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- Foreign and Defense Policy of Ukraine
- The course of the Russian-Ukrainian war

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- *THEME ANALYSIS: The US indecisiveness jeopardizes not only Ukraine's ability to resist, but also the security of its European allies*



*Photo: Military parade in Poland
Source: CNN*

Despite the nuclear blackmail by the Russian leadership, partner states continued providing comprehensive assistance to Ukraine. Therefore, over the past month, Russia has continued its threats, but the emphasis is now placed on conventional means and hybrid methods of influence. The leadership of the aggressor state understands that the North Atlantic Alliance is trying to avoid a direct clash by all means and therefore does not refrain from provocations against NATO member states. After the invasion of Ukraine, Russian missiles already fell on the territory of Romania and Poland. Belarusian helicopters violated Polish airspace, and a US MQ-9 Reaper drone was damaged by a Russian fighter jet, causing the American drone to crash into the Black Sea. In addition, Russian spies are regularly detained in NATO member states, with the most recent cases occurring in Poland and the United Kingdom.

In the Russian-Ukrainian war, the Russian Federation is trying to achieve its goals not only in relation to Ukraine. The aggressor country is fighting for regional dominance. Eastern European countries are well aware of this, as they provide the largest share of weapons to

Ukraine among NATO countries in terms of percentage of GDP. The leaders in this dimension are the Baltic states and Poland (1.26% - Estonia; 1.09% - Latvia; 0.95% - Lithuania, 0.68% - Poland).¹ At the same time, the United States' assistance is limited to 0.33% of the country's GDP. In absolute terms, this is the largest contribution from a single country. However, if the United States really wanted Ukraine to win, the aid would be many times higher.

Ukraine, contrary to the canons of military science, is conducting an unprecedented offensive operation, without a significant numerical advantage and, most importantly, without an air superiority. The United States and the North Atlantic Alliance have always conducted offensive operations after gaining air dominance, but Joe Biden administration is delaying the transfer of the necessary advanced weapons as much as possible, and therefore the current Ukrainian counter-offensive is taking place in the face of Russia's complete air superiority. At the same time, the United States is not transferring medium-range missiles, which could partially compensate for the lack of powerful aviation and contribute to the rapid destruction of Russian defense. Unlike the United Kingdom and France, which provided Storm Shadow and SCALP missiles, the United States has not yet transferred ATACAMs missiles for HIMMARS systems.

Against this background, non-optimistic processes are taking place within the United States in the context of the upcoming elections. Russia's war against Ukraine has become one of the main topics of the American election campaign. Support for Ukraine is being used by various candidates to promote narratives that are popular among voters.

A CNN poll released earlier this month showed that 55 percent of Americans said the country should not provide additional funding to Ukraine, including 71 percent of Republicans and 55 percent of independents.² At the same time, 38% of Democrats share this opinion. In the Republican presidential debate, candidates who support Ukraine are not favorites. The main contender among Republicans is Donald Trump, who promised to end Russia's war against Ukraine within 24 hours after his election. In the context of Russian aggression, the most likely scenario for ending the war within 24 hours is forcing Ukraine to peace by legalizing Russia's occupation of Ukrainian territories. Therefore, Donald Trump's presidency could pose a threat to Ukraine.

The second favorite, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, called the Russian invasion a "territorial dispute." According to Reuters, DeSantis' campaign is backed by The Heritage Foundation, a think tank.³ In recent months, The Heritage Foundation, once a respected organization, has been actively spreading narratives that are typical for American isolationists and play into the hands of the Russian Federation. In particular, the organization has been spreading manipulative comparisons of assistance to affected American citizens in Hawaii

¹ Total bilateral aid commitments to Ukraine as a percentage of donor gross domestic product (GDP) between January 24, 2022 and May 31, 2023, by country, 25.08.2023, URL: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1303450/bilateral-aid-to-ukraine-in-a-percent-of-donor-gdp/>

² Ukraine, Russia turns into GOP presidential flashpoint, 26.08.2023, URL: <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/4172029-ukraine-russia-turns-into-gop-presidential-flashpoint/>

³ Insight: Conservative think tank emerges as force behind DeSantis campaign, 18.08.2023, URL: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/conservative-think-tank-emerges-force-behind-desantis-campaign-2023-08-18/>

and Ukraine. Videos were published of Ukrainians walking through the streets of Kyiv and the burning island of Maui. Narratives were also spread about the Joe Biden administration's prioritization of international policy issues over domestic problems.

Similar anti-Ukrainian signals are currently being spread by the third most supported candidate, Vivek Ramaswamy. According to Politico, after the debate, he overtook Ron De Santis in terms of support.⁴ Businessman Ramaswamy openly states that he intends to stop supporting Ukraine, officially reject its NATO bid, and give Russia the occupied territories to prevent the alliance between Russia and China. During the debate, Donald Trump's Vice President Mike Pence, former South Carolina Governor and former U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Nikki Haley, and former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie pointed out the absurdity of Ramaswamy's position. However, the popularity of more conservative candidates is currently low.

The electoral mood in the United States may continue to have a negative impact on the level of assistance to Ukraine. Joe Biden is likely to continue the policy of limited assistance to Ukraine, hoping for some success of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, which can be presented as a correct tactic for the American voters. An increase in aid is unlikely, as such a move could be used against the US President, in a way The Heritage Foundation is currently doing.

In addition, the U.S. strategy in Ukraine is currently focused on preventing Russia from achieving victory. At the same time, the US is limiting military support to prevent Russia from using nuclear weapons. ***Thus, the Armed Forces of Ukraine will continue to liberate the territories with a limited amount of means provided by partners.***

Russia is waging a war of attrition, hoping that war fatigue and the change of governments will allow the aggressor to secure the occupied territory. At the same time, the Russians realize that the United States does not want the war to drag on. In this situation, the United States is putting itself in a difficult position, because Russia will raise the stakes in the war at a favorable moment to force the United States to make concessions regarding Ukraine. At this stage, Vladimir Putin could agree to negotiate. The Kremlin has repeatedly signaled that negotiations are possible if Ukraine gives up the Crimean Peninsula and four occupied regions. If Ukraine were forced to a peace, as in 1938, it would not stop the aggressor state's expansion completely and would only give Russia a foothold for future aggression and time to recover and attack at a favorable time. At present, however, this view is shared mostly by those countries neighboring Russia.

By supporting Ukraine, Eastern European NATO countries and the United States avoid the need to send their own soldiers to the battlefield. After all, after Ukraine, it will be the turn of the Eastern European NATO states. Ukraine currently has the strength to make further progress, but the country needs further support and increased pressure on Russia.

Russia is capable of waging a war of attrition. Are Ukraine's partners ready for this scenario? And is Ukraine capable of defeating Russia with the current level of assistance? According to the Main Intelligence Directorate, the Kremlin plans to send another 450,000

⁴ DeSagging: Florida governor drops in POLITICO rankings, 26.08.23,
URL: <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/08/26/desantis-drops-ramaswamy-rises-in-polls-00113076>

people to the war.⁵ In addition, the aggressor is quite successfully putting the economy on a war footing. **The US indecision threatens not only Ukraine's ability to resist, but also the security of its European allies. The White House is giving Russia room to raise the stakes further.**

If the United States wanted to defeat Russia, Ukraine would get much more. Only such a scenario could avert a protracted war and preserve Ukraine's territorial integrity and an order based on the strength of international law. At the moment, however, Russia has not received a strong signal that continuing its aggression against Ukraine is futile, so it is betting on a protracted conflict, while the United States continues to believe in the rightness of its strategy of limited assistance. *In the long run, such developments pose threats to Ukraine, as fatigue from the war abroad is growing, the issue of supporting Ukraine is gradually becoming less popular, and the aggressor state does not give up its goal of occupying Ukrainian territory and destroying its statehood.*

⁵ кремлівська влада планує відправити на війну ще 450 тисяч осіб, 25.08.23, URL: <https://gur.gov.ua/content/kremlivska-vlada-planuie-vidpravyt-na-viinu-shche-450-tysiach-osib.html>

- *THEME ANALYSIS: Peace Summit in Saudi Arabia in search of global consensus: at what cost and at whose expense?*



*Photo: Negotiations in the KSA
Source: UWC*

Ukrainian diplomacy continues to promote the peace initiative of the President of Ukraine - the Peace Formula. On 5-6 August, extended consultations at the level of national security advisors to the heads of state were held in Jeddah. Forty-two countries from different continents took part in the discussion, which indicates an increase in the geography of participants in the discussion of the Ukrainian peace initiative.

Representatives of Ukraine were quite optimistic about the process of increasing the number of participants. In particular, the head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, Andriy Yermak, said that with each step, the number of countries that unconditionally respect Ukraine's independence, territorial integrity, and sovereignty and are ready to work on a specific point or on the implementation of the entire Peace Formula is growing. And **Russia's isolation is becoming deeper**.¹ According to Andriy Yermak, the vast majority of partners clearly emphasized the need to withdraw Russian troops from the territory of Ukraine and the impossibility of freezing the war in any form, as this would only give time to prepare for new

¹ Найважливіший підсумок зустрічі в Джидді – ми стали ще на крок ближчими до реалізації Формули миру – Андрій Єрмак, 08.08.2023,
URL: <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/najvazhlivishij-pidsumok-zustrichi-v-dzhiddi-mi-stali-she-na-84777>

attacks on Ukrainian territory. The participation of a representative of the People's Republic of China in the talks was also stressed.

The expansion of the geography of participants in the negotiations on the implementation of the Peace Formula is certainly a positive development. It is currently known that discussions on this issue are being held at the level of ambassadors and national security advisors, and later this year Ukraine hopes to hold a global Peace Formula summit. The implementation of the 10 points of the Peace Formula should unite the countries of the world suffering from the consequences of Russian aggression against Ukraine and ultimately lead to the establishment of a lasting peace.

However, **there is a risk that the Peace Formula will ultimately fail to meet the expectations of the Office of the President.** First of all, the participation of China and other non-Western countries does not mean a change in their position on Russian aggression. Since the beginning of this year, a number of states have published their own proposals for ending the war. Brazilian President Lula da Silva has been actively promoting the creation of a "political Group of 20," while emphasizing the existence of a Chinese initiative. China proposed a plan that would freeze the conflict and secure the occupied territories for Russia. Similarly, Indonesia proposed a plan that resembled a version of Minsk-3 rather than a plan for a just end to the war.

African leaders proposed a plan that does not in fact exist, without clear wording, and most importantly, without understanding the nature of the Russian war. At a press conference, the President of the Comoros even compared France's overseas territories to the occupied south of Ukraine, where Russians have set up filtration camps and are persecuting all pro-Ukrainian citizens.

The range of proposals put forward by non-Western states demonstrates the prioritization of their own interests and the lack of interest in restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity, if such a scenario requires them to make efforts and creates risks in relations with Russia. If the occupation of Ukrainian territory had no impact on food and energy prices, many states would seek this status quo.

China, in turn, benefits from the ongoing war, as Russia becomes increasingly dependent on China. At the same time, the development of the US partners, the European Union countries, is being slowed down. **The main task of China in this war is to prevent its ally, the Putin's regime, from losing the war,** because Ukraine's victory in the eyes of the Chinese leadership will be a victory for the United States. China's unwillingness to support Ukraine in its right to self-defense, sovereignty, and inviolability of borders is also evidenced by its rhetoric. The country has condemned an arrest warrant for war criminal Vladimir Putin; it avoids imposing sanctions against Russia, criticizes the United States and the EU for imposing such sanctions; and spreads false Russian narratives about "the fundamental interests of the countries," justifies Russian aggression and calls the Russian invasion a "Ukrainian crisis."

It is likely that China participated in the Jeddah Peace Formula meeting to better understand the processes surrounding Ukraine's peace initiative. China is unlikely to contribute to the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, except by providing Russia with various kinds of support.

Similarly, other countries in the Global South are unlikely to go beyond standard declarations of the need for peace and respect for the UN Charter. The participation of states

such as Saudi Arabia or India in the implementation of the Peace Formula may depend on developments on the frontline and the overall political and diplomatic situation. Such countries will be inclined to support the side that is on the verge of victory. At the same time, strong anti-Americanism and anti-Western sentiments may have an even more negative impact on the involvement of Asian, African, and Latin American states in ending Russian aggression.

The advantage of Ukrainian diplomacy is the fact that despite its pro-European course, Ukraine is not a colonial state and the history of Ukraine is in some respects similar to the history of the former colonies. This factor can be positively accepted by non-Western societies. At the same time, not all governments of such states do not understand the nature of Russian aggression. Many of them are simply guided by their own interests, seek to reduce the negative impact of the Russian invasion on the economic and food security of their own state, and are not ready to oppose Russian aggression.

Among the points of the Peace Formula there are universal ones, such as nuclear, energy and food security. It is realistic to involve a wide range of such states in their implementation. The more complex point of "preventing escalation" is already being implemented. Ukraine is seeking to sign security guarantees with many countries. However, the content of such agreements is still unknown. ***There is a danger that such agreements will become another Budapest Memorandum, and their implementation will depend on the great powers, primarily the United States.***

At the same time, such points as "implementation of the UN Charter and restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity and world order"; "withdrawal of Russian troops and cessation of hostilities"; and "restoration of justice" are more difficult to implement. Their successful implementation depends on many factors, such as the political will of the international community and the success of the Ukrainian army on the battlefield.

The main factor that will allow these points to be implemented is a global consensus on the formation of a new global security order. When the Ukrainian leadership declares its intention to extend the experience of the Peace Formula if it succeeds, this is exactly what it means. The question arises as to the reality of achieving such a global consensus. One of the two global players, China, is not interested in Ukraine's victory. A number of large non-Western countries are guided by their own interests and avoid condemning Russia. At the same time, many leaders of these countries view the world through the prism of anti-Americanism. This narrows the space for cooperation and the formation of a new global security system. The liberal democracies of North America and the EU will have to make great efforts to find common ground with the major countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

At the same time, **the best way to implement the Ukrainian Peace Formula is to ensure Ukraine's military victory over Russia on the battlefield.** After all the geopolitical failures of the United States and the European Union, Ukraine provides an opportunity for liberal democracies to recover their positions, partially restore their reputation and change the balance of power in their favor. **It remains for the liberal democracies to give Ukraine the opportunity to realize this scenario.**



Source: Army FM

■ *Changes at the front*

In the Svatove direction, the Russian Federation continues its offensive. Fighting continues near Synkivka and Novoyehorivka.

In the Bakhmut direction, bloody fighting continues for Klishchiiivka and near Andriivka.

In the Avdiivka direction, the Defense Forces continue to restrain the enemy's attempts to advance.

In the Zaporizhzhia direction, the Ukrainian Armed Forces continue their offensive. Fighting continues east of Robotyne.

■ *Military assistance*

In the first half of August, it became known about the transfer of the following weapons to Ukraine:

From Slovakia:

- Zuzana 2 self-propelled artillery systems (2 units)

From Germany:

- Armored personnel carrier Marder
- SurveilSPIRE system (5 units)
- BREM Bergepanzer 2
- Patriot launchers (2 units)
- Bandvagn 206 all-terrain vehicles (2 units)
- 155-mm smoke shells (6705 units)
- materials for the disposal of explosive devices
- glasses for the military (20,000 units)
- binoculars (1163 units)
- first aid kits (40,000 units)
- VECTOR drones (4 units)
- vehicles for Ukrainian border guards (5 units)
- 8×8 HX81 trucks with trailers (6 units)
- trucks with 8×6 wheel formula (6 units)
- MG5 machine guns (100 units)

From the United Kingdom:

- AIM-132 ASRAAM short-range air-to-air missile launchers

From France:

- SCALP EG cruise missiles

From the United States:

- field dugouts
- equipment to counter UAVs, BlueHalo Titan

From Sweden:

- RBS-17 missile systems
- ammunition for infantry fighting vehicles CV9040C (Stridsfordon 90)
- ammunition for Stridsvagn 122 tanks (Swedish version of the Leopard 2A5 tank)
- vehicles
- emergency rescue equipment
- equipment for demining

Source: Mil.ua

■ *Russia: External and internal challenges*

Counting on the prolongation of the war and Ukraine's exhaustion.

In August, Russia continued its attacks on the infrastructure of Ukrainian ports. The aggressor state in the current situation has switched to a war of attrition, and therefore one of Russia's main goals will be to destroy Ukraine's economic potential. Prior to the full-scale

invasion, 2/3 of Ukraine's exports were carried by sea. Currently, Ukraine's Azov ports are occupied, and the Black Sea ports are under constant missile attacks. ***In response to Russia's terror, Ukraine's partner states have failed to either use diplomatic means to unblock freedom of navigation in the Black Sea or to make more serious demonstrations or escort ships using their navies and aircraft.***

Ukraine, for its part, has proposed its own maritime corridor. However, this sea route was primarily used to evacuate ships stuck in Odesa after February 24, 2022. The situation is further complicated by the fact that Russia has launched mass production of missiles and drones. With the onset of autumn, Ukraine will face a serious threat that is more significant than last year. There is a possibility that, in addition to the port infrastructure, Russia will launch large-scale attacks on the energy facilities. This element of genocide against the Ukrainian people could have catastrophic consequences for the population of Ukraine and the country's economy. Therefore, before the cold weather begins, Ukraine must make large-scale preparations to reduce the negative impact of Russia's autumn-winter terror.

At the same time, the international community and Ukraine's partner states must do everything possible to prevent, ***first***, a possible genocide by cold, and, second, the destruction of the Ukrainian economy as a result of Russia's actions. The aggressor state is ready to wage a war of attrition, and thus ensuring resilience over the next year will be a difficult but essential task. ***At the same time, Ukraine and its partner states should develop a plan to deliver symmetrical strikes against Russia that would discourage the aggressor from destroying Ukraine's port and energy infrastructure.*** For every Ukrainian facility destroyed, Russia should lose several of its own.

The situation is further complicated by the reluctance of Ukraine's partners to destroy Russian ports on the Black Sea because of the potential consequences of such actions for international markets. Thus, **Russia is allowed to destroy Ukrainian infrastructure, while its partners are not ready to support Ukraine's right to retaliate.** This approach is also dangerous because the Ukrainian economy is dependent on foreign aid. If Russia continues to destroy Ukraine's economic capabilities, Ukraine's partners will bear a greater burden. Combining this with a possible energy collapse in the winter, Russia hopes to force Ukraine's partners to negotiate.