era. As a result, China could emerge as the primary beneficiary, with Moscow becoming increasingly dependent on Beijing. The prolonged nature of the conflict would result in even greater suffering for the Ukrainian side.

At a certain point, military assistance to Ukraine may become unstable as the stockpiles of Western countries, particularly American and European weapons, dwindle. This could increase the likelihood of nuclear escalation. All scenarios illustrate potential outcomes, but it is essential to recognize that the situation can change drastically in a day. Rational decisions must be made to end hostilities as quickly as possible, as not only is the civilian population suffering, but the environment—our only home—is also affected. A ceasefire with the cessation of hostilities (with

or without mediation) should be the priority, considering international law.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study focused on state actors and their reported data, analyzed through the lens of realist theory, which emphasizes the competitive and conflictual aspects of international relations. The analysis involved a close examination of NATO defense spending reports, as well as key interviews and speeches. In particular, it covered President Macron's France 24 interview and Tucker Carlson's interview with President Putin, as well as President Obama's speech at the 2011 East Asia Summit. Graphical representations were used to illustrate spending patterns, showing how spending varied among allies. These findings were then placed in the broader context of the region's political, economic, and social dynamics. The data was collected through NATO Allies' reports, which are published on a regular basis. Each ally's defense minister reports on current spending in accordance with agreements, using information from the European Commission and other organizations. The study also used data from the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, which conducted a public opinion poll on President Zelensky's potential re-election. This survey was conducted using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) on a random sample of 1,202 respondents from all regions of Ukraine except Crimea. Drawing on realist theory, the study proposes several alternative courses of action for conflict resolution. These include diplomatic negotiations, the formation of strategic alliances, and the imposition of economic sanctions. By comparing these alternatives with historical events, the study seeks to predict their potential outcomes for global stability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Thus, the Ukraine-Russia war poses a serious threat to the stability of the international system, creating conditions for new precedents and undermining principles of

Graph 4 : Defence expenditure as a share of GDP (%)
(based on 2015 prices and exchange rates)

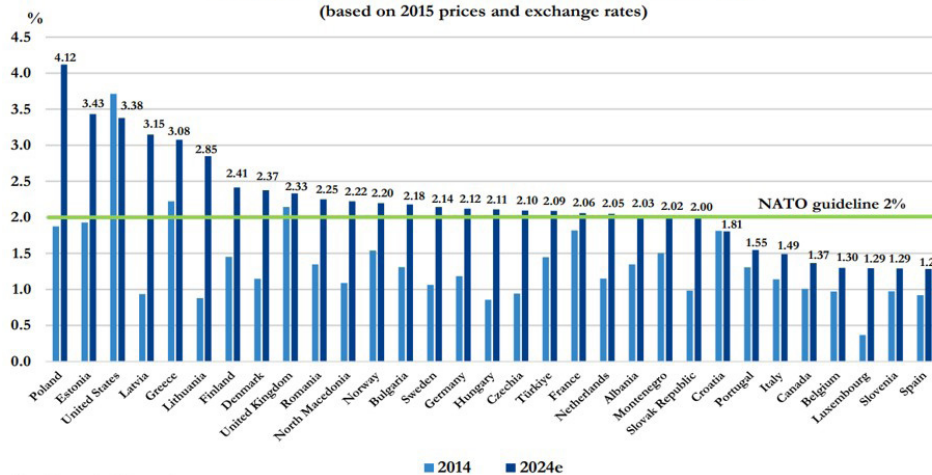


Figure1: Defence expenditure as a share of GDP (%)
Note: Figures for 2024 are estimates

international law. This conflict has prompted NATO's expansion, with new member states such as Finland and Sweden joining, which negatively affects countries that adhere to the non-aligned movement. Consequently, Russia has initiated a new process of dividing the world into blocs, reminiscent of the Cold War, compelling nations to reassess their diplomatic and military alliances. A second outcome is the change in EU policy. The war has

heightened security concerns among European countries, prompting them to bolster their defense capabilities. Military expenditure increases in all regions World military expenditure rose for the ninth consecutive year to an all-time high of \$2443 billion. For the first time since 2009, military expenditure went up in all five of the geographical regions defined by SIPRI, with particularly large increases recorded in Europe, Asia and Oceania and the Middle East.

Table 2: Defence expenditure

Million US dollars											
Current prices and exchange rates	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023e	2024e
Albania	178	132	131	145	176	197	197	224	231	397	516
Belgium	5,200	4,204	4,258	4,441	4,845	4,761	5,324	6,245	6,904	7,622	8,519
Bulgaria	747	633	671	724	962	2,159	1,121	1,276	1,440	1,992	2,325
Canada	18,172	18,689	17,708	23,700	22,399	22,572	23,330	25,502	25,898	27,991	30,495
Croatia	1,064	883	837	926	966	1,001	983	1,361	1,285	1,441	1,624
Czechia*	1,975	1,921	1,866	2,259	2,750	2,982	3,199	3,915	3,895	4,538	6,834
Denmark	4,057	3,364	3,593	3,780	4,559	4,487	4,886	5,274	5,473	8,140	9,940
Estonia*	514	463	497	541	615	637	719	749	820	1,238	1,437
Finland	3,991	3,401	3,418	3,536	3,825	3,900	4,156	4,145	4,726	6,266	7,308
France	52,022	43,496	44,209	46,133	50,507	49,493	52,519	56,457	52,238	59,379	64,271
Germany	46,176	39,833	41,606	45,470	49,772	52,549	58,652	62,054	61,405	73,138	97,686
Greece	5,234	4,520	4,637	4,752	5,388	5,019	5,492	8,006	8,488	6,731	7,684
Hungary	1,210	1,132	1,289	1,708	1,615	2,190	2,767	2,410	3,270	4,360	4,889
Italy	24,487	19,576	22,382	23,902	25,641	23,559	30,084	33,140	31,512	33,857	34,462
Latvia*	294	282	403	485	710	692	743	824	857	1,254	1,421
Lithuania*	428	471	636	817	1,057	1,094	1,176	1,308	1,738	2,165	2,300
Luxembourg	253	250	236	326	356	381	426	403	461	642	785
Montenegro	69	57	62	65	75	74	83	91	86	114	162
Netherlands	10,349	8,673	9,112	9,643	11,172	12,067	12,838	13,916	13,899	16,764	21,460
North Macedonia	124	105	104	101	120	146	154	204	221	267	353
Norway	7,722	6,142	6,431	6,850	7,544	7,536	7,228	8,438	8,694	8,799	10,606
Poland*	10,107	10,588	9,397	9,940	11,857	11,824	13,363	15,099	15,338	26,476	34,975
Portugal	3,007	2,645	2,616	2,738	3,249	3,299	3,273	3,899	3,578	4,241	4,627
Romania*	2,691	2,581	2,645	3,643	4,359	4,608	5,056	5,299	5,197	5,605	8,644
Slovak Republic	999	987	1,004	1,056	1,298	1,802	2,049	2,066	2,090	2,445	2,841
Slovenia	487	401	449	477	547	572	568	763	777	914	949
Spain	12,634	11,096	9,975	11,889	13,200	12,630	12,828	14,849	16,451	18,875	21,269
Sweden	6,205	5,103	5,017	5,229	5,396	5,560	5,984	9,071	8,562	9,848	13,428
Türkiye	13,577	11,953	12,644	12,971	14,168	14,089	13,396	13,137	12,292	16,614	22,776
United Kingdom	65,692	59,505	56,362	55,719	60,380	59,399	63,500	71,927	70,846	76,939	82,107
United States	653,942	641,253	656,059	642,933	672,255	750,886	770,650	824,094	834,977	875,603	967,707

NATO Europe and Canada	289,276	254,422	255,595	275,102	300,167	301,674	325,953	358,836	355,382	419,205	506,692
NATO Total	943,218	895,675	911,654	918,035	972,422	1,052,560	1,096,603	1,182,930	1,190,359	1,294,808	1,474,399

Based on these graphs, we can observe that recently, defense spending has increased in Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia, countries close to the conflict zone. This has accelerated discussions about energy independence from Russia and placed security and protection high on the agenda.

The third point is the escalation of tensions between the U.S. and Russia due to various sanctions. A turning point in relations has occurred, leading to strengthened bilateral ties between the U.S. and Ukraine.

Fourth, the conflict has disrupted global energy markets, causing spikes in oil and gas prices, particularly affecting European countries. This has spurred a push for alternative energy sources and enhanced energy security. Additionally, food supply issues have become significant due to disruptions in supply chains, resulting in shortages of food resources and rising prices for grains and fertilizers.

Lastly, there has been increased media propaganda and expressions of solidarity with Ukraine, which has created challenges for the UN and the Security Council, where Russia holds veto power, further complicating matters.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we must recognize that unless societies eliminate their propensity for violence, the joys of peace will remain unattainable. In all these wars, innocent people suffer, leading not only to refugee crises but also to environmental degradation, which diminishes nature's restorative properties and exacerbates hunger issues. To mitigate these threats, governments must seek practical solutions. Foreign policy and public attitudes must be entirely refined to foster a multicultural atmosphere.

Acknowledgement

In this article, I attempt to explain the latest situation in the war zone politics by using contemporary information, as well as comparing the policies and strategies of states and their interests in the expansion and reservation of war.

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