

THE UKRAINIAN REVIEW

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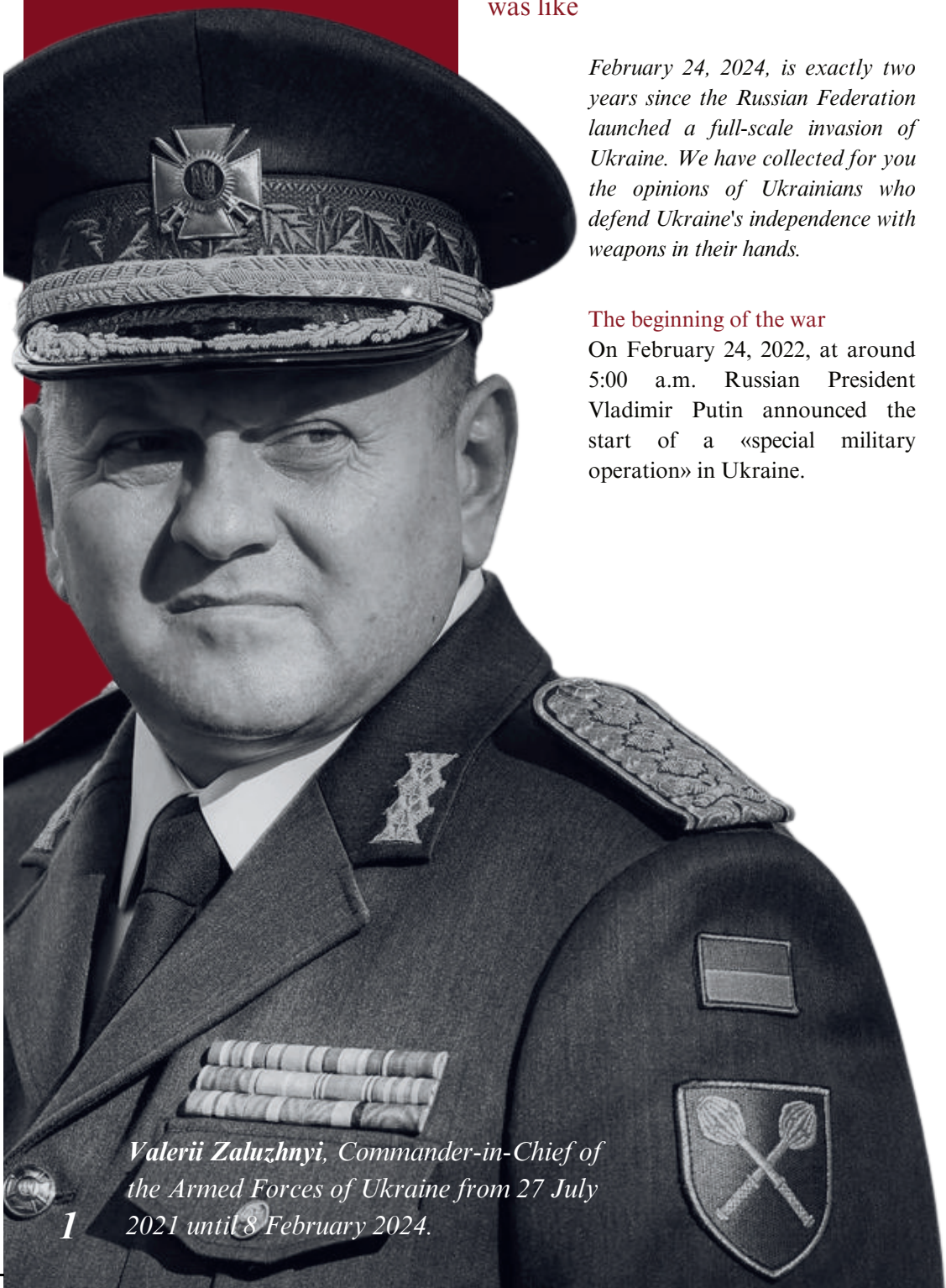
Two years of the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine: what it was like

WAR

February 24, 2024, is exactly two years since the Russian Federation launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. We have collected for you the opinions of Ukrainians who defend Ukraine's independence with weapons in their hands.

The beginning of the war

On February 24, 2022, at around 5:00 a.m. Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the start of a «special military operation» in Ukraine.



Valerii Zaluzhnyi, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine from 27 July 2021 until 8 February 2024.

Immediately, Russian troops began intensive shelling of the units of the Armed Forces in the east of the country, crossed the northeastern borders, and also began missile attacks on the territory of Ukraine. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine unanimously approved the introduction of martial law. Putin's plan was to capture Kyiv in 3 days and install a pro-Moscow government.

Military experience: three points of view

Dmytro Linko, People's Deputy of Ukraine, the first commander of the «St. Mary» battalion, told about his participation in this battle:

«I learned about the beginning of a full-scale war in Kropyvnytskyi, where I was working at the time as Deputy Chairman of the Kirovohrad Regional Council. I realised that the country needed me more as a soldier than as an official. In the evening, I already left for Kyiv, where my friends, with whom we fought together back in 2014, were gathering.

We have close ties with the fighters of the GUR (Main Intelligence Directorate of Ukraine, — ed.), so we joined them as volunteers. They loaded me with a submachine gun and a huge pile of boxes for it. We went to the center of the Hostomel. There, we set up an ambush right in the center of the city, digging trenches right in the streets. The battle lasted from the 1st to the 3rd of March, during which we destroyed a column of Russian paratroopers.

They planned to march into Kyiv and have a parade on Khreshchatyk, but we changed their plans.

The turning point and the fiercest stage of the battles for Kyiv was the battle near the village of Moshchun. Here the Russians tried to cross the rivers and swamps that separated them from the attack on Kyiv. The battalion of the 72nd Brigade held positions here. Together with them, we had to keep our positions for several days. Everyone who was in Moshchun remembers that it was like a World War I battle, with raw trenches and thousands of shells falling overhead. Many remained in the trenches forever... After several weeks of futile assaults, the Russians realised that the plan to encircle Kyiv had failed».



The world's largest airplane AN-225 "Mriya" was destroyed during the Battle of Hostomel airport in the first days of the full-scale Russian invasion.





Dmytro Linko, People's Deputy of Ukraine, the first commander of the «St. Mary» battalion.



Oleg Symoroz, a veteran of the Russo-Ukrainian War, a soldier, served as a rifleman in the rifle company of the 131st battalion of the 112th brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine



Volodymyr Musyak, a serviceman of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

We spoke with Oleg Symoroz, veteran of the Russian-Ukrainian war, a soldier, served as a rifleman of the rifle company of the 131st battalion of the 112th brigade of the Armed Forces, about his personal military experiences and his thoughts on the future perspective of the war:

«On February 24 I made the decision to join the Armed Forces. We fought in the Irpin direction. In the fall of 2022, we received a combat order to perform tasks in eastern Ukraine. On October 20, 2022, near Torsk and Dibrova, at zero, my Nissan Navara pickup hit an anti-tank mine. As a result, both of my lower limbs were amputated. Complex fractures of the arms with burns on the right arm. I also lost teeth, had a broken jaw, facial bones, nose, and a concussion.

Now the war is becoming even harder for infantry. More mines, more drones' attacks from the enemy. The situation on the battlefield can be changed by increasing technical means - artillery, tanks, mortars, and attack drones. There is still a shortage of all this, so the infantry are forced to cover this gap themselves...»

First, the military put on the first training prostheses. Unfortunately, his right stump, which was already short, became irritable and had to be re-amputated 4 cm. This all took time. So in May 2023, we had to start all over again.

"We managed to master the training prostheses in about a month. They are without knee modules, so the legs could only be rearranged. And somewhere at the end of the summer, they received knee modules. Frankly, it was difficult at first. I was going crazy because they told me: "Come on, work on your knees." Well, drop your knees." I give up, nothing comes out, I say: "Damn, I can't even stand on this." Like, I used to walk without crutches on previous prostheses, but here I simply can't stand. Well, it's kind of scary. However, the adaptation was final when I put them on. Two weeks were important to understand how to work with the knee, how to press it with the heel, these things. When I understood that, it became easier. And then two months later I left."

People with high double amputation on hydraulics walk on crutches. Even after years.

"Two months after I was discharged, I realized one day that, yes, it is quite difficult. I don't really enjoy walking. But I understand that dude, you're going to rehab now, and the stroller is staying today. You have to walk to the car today with prosthetics. It was quite difficult to walk 200 meters, maybe 30 minutes. I remember the first time I did that, I gasped and sweat was even in my eyes. But because of things like that, when you challenge yourself, you become a more confident user. It took me about two or three months from the moment I received the hydraulic knees to try to walk on my own."

We became interested in Oleg's opinion about how Ukraine is ready for the return of an inclusive military after the war. He replied that judging by the capital, the situation is very bad, especially for those who use wheelchairs.

"We see how the same curbs have not been lowered yet. This is such a trifle that is done by utilities. Yes, unfortunately, you can't cut the red ribbon here. Here you simply take and dig up half the city to lower these curbs. What is the problem? There is no state and city policy even in this regard. That is, I could argue with the authorities and say that I don't like it, that it will take 2-3 years there, that's a very long time. But there is nothing to quarrel about because there is no systemic history."

We also spoke with *Volodymyr Musyak*, a serviceman of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, about his combat experience and perspective on the war:

«I was in the war from 2014 to 2018. During the full-scope war I fought in the Kharkiv region, in Bakhmut, Zaytseve. Now - in the Kupiansk direction. We were near Lyman, before the Kupiansk direction.

The prospects of the war - victory, definitely victory. Because if, God forbid, someone is not determined to win, our country will not exist, our people will not exist. We have already seen how they came in the spring of 2022 : they were destroying not only the military but also the civilian population. They were destroying women, children, elderly people, not to mention men... because it was just everybody. In my opinion, their goal is not to conquer our country. Their goal is, as it was in Tsarist Russia, then in Soviet power - the destruction of us as an ethnicity, as a nation. Total annihilation. And those they don't destroy, they want to turn into janissaries, into mankurts».

Anya Ostymchuk



Photo capturing the aftermath of the occupation in the city of Bucha.

Foreword by Volodymyr Savchenko, founder of The Ukrainian Review

Ukraine was given only a few days but has persisted for two years. Ukrainians are demonstrating that they can fight and win. However, besides the war with tanks and artillery, there is also an informational front. Ukraine, for many, was in the shadow of Russia and the former Soviet Union before the war. Now, Ukraine is carving out its place in the modern world.

This is precisely what inspired me to launch The Ukrainian Review, to tell the world about Ukraine. Today, information is both a resource and a weapon. It's a resource for learning, analysing reality, enriching oneself, and making right, thoughtful decisions. But information is also a weapon that can be used in the fight against the enemy. Our resource emerged as a response to fakes and anti-Ukrainian propaganda.



Volodymyr Savchenko,
CEO The Ukrainian Review

We publish information across various social media platforms and as a printed magazine.

Even though more and more people are using digital media, the paper edition has not lost its content and meaning. That is why we decided to release this, the third print edition of *The Ukrainian Review*, timed to the second anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The printed version offers the reader a selection of materials that have already been published on *The Ukrainian Review's* website and those that have been prepared specifically for this issue.

In this issue, you will find analytical papers and engaging interviews with defenders of Ukraine and foreign experts and politicians. With this issue, we want to draw attention to Ukraine's war-determined present and future.

Enjoy your reading, and thank you for your informational support of Ukraine, with respect to our readers,

Volodymyr Savchenko.



Ukraine: Prospects of an 'Economic Miracle' and Components of Success

At this time, our people and country are experiencing the most challenging times in our history. How we cope with the situation on the front lines, internal issues, and challenges on the international stage will define our future and, to a greater extent, the fate of the civilised world and the new safety architecture in Europe and beyond. Ukraine has the potential to become a reliable partner for the Western world. We have already learned to live in war conditions and are constantly evolving. We cannot afford to lose this potential.

To stabilise the situation and restore economic growth in Ukraine, we need to take many necessary steps, including combating corruption, implementing reforms, and ensuring the work of professionals in the government and parliament. Ukrainians demonstrate their courage, productivity, and determination for progress, even in the challenging war conditions. It is the ordinary people who remain unwavering. Enterprises continue to operate, industries function, and educational institutions do not cease their activities.

*Building of the National
Bank of Ukraine*



First Victory, Then Reconstruction

I am confident that Ukraine has the potential, after the war, to replicate the German economic miracle and become a strategic partner of democratic Western countries, forging mutually beneficial alliances with Global South nations.

Crucial to this is the support of Ukraine by the global community, without which we would not have been able to hold the front lines in the early days of the full-scale war, and without which, it will be very challenging for us to continue the fight for independence.

"Unfortunately, we see that the situation surrounding Ukraine has become a subject of speculation for many world politicians. Opinions in societies have become divided, but the trouble is that while some think about their ratings, children continue to die in Ukraine. A striking example is the family from Kharkiv, where a 35-year-old woman, Olga Putyanina, her husband, Grygoriy, and three boys aged 7, 4, and 10 months were burned alive in a barbaric shelling of civilian homes on the night of 9-10 February 2024. These tragedies could have been avoided if Ukraine had been provided with the necessary number of air defence systems.

Some argue that Ukraine should cease hostilities and sit down at the negotiating table. Therefore, they advocate for ending military aid to Ukraine. It is important to note that, first and foremost, Russia must cease its shelling, stop destroying our cities, and cease killing civilians. But as long as Russia continues to launch ballistic missiles and conduct offensive actions along the front line, we must defend our country.

The West should understand that the aggressor will not stop at Ukraine. They will continue further. Therefore, we expect support for our state and decisive actions to be taken at the NATO summit in Washington, scheduled for July 9-11, 2024.

Ukraine and the United Kingdom signed a security agreement on January 12, 2024. Perhaps the revitalisation of bilateral security agreements will be an effective format for building a new policy of deterring the aggressor and will serve as a kind of 'roadmap' for Ukraine's full integration into the NATO structure.

We are grateful; we value and remember the assistance of our friends who have chosen the side of light and are doing everything to support our people. Believe me, solidarity is essential for Ukrainians, as it gives us strength and hope that we can overcome this difficult path.

“The 'Ukrainian Economic Miracle’’: Not a Myth, but a Reality to be Achieved

After the end of the war, Ukraine's economic prospects have the potential for significant growth and development due to several key factors. The country's post-conflict recovery could open up a wide range of opportunities for international investment, governance reforms, and innovative economic projects.

First and foremost is infrastructure. The restoration of infrastructure will be a critical moment for Ukraine's economy. Investments in building new housing, constructing and repairing roads and bridges, and restoring energy infrastructure can stimulate economic activity and create hundreds of thousands of jobs. International aid and investments will be crucial in this process, offering Ukraine financial resources and access to cutting-edge technologies and planning practices.

The second factor influencing Ukraine's economic prospects is the agricultural sector. Ukraine, known as the 'breadbasket of Europe', has enormous potential in agriculture. The war forced many farmers to suspend their operations. Still, post-war reconstruction can facilitate the modernisation of this sector, attracting investments in high-tech farming, which will increase productivity and export opportunities for the Ukrainian economy.

Third, reforming the business environment and modern governance systems will serve as a catalyst for attracting foreign investment. Increasing transparency, genuine efforts to fight corruption, and simplifying regulatory burdens on businesses can significantly improve the investment climate in Ukraine, making it attractive to foreign companies.



Fourth, technological development and innovation can be crucial in economic recovery. Ukraine already has a strong IT sector with talented professionals and unique product companies. After the war, with the support of government initiatives and additional investments, this sector of the economy can become an even more powerful source of innovation and exports.

Fifth, a crucial aspect will be Ukraine's integration into the European economic system. Closer ties with the European Union through association agreements and potential membership can significantly improve trade relations, open up new markets for Ukrainian products, and facilitate the implementation of European standards across all sectors of the economy.

Of course, these prospects will be accompanied by significant challenges, including the need for large investments, risks of political instability, and the necessity for deep socio-economic reforms. Nevertheless, with wise governance and international support, Ukraine can not only recover after the war but also make a significant leap in its economic development, transforming itself from a subsidy-dependent country to a donor country and a stability factor in Europe.

Together, towards **victory!**

Volodymyr Savchenko, CEO of The Ukrainian Review



*Mother Ukraine monument after the change
of Soviet emblem with Ukrainian trident
Photographer Oleksandr Gusev*

superhumans Center

Is Ukraine ready for the return of soldiers with amputations - the experience of the Superhumans Center and the military

Official data on the number of casualties are not disclosed in Ukraine. However, The Wall Street Journal recently published an article that the number of people with amputations in our country has reached the level of the First World War in Britain - 20-50 thousand people. Specialists of the Superhumans Center are also guided by this number.

In order not to repeat the experience of the USSR: how the Superhumans Center appeared

According to Andrey, he began to think about the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. The key was the feeling that we owe an unpaid debt to the boys and girls who gave part of their health so that we could continue to live in peace. Another reason is the unwillingness of Ukraine, which will win, to turn into a poor, socially unprotected country of disabled people, which was the USSR after World War II.



Superhumans Prosthetics and Rehabilitation Clinic in Vynnyky,

"For example, the story about the so-called "Stalin samovars" - men who had high amputations of both legs after the Second World War, and moved on wooden boards with wheels. These boards are shallow, so a person pushes off the ground with his hands to move. So, in order not to "spoil" the proud image of the victorious country, Stalin gathered all such people, as well as people with other injuries and disabilities, and forcibly sent them to Solovki and Valaam, where they all died.

Meanwhile, veterans of more recent wars, such as Afghanistan or Chechnya, were often forced to either engage in crime or live out their lives in social isolation, with psychological problems, without the possibility of employment and simply leave home."

In the spring of 2022, the team - Olga Rudneva, Philipp Grushko, and others - began working on the project for the future free clinic for prosthetics and rehabilitation.

The first to believe in the idea and support it was the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, who has long taken care of the topic of barrier-free and inclusiveness, as well as the Minister of Health of Ukraine, Viktor Lyashko.

Superhumans announced its primary goal as follows: to bring the best world experience, the most successful medical expertise, and the most advanced technologies of prosthetics and rehabilitation as close as possible to the patient, and not the other way around. Prosthetics abroad is an option, but, unfortunately, there are many factors that make it too complicated. Therefore, in addition to the search for donors, the team also engaged in the involvement of foreign clinics and specialists.

Later, Superhumans was joined by the Howard Buffett Charitable Foundation, which is currently the largest donor to the project



Andrey Stavnitser, Co-Founder at Superhumans Center



“Ukrainian warrior **Ivan Tarn**, was seriously wounded on the Bakhmut sector of the front, is now undergoing rehabilitation at Superhumans”



“Patients of the Super Humans center - Ukrainian soldiers are undergoing rehabilitation”.



“Superhumans is a modern center for prosthetics, reconstructive surgery and rehabilitation of war victims”.



“Anastasia “Phoenix” Savka, undergoing rehabilitation at the center”.

Prosthetics, rehabilitation, reconstruction and PTSD: where the project is going

In the winter of 2022, Superhumans decided on the location and began the reconstruction of two buildings of the Lviv Military Hospital. Already in April 2023, the first building was officially opened. There is a laboratory for manufacturing prostheses, a large block for rehabilitation, offices of occupational therapists and psychologists, and a unique therapeutic pool.

Superhumans announce that a second, larger building will be opened this year. There will be operating rooms with a unique ventilation system to prevent infections. Thus, Superhumans will begin to perform reconstructive surgeries to restore the functionality of the facial organs as much as possible, and aesthetically correct the mutilated parts of the body.

"In the second building, there will be a ward fund, a 3-D printing laboratory, and rooms where foreign missions can stay. There will also be a hearing department here. According to Superhumans specialists, when a person spends a long time in a changed sound landscape (explosions, gunfire), his hearing organs are damaged, so many clinic patients also need help in this area.

The team also pays a lot of attention to working with the "stereotypical" perception of people with disabilities as weak and incapable of an active life.

"We talk a lot about it in the media and hold events to demonstrate that these are not people who need our sympathy and pity, they are iron people, in some places much more motivated and stronger in spirit than many of us. We often invite entrepreneurs, particularly from service areas, and we conduct tours of the Center in wheelchairs.

Even our space, built in compliance with all barrier-free standards, after an hour of such an excursion leaves a person very exhausted and tired - it is physically challenging. But after that, we better understand how to turn our restaurant, shop, and hotel into a place accessible to everyone."

In 2024, Superhumans aims to open centers in other regions of Ukraine. Currently, the team has more than 100 people.

The Superhumans Center highlighted the main problem of prosthetic medicine that currently exists in Ukraine - a huge number of people with amputations, including very complex ones. Now, no medical system in the world has experienced such a load. In addition, unfortunately, even the end of the war will not mean a quick "relief" in the employment of doctors, because the total area of landmines in Ukraine is already larger than the area of Austria. This means that Ukrainians will be blown up by mines and lose limbs for many years after the war.

Stories of the Brave: Two Soldiers Who Live On

Military Anastasia Savka "Phoenix", after being wounded at the front, has already received a prosthetic leg and is learning to use it at the Superhumans Center. After rehabilitation, she wanted to return to the army.

Before the full-scale war, Anastasia worked as an administrator at a car service center. The full-scale invasion forced Anastasia to change it. Even though she had no military experience and that women were not very willing to join the army at first, Nastia managed to get into the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Although she had to attend six months of shooting training for civilians in Lviv. During this time, she realized that she liked sniper rifles the most, and that's what she wanted to do.

Later, Anastasia took part in heavy battles with the occupiers, and after one of them, she was wounded when she stepped on a mine and it exploded. As a result, she lost the lower part of her left leg, in November 2023. Anastasia describes that moment this way:



"I took a step and stepped into a crater. Immediately, it was as if I was electrocuted all over my body - from head to toe. There was a pungent smell of TNT in the air. I realised that my left leg was unlikely to be saved."

"In reality, everything looks different from what they show in the movies. You constantly feel this discomfort. You are looking for at least something to hold on to. You dig in under enemy fire. And vice versa - you dig up those covered with earth from a close approach. "

And now Anastasia emphasises that the war is not over for her or anyone else. Therefore, she wants to return and continue her work and urges people not to relax because, perhaps, everyone will eventually have to fight.
Ivan Tarn, a veteran of the Russian-Ukrainian war from the special unit of the GUR of the "Artan" MOU, shared his experience.

"I was wounded in Bakhmut while evacuating my brother-in-arms. I was on the emergency response team. We received information that we had a wounded soldier under enemy fire. He needs to be taken out of there. We had a group of four men: a medic and three [soldiers] for evacuation. We got there successfully. The wounded soldier was stabilised and put on a stretcher.

All that was left for us to do was to follow the tracks we had followed. Of course, this sounds easier than it is done because Bakhmut was already a complete ruin at that time. And there was cluster PFM-1 (anti-personnel high-explosive mine "Petals" — ed.)... And when we were already carrying out my brothers-in-arms, I stepped on a mine. I was injured first. We had about 3 km left to go, my friend received the same injury, also his right foot, about two hundred meters later".

Ivan turned to the Superhumans Center clinic for a leg prosthesis. He left his application on the website and was contacted by the organisation's employees. In his opinion, the best prostheses in Ukraine are produced there. The rehabilitation was tailored to him, so he recovered relatively quickly.



Ivan Tarn, a veteran of the Russian-Ukrainian war from the special unit of the GUR of the "Artan" MOU



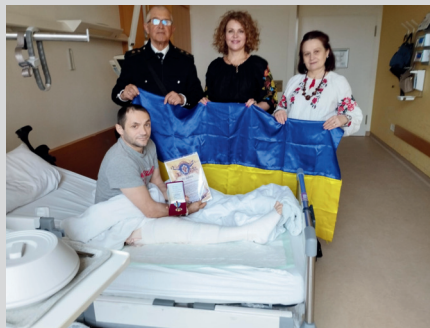


Patient during rehabilitation

Assistance to Ukrainian military personnel in Germany

The German-Ukrainian cooperation association "Feine Ukraine" e.V. was founded in 2011. Throughout the entire period of Russian aggression against Ukraine, the Ukrainian community in Northern Germany and Hamburg has been providing assistance to Ukraine. This assistance may come in the form of medical supplies or humanitarian aid, but one of the most important aspects is the treatment of Ukrainian soldiers.

*"For 13 years now, we have been operating as a non-profit organisation. We aim to support Ukrainian migrants in Hamburg, unite Ukrainian and German-speaking activists, and provide direct integration assistance. The organisation brings together about 200 employees and volunteers. One of the main areas of our work is personal and phone support. One of the most significant aspects of our work is assisting wounded soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and their families. This direction is called: 'Association of Ukrainian veterans and wounded,'" - **Lilia Ketler, CEO, project manager.***



Award ceremony for service members. With Vice Admiral Boris Kozhin, Commander of The Ukrainian Navy (April 1992 - October 1993). April 14, 2023.

"In addition, 'Feine Ukraine' unites a children's club, dance groups, the contemporary art team 'Sonakhi,' a psychological support club, a sports club, the football team SC FU, and the integration project 'Integration Bühne'."



Delivery of gratitude from General Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (2021-2024), to the doctors of the Military Hospital Hamburg for assisting the wounded. February 24, 2023.

"The first casualties arrived in Hamburg on September 3, 2014. Since then, members of our association and other activists from Hamburg have been caring for wounded Ukrainians undergoing treatment at Bundeswehr hospitals. At that time, a maximum of 6 patients were treated over a certain period. From the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Ukrainian soldiers are once again being treated in Hamburg as part of the program by The Ministry of Health of Ukraine 'MedEvac.' Since May 2022, 150 war-wounded patients have been admitted to hospitals in Hamburg and northern Germany. In total, about 900 patients are receiving treatment in Germany. NATO planes arrive in Germany every two weeks," said Lilia Ketler.



Meeting Ukrainian wounded at Hamburg Airport. September 4, 2023.

Stay or come back: how Ukraine and its allies are trying to bring Ukrainians home

As a result of Russia's war against Ukraine, thousands of Ukrainian families have lost their homes, jobs, loved ones, and their usual way of life. According to UN data, over 12 million Ukrainians have been displaced due to the occupation of Ukrainian territory or hostilities.

In this article, we have collected views from the representatives of the Ukrainian government, representatives of the legislature and diplomatic corps of allied countries, as well as civil society on how to create conditions for Ukrainians to come back home from abroad.

Current situation of internally displaced persons and refugees

According to the Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine Natalka Cmoc and the latest survey of the Centre for Economic Strategy between 5.6 and 6.7 million Ukrainians left Ukraine because of the war. Many people have returned to Ukraine to help renovate and rebuild their communities. The reality is that the longer people live outside of Ukraine, the more they will integrate into their new communities, and the more difficult it will be for them to return to Ukraine. The same survey supports this assumption estimating that between 1.3 and 3.3 million Ukrainians are likely to choose to remain abroad. Oleksandr Yavtushenko, Vice-President of the World Displaced Persons Organization, Chairman of the Council for Internally Displaced Persons and the Council of Volunteers at the Kyiv Regional State Administration, believes that most of these individuals are young, economically active people who are a significant driving force for Ukraine's economy and its primary labor resources.

Oksana Zholnovych, Ukrainian Minister of Social Policy, says: “According to the



Ukrainian Center for Economic Strategy, among those Ukrainians who are abroad, in the spring of 2023, 63% of Ukrainians abroad planned to return to Ukraine, 14% did not plan to return, and another 23% hesitated to answer. Ukrainians want to return, because there is a home, a working infrastructure and friends waiting for them. People left not because things are bad in Ukraine, but because Ukraine was attacked. The main reasons why migrants do not want to return are lack of security - 47%, lack of work and livelihood (mainly due to the war)- 31%.

The outstanding efforts of the Defense Forces of Ukraine, the return to Ukrainian control of a large part of the captured territories, and the general stability of the Ukrainian state under the conditions of war create the basis for the return of many migrants to their homes. The International Organization for Migration estimates the number of Ukrainians who returned to their homes from both external and internal migration as of September 2023 at 4.6 million people.

We need the help of our Western partners both in the military and financial and humanitarian dimensions. In particular, in strengthening the ability of the Ukrainian state to financially support citizens in the initial period after their relocation - until they are integrated in the new community, as well as develop the ability of local communities to provide the necessary services to our citizens. The ability of each local community to provide effective support to citizens in need is crucial to the return of Ukrainian migrants from abroad. And their return, in turn, is extremely important for ensuring the economic and security stability of our country as a whole." At the same time, in some areas Ukraine may also benefit from the prolonged presence of some categories of its refugees abroad until the situation remains not so safe. For example, Canada and Ukraine signed a bilateral Youth Mobility Agreement, which young people from both countries will benefit from when travel to Ukraine becomes safe.

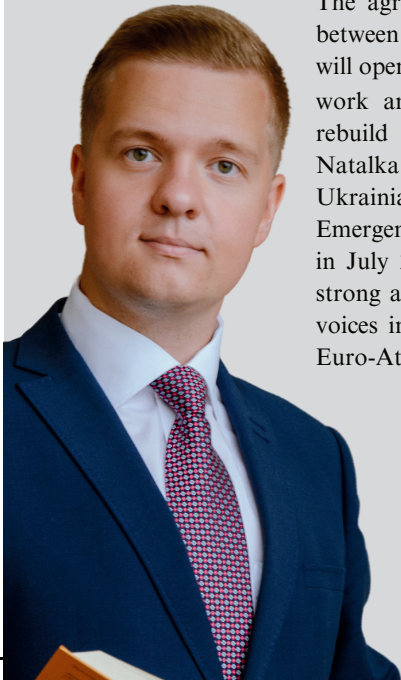
The agreement further deepens the strong ties between our peoples and our two countries. It will open up new opportunities for youth to work and travel, including opportunities for Canadian youth to help rebuild Ukraine. According to the Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine Natalka Cmoc, since the beginning of the full-scale war, more than 210,000 Ukrainians arrived in Canada under the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) measures, launched in March 2022 and closed in July 2023). While many will stay in Canada, they have proven to be strong advocates for Ukraine in Canada, and as such, they are important voices in ensuring that Ukraine continues to be supported in its goal of Euro-Atlantic integration.



Oksana Zholnovych, Ukrainian Minister of Social Policy



Natalka Cmoc, Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine



Oleksandr Yavtushenko, Vice-President of the World Displaced Persons Organization

Many will undoubtedly choose to return to Ukraine when the conditions are right, including safety, access to jobs and a favourable environment for entrepreneurship. They want to ensure that their children have the support mechanisms for their reintegration. When they return, they will bring their valuable experiences with them.. Even with the return of overseas Ukrainians, Ukraine will still face a demographic challenge from the impact of the war. This will challenge Ukraine's ability to recover and rebuild.

Oleksandr Yavtushenko says that the ongoing armed conflict, the bleak security situation, and the lack of a systemic vision for solving the internally displaced persons (IDP) problem continue to force people to emigrate. In order to retain people in Ukraine and facilitate the return of those who have left, the state and our international partners must propose a strategic vision for addressing this issue. Clearly, this requires the creation of a comprehensive set of socio-economic conditions. He refers to his concept of the "Ukrainian Dream" drawing an analogy with the so-called "American Dream". This concept should provide answers to key questions such as employment opportunities, creating conditions for business development, and providing housing for those citizens who have lost it. Let's consider these issues one by one.



*A refugee camp.
Photographer Sergey Ponomarev*

Addressing the housing problem

Individuals who have lost their homes due to hostilities or whose homes are located in occupied territories should be given the right to use alternative housing or given the opportunity to obtain preferential long-term mortgage financing to purchase such housing. In particular, it is necessary to expand relevant programs offered by the Fund for Support of Youth Housing Construction and Ukrfinzhytlo (eHome).

For example, the Ukrainian government has spent over €73 billion on payments to internally displaced persons (€2,000 for adults and €3,000 for children and disabled individuals per month). With these funds, the state could have built more than 300 apartment complexes, each with 280-350 apartments (for comparison, based on the average cost per square metre of housing approved by the Ministry of Infrastructure, €73 billion would have been sufficient to build 3.4 million square metres of housing, while in the first nine months of 2023, construction began on 3.1 million square metres of housing). These apartments could have been made available for over 100,000 people who lost their homes. Additionally, a significant part of the population could have been employed in the construction industry (for comparison, in 2021, over 690,000 people worked in construction).

An alternative to apartment complexes could be a model similar to Israeli kibbutz settlements, with five-story houses where displaced individuals live and work in agricultural or processing enterprises within the kibbutz's territory. Such a solution may be somewhat more expensive than regular houses, but it provides immediate employment for the population and often includes necessary social and psychological programs for the kibbutz residents. The integration effects of such settlements can be truly significant. Men involved in such construction could be granted deferments from mobilization. A similar large-scale project would significantly boost economic development, support local production of construction materials, and, as a result, the state would acquire a substantial asset. In the long term, these apartments could be used as a flexible housing reserve, to which low-income individuals could have free access, and others could buy through favorable state-sponsored mortgage programs.

The availability of such apartments where people can live for free and have the opportunity to get back on their feet while having a roof over their heads would encourage a certain part of those who left, especially among the youth who do not have their own homes, to return to Ukraine if they were guaranteed access to these apartments. For those planning to leave Ukraine, this could become an argument in favor of staying.

Funding for such large-scale housing construction projects could be proposed to international donors who have already expressed their willingness to provide additional compensation to Ukrainian returnees. Providing them housing could not only motivate them to return but also to stay if the condition of living in the apartment is set as a requirement for the possibility of obtaining ownership or purchasing it at a certain discount.

Overall, the state could implement such a large-scale project. For example, it could breathe new life into Ukraine's largest state construction holding, "Ukrbud". Under the proper management and close scrutiny by international observers and the public, it could become the general contractor for mass housing construction projects in Ukraine.

Oksana Zholnovych, Minister of Social Policy also supports this approach: "The Ministry of Social Policy has developed a draft of Strategy for Demographic Development of Ukraine until 2040, one of the focuses of which is the policy of returning Ukrainian migrants. Important elements of such a policy are the creation of housing funds and assisting in renting housing for citizens who have lost it; safety issues, including the creation of a sufficient number of shelters; the development of labour market opportunities for citizens of working age, and the development of the service market and effective and high-quality support for those citizens who cannot work, so that their able-bodied loved ones can work instead of caring for them. We have to create a humane environment in Ukrainian cities. And, of course, systematic communication with our citizens abroad is extremely important, not only with forced migrants, but also with the Ukrainian diaspora".

Additionally, it would be advisable to create a platform where internally displaced professionals (e.g., doctors and teachers) could find communities willing to invite them to work and provide them with suitable conditions, including housing. In this way, it would be possible to simultaneously meet the labour needs of the respective community, address the integration problem of displaced persons and their families, and encourage highly qualified professionals to remain in Ukraine.



*Ukraine is a blueprint
for a modular refugee village*

Employment and the creation of business conditions

Ukrainians are a nation of entrepreneurs, so the state's first priority should be to simplify the business environment as much as possible. This includes implementing straightforward and transparent reporting and taxation rules, as well as establishing clear , automatic tax monitoring.

Dr. Marcus Faber (Free Democratic Party), a member of the German Bundestag, notes that a key aspect is economic reconstruction. This includes job creation , restoration of infrastructure and measures for the social and economic integration of returnees, including housing, education and health services. These programmes are crucial to give returnees to lead a stable life and facilitate the transition.

International support for reconstruction in the form of relief supplies, financial aid and expertise is crucial to the stabilisation of Ukraine. It helps to sustain support and strengthen the country.

According to Oleksandr Yavtushenko, the state should actively support entrepreneurial education and provide grants for creation and development of small businesses. Within these grant programs, it would be beneficial to allocate specific quotas for young entrepreneurs and internally displaced persons. For the latter, it is essential to consider their successful entrepreneurial experience prior to displacement, which demonstrates their aptitude and necessary business skills to restart their businesses in their new communities. Such an approach would, among other benefits, promote employment opportunities for IDPs. With the help of grants, IDPs would create employment opportunities for themselves and potentially for other displaced persons .

Security and safety

Dr. Marcus Faber points out that in order to facilitate the reintegration of refugees, geopolitical stability in Ukraine, and the recognition of its territorial integrity and sovereignty within the 1991 borders by all international states, is a crucial step. In this context, comprehensive security guarantees for Ukraine are essential to reassure the people there that they can return to their country.

Equally important are conditions of the security policy . This includes the establishment of sustainable peace and order in Ukraine. Measures such as eliminating the dangers of war, for example from mines, ensuring public order and protection against potential future aggression are essential. Furthermore psychological and social support also play an important role. Psychological counselling and social integration services are essential for those who have suffered trauma and loss. Political stability is a key factor. Stable, transparent and inclusive governance would strengthen citizens' confidence in Ukraine and help create a safe and welcoming environment.



Dr. Marcus Faber, Member of German Bundestag



Conclusions

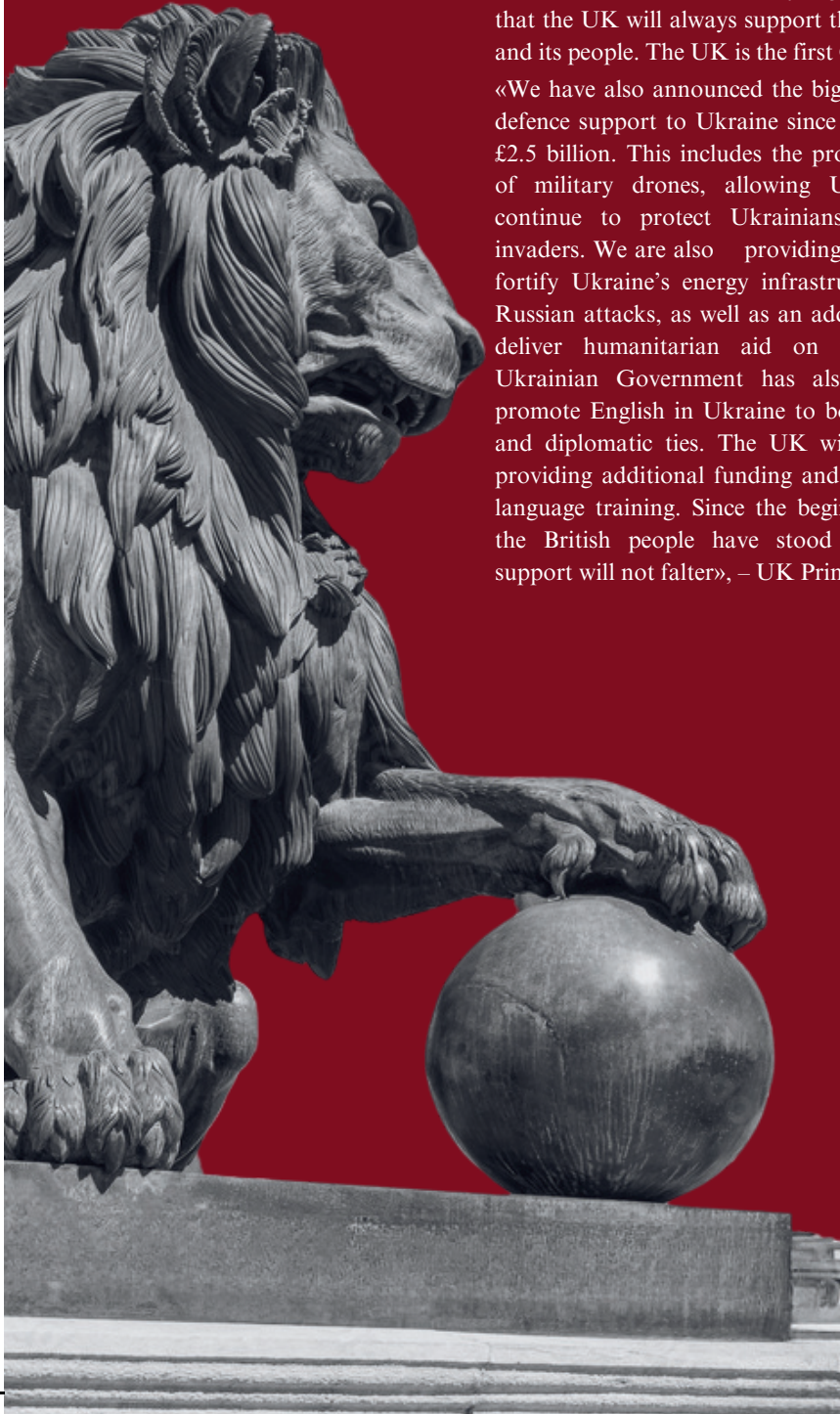
Both Ukraine and its allies have an urgent need for a comprehensive strategy to address the challenges faced by displaced Ukrainians, emphasising housing, employment, and international cooperation as key pillars for successful reintegration and return of Ukrainians home. By proposing innovative housing models and advocating for simplified business conditions, Ukraine and its allies should suggest tangible solutions that could not only facilitate the return of Ukrainians but also contribute to the national economic recovery.



Historic agreement on military cooperation between **Ukraine** and **Great Britain**

On January 12, 2024, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a historic UK-Ukraine Security Agreement, making clear that the UK will always support the Defence of Ukraine and its people. The UK is the first G7 country to do so.

«We have also announced the biggest single package of defence support to Ukraine since the war began, worth £2.5 billion. This includes the production of thousands of military drones, allowing Ukrainian defence to continue to protect Ukrainians and repel Russian invaders. We are also providing additional funding to fortify Ukraine's energy infrastructure against further Russian attacks, as well as an additional £18 million to deliver humanitarian aid on the front line. The Ukrainian Government has also announced it will promote English in Ukraine to boost economic growth and diplomatic ties. The UK will help in this effort, providing additional funding and resources for English language training. Since the beginning of this conflict, the British people have stood with Ukraine. That support will not falter», – UK Prime Minister



The Prime Minister of Great Britain also paid a visit to the Ukrainian Parliament, where he addressed the members of parliament and the people of Ukraine.

«I am a member of one of the world's oldest parliaments. Today, I had the honour of addressing the world's bravest. Slava Ukraini! Ronald Reagan once said that freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on to our children for them to do the same. Ukrainians know this more than anyone. We stand with them, for as long as it takes», – Rishi Sunak



Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the security agreement with the UK and the results of his trip to the Baltic States

«January 12, 2024 is the day when the history of Europe changed. Ukraine and the United Kingdom have signed a new and unprecedented security agreement. This is not just a statement. It is a reality that will come true thanks to our cooperation and, in particular, the security guarantees from a prominent world power — Great Britain»,

— said the President of Ukraine.

*«We have agreed on annual assistance to Ukraine, on full cooperation for the sake of the sufficient potential of our defence and security Forces, our defence-industrial complex, our state institutions and social systems. Thanks to this, we will achieve such a level of security that the very fact of its existence will serve to deter an aggressive Russia. The term of this agreement with Britain is ten years. The term may be extended — by analogy with other similar security treaties concluded by global leaders», – emphasised **Volodymyr Zelenskyy**.*

«This day has already entered the history of our state: today, we have an agreement with the UK, a security agreement that we have been working on for a long time. It is the first bilateral agreement implementing the G7 basic understanding of security commitments

for Ukraine, our defence, our security growth. I thank the UK and Prime Minister Sunak for being first and your leadership. And, of course, I want to thank all our friends in the Baltic States – the three visits were very fruitful. Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia. There are decisions regarding weapons for our warriors, regarding economic support for Ukraine. Support for our relations with the European Union. Our movement towards NATO. Important decisions that will definitely strengthen us all. Europe will endure only when it is a continent of unity», – added President of Ukraine.



The reaction of Ukrainian and British politicians to the signing of the UK-Ukraine security agreement

«Rishi Sunak visited Ukraine. He brought good news and long-term security guarantees to Kyiv. This is the best answer to Putin, who convenes the UN Council on the operation of the US and Great Britain against Iran’s friends, the Houthis, in Yemen», – said Oleksiy Goncharenko, a member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, a member of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE, and Vice-President of the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.



“Verkhovna Rada”, the Ukrainian Parliament Building

The Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Ruslan Stefanchuk expressed words of support: «A historic moment. Ukrainian people, defenders are holding the line, continuing to fight for Ukraine’s independence and territorial integrity. And this is thanks, in particular, to the help of the United Kingdom, which continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine. Ukraine has reliable and loyal allies.



British Parliament building

UK Secretary of State for Defence Grant Shapps: «We said our support would be unwavering and today we’ve proved it. Putin hoped the West would be distracted by events in the Middle East but today we’ve taken the critical step to increase our military support to Ukraine, to get them more of what they need to win. With £2.5 billion to get Ukraine the advanced capabilities and drones they need to defeat Putin and train more Ukrainian soldiers to defend freedom’s frontline against tyranny. At £2.5 billion, our latest Ukraine support package is our biggest yet».

Ivan Tarn, a veteran of the Russo-Ukrainian War, ambassador of The Ukrainian Review said: «Great Britain is the first country to sign a security agreement with Ukraine. Despite the fact that calls for negotiations are increasingly heard in Western media resources and politics, the UK has clearly taken a position to stand by Ukraine in restoring its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The latest record-setting missile strikes once again show the terrorist nature of Russia. It must be defeated, because in the modern world, the actions of the aggressor lead only to the collapse of the world order».

Sanctions against Russia: why is it so difficult to confiscate the assets of Russian banks and individuals abroad?

Our speaker has both practical and theoretical experience - he believes that the transfer of most of the frozen Russian assets is not at all a simple story and could threaten the stability of the Western economy itself. Together with Dovydas Vitkauskas, we are looking into how many assets of Russia were frozen and what their potential fate is.

Dovydas Vitkauskas (DV): former lawyer at the European Court of Human Rights; former Team Leader of the biggest EU-funded justice reform project in Ukraine; advisor to the Lithuanian Government on better regulation

Why has the West been slow in taking Russian assets and giving them to Ukraine?

DV replies: The US, EU and other Western countries have been rather quick in adopting sanctions against the Russian sovereign and private assets before and following the 2022 military intervention. However, the purpose of sanctions is not to punish the rogue actor, but to exert pressure to change political course. Sanctions are ultimately a preventive, and not a reactive, tool. Some populist politicians are confusing the picture even more by wrapping together two separate issues with distinct political, legal and economic implications - that is, dealing with Russia on the one hand, and helping Ukraine on the other. As a result, promises and expectations do not always match reality.

Why should these issues be separate??

DV replies: The West, and especially the US, have a distinct national interest - namely, to preserve the supremacy of US Dollar (USD) as a dominant reserve and transaction currency. Currently about 60% of global financial reserves are kept in dollar assets, and up to 60% of global business settlements are USD-denominated. The US wants to avoid a message that it is no longer a safe place to invest. What would be the use of any sanctions in a future conflict, if the West no longer controlled the global financial system? Secondly, in case of confiscation, the West, especially EU countries, are afraid of tit-for-tat retaliation by Russia against Western assets there. It is enough to note that Austrian and Italian banks currently hold tens of billions of euros worth of credit and collateral in Russia. Thirdly, our politicians may want one thing, but our lawyers and judges might disagree - that's what we call "the rule of law" in the West, which has worked so far, to a certain extent.

Which Western country holds the key to finally addressing the issue of sanctioned Russian assets?

DV replies: *Without a doubt, the United States. The US is the only country which has a profound political experience in imposing sanctions on various rogue players, especially since the Cuba sanctions in the 1960s. Secondly, the US have a readily-made legal framework, including by way of executive (President's) authority, to vest the title of a sanctioned asset - that is, to confiscate - on the basis of so-called IEEPA, TWEA, RICO, CAATSA, DETER, DASKAA and other legislative instruments. The US also has administrative, civil and criminal forfeiture to deal with assets of illicit origin. The US confiscated about USD 1.7 billion belonging to Iraq commercial banks following the military intervention in 2003. Only two years ago the US took away some Afghan Central Bank dollar assets to compensate 9/11 victims. Previously the Trump administration had even used frozen US-based shares of Venezuelan state-owned oil company CITGO to fund the political activities of the then acting President of Venezuela Juan Guaido. So the US has the know-how of action on different types of foreign sanctioned assets, unlike the EU.*

So why not act against sanctioned Russian assets now?

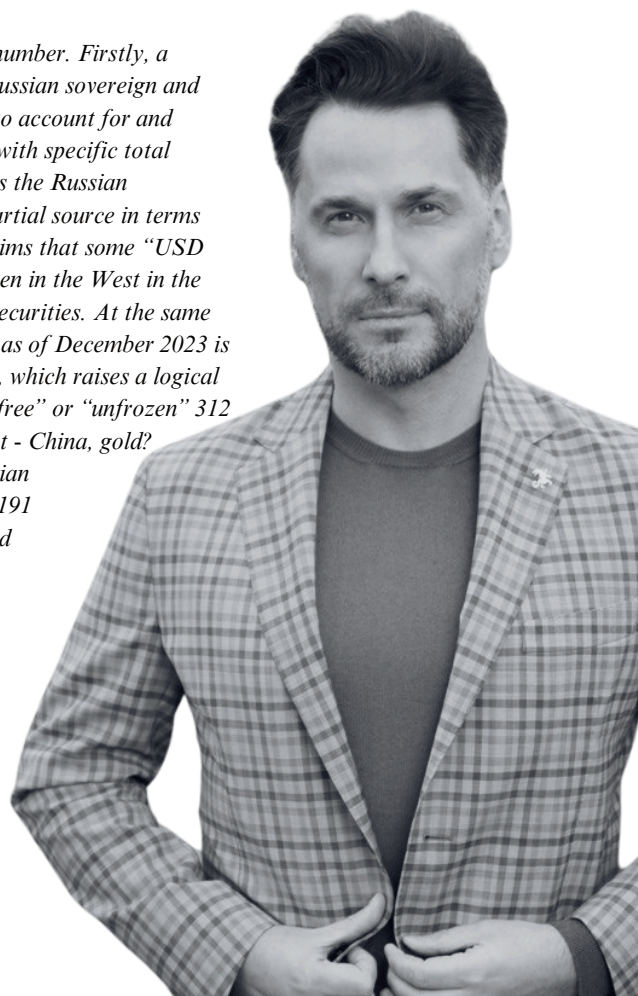
DV replies: *It's the problem of caliber of sanctioned Russian assets, not legal nature of that action..*

How much sanctioned Russian property is there in the West?

DV replies: *We actually don't know the precise number. Firstly, a distinction should be made between sanctioned Russian sovereign and private assets. Sovereign assets are much easier to account for and find legal basis to deal with. But the only source with specific total numbers of sanctioned Russian sovereign assets is the Russian Central Bank (RCB) itself - not exactly an impartial source in terms of either factual accuracy or intentions. RCB claims that some "USD 300 billion" of its financial holdings are now frozen in the West in the shape of currency, government bonds and other securities. At the same time, RCB mentions that the total of its reserves as of December 2023 is a significantly larger amount of USD 612 billion, which raises a logical question: where does Russia hold its remaining "free" or "unfrozen" 312 billion of international reserves, if not in the West - China, gold? The only number - and the biggest chunk of Russian property in one place - that we can trust is EUR 191 billion of sanctioned Russian sovereign assets held by a Belgian clearing house Euroclear.*



Dovydas Vitkauskas, a former lawyer at the European Court of Human Rights; former Team Leader of the largest EU-funded justice reform project in Ukraine; advisor to the Lithuanian Government on better regulation



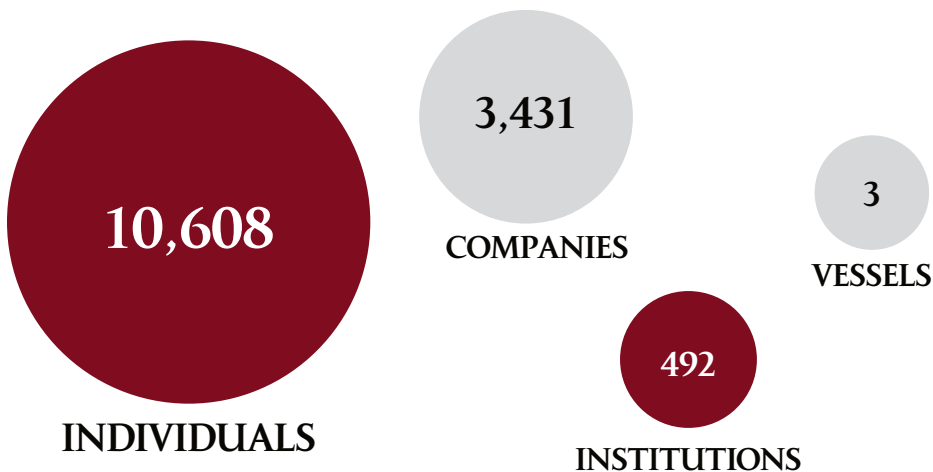
So the Russian Central Bank continues to earn money in the West?

DV replies: Yes. The Euroclear holdings earned RCB about EUR 821 million profit in 2022, and EUR 4.4 billion profit in 2023, due to rising interest rates. These profits have been immobilised by sanctions together with the EUR 191 billion principal held at Euroclear. Belgium also received somewhat more than EUR 1 billion in taxes from these profits. G7 are currently discussing how to use the Euroclear and other similar smaller RCB holdings elsewhere to help Ukraine. An option to confiscate outright the whole principal is unrealistic, as Germany and some other EU countries would articulate the risks to the status of the Euro as a second preferred global reserve and transaction currency, for the same reasons as those indicated above with regard to Dollar global supremacy. An idea to use the Euroclear principal of EUR 191 billion as a collateral for new debt to be issued by European countries is also unrealistic, in my opinion, because putting a collateral for a third person's debt is not unlike vesting that guarantee to someone else - or, in other words, not dissimilar from confiscation. The only option that realistically remains is to tax the profits of Russian sovereign holdings. But this will generate at best one or two billion USD per year, not the hundreds of billions that Ukraine needs.

What about sanctioned Russian private assets?

DV replies: Western countries, where most of those properties of sanctioned Russian individuals are located, have rather underdeveloped eGovernment, as a result of which it is hard to know or access any quality electronic data on who owns what, or aggregate that data for statistical purposes. Putting restrictions on property - or visualising those restrictions - is frequently not automated either. In order to know exact numbers of various types of sanctioned Russian private assets, one needs to browse through various paper registers, or rely on data collected by governments themselves. Earlier last year the European Commission asked EU member states to respond on how much sanctioned private Russian assets were frozen in each country. Belgium, Germany and Italy reported more than EUR 3 billion worth of such assets each. Malta and Cyprus reported EUR 200 thousand. It's not a joke, unfortunately. Switzerland appears to hold some EUR 8 billion, and the UK almost EUR 20 billion, of sanctioned Russian private assets. Taking them outright will be impossible due to the established legal limitations, however.

Total number of list-based sanctions imposed on Russia by territories and organizations worldwide from February 22, 2022 to February 10, 2023



Why not take it and give it to Ukraine?

DV replies: Sanctioned private assets are not criminal, by default. Moreover, the EU as a whole, or most EU countries separately, do not even have a legal basis similar to “forfeiture” in the US where one’s property can be taken without a criminal conviction. Even a few European countries (UK, Ireland, Italy etc.) that have a legal basis for non-conviction-based confiscation, will face hundreds of thousands in legal fees and years of bulky judicial processes to prove a “criminal” origin of sanctioned assets in each and every case. Maybe they will succeed in 1 or 2 percent of cases - for instance, where a sanctioned person willingly tries to circumvent sanctions. While being sanctioned is not a crime, evading sanctions is. A sanctioned oligarch Konstantin Malofeyev lost USD 5 million in the US last year for this reason. While the Malofeyev proceeds were transferred by the US government to Ukraine as compensation for Russia’s war, such cases will be a teardrop in the ocean. Canada has the most assertive and dedicated legal framework to take away sanctioned private Russian assets by way of “repurposing” for Ukraine, but it does not have much Russian property to back it up. There is no doubt that some sanctioned Russian assets, such as EU-based companies with dependence on sanctioned supply chains, will go bankrupt. One way or the other, it is not much for Ukraine to expect.

So what advice would you give the West regarding sanctioned Russian assets?

DV replies: It took hundreds of years for the West to create its global financial supremacy as a “safe heaven”, and building the international system of rules of investor and trade protection. The Western countries can still borrow relatively cheaply, or print money without significant consequences, as a result of that supremacy. Dismantling this system of respect for property rights would come at a great cost firstly for the West itself, and can be used as an advantage by new rogue players or their enablers looking for alternative financial heavens. By way of a simple cost-benefit analysis, continuing to put pressure by way of sanctions on the Russian government is a better strategy than confiscation of sanctioned Russian assets. As mentioned above, the ultimate purpose of sanctions is not to punish but to change the rogue regime which threatens World security.

Has this strategy worked in the past?

DV replies: No. Western sanctions are still in place with regard to Cuba, Iran, and North Korea after decades. But we have no other option, especially in a World with diminishing economic power of the West.

What will the reconstruction of Ukraine be like: the opinion of Ihor Vasylykovskiy, People's Deputy of Ukraine

Reconstructing Ukraine after a victory in the war would be an immense challenge, requiring coordination among government agencies, international organisations, NGOs, and the private sector.

Here are some key aspects of the reconstruction process:

Infrastructure: Rebuilding damaged infrastructure such as roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, and utilities is crucial for restoring normalcy and enabling economic activity. It will be essential to attract foreign technology and investment.

Housing: A priority is to provide adequate housing for displaced persons and those whose homes were destroyed. This may involve building temporary shelters as well as permanent housing solutions. Again, an important question: to restore old but destroyed cities in the East, or to create new ones according to new master plans?

Economy: Rebuilding the economy is essential for long-term stability. This could involve initiatives to stimulate entrepreneurship, attract foreign investment, and support industries affected by the war.

Demining and Cleanup: Clearing landmines and unexploded ordnance is necessary to ensure returning residents' safety and facilitate reconstruction efforts. Environmental cleanup may also be required in areas affected by pollution or damage to natural resources.

Social Services: Restoring access to healthcare, education, and social services is crucial for the population's well-being.

Socialization of the military: Creating priority conditions for the return of former soldiers to an everyday and peaceful life, psychological and financial support and special adaptation programs.



Ihor Vasylykovskiy,
People's Deputy of Ukraine

Reconciliation and Social Cohesion: Addressing the social and psychological impacts of war, including trauma and displacement, is essential for rebuilding communities and promoting reconciliation. This may include initiatives to foster dialogue, support victims, and promote understanding among different groups.

Governance and Rule of Law: Rebuilding governance structures and restoring the rule of law is essential for ensuring security and stability. This may involve reforming institutions, strengthening judicial systems, and promoting transparency and accountability in government.

International Assistance: Ukraine would likely require significant international assistance, both financial and technical, to support its reconstruction efforts. This could come in the form of grants, loans, technical expertise, and humanitarian aid from bilateral and multilateral donors.

Long-Term Development: Reconstruction efforts should also focus on long-term development goals, such as improving infrastructure resilience, promoting sustainable development practices, and addressing underlying socio-economic issues that may have contributed to the conflict.

Political Stability: Finally, achieving lasting peace and stability is essential for successful reconstruction. Ukraine should become an example of democracy, stability and development, a guarantor of stability in Europe and an organic part of Western civilisation in political, economic and value terms.

Overall, the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine would be a complex and challenging process that requires comprehensive planning, coordination, and sustained commitment from all stakeholders involved.

The task of the deputy corps at present is to work for the victory of Ukraine and promote President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula in the world as a roadmap for achieving peace in Ukraine within the borders of 1991.



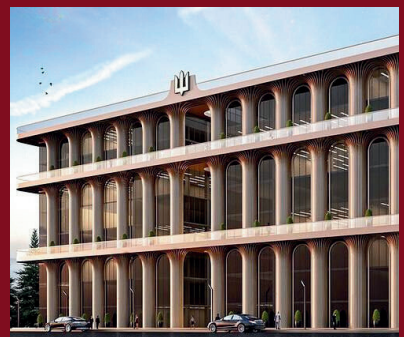
One of the projects for the reconstruction of the city hall building in Mariupol



Visualization of the reconstruction of the largest district of Kharkiv - Saltovka



Rehabilitation project of the railway station square in Trostyanets



Kharkiv Regional State Administration Reconstruction Project

The situation of **Ukrainian** children: how Ukraine is **fighting** for its rights in **PACE**

Ukraine became a part of PACE in 1995, but strong cooperation actively began in 2014. It was then that Russia began armed aggression on the territory of Ukraine, which already, in 2022, turned into a full-scale invasion. Since then, many resolutions and recommendations have been adopted, which, in one way or another, were intended to help Ukraine.

We spoke with two members of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE about the current state of affairs and what to expect from our cooperation in the future. In particular, they talked about the new Resolution "Position of Ukrainian Children", which recognised the illegal removal of our children to Russia as genocide.

PACE – is one of the two statutory bodies of the Council of Europe. It examines issues related to societal problems and various aspects of international politics within the framework of the

Council of Europe's general mandate, which covers the protection of human rights, the development of democracy, and the rule of law. The results of the Assembly's work help determine the direction of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and intergovernmental cooperation within the framework of the Council of Europe.



Maria Mezentseva - Head of the Subcommittee on Approximation of Ukrainian Legislation to EU Legislation, Head of the Permanent Delegation to PACE

Ukraine and PACE: a new resolution was adopted

We asked Oleksiy Goncharenko, a member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, a member of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE, and the head of the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees, and Displaced Persons to highlight the most important of the adopted resolutions.

"The resolutions adopted by the PACE regarding the Russian-Ukrainian war are important because they help the war remain in the centre of world attention. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, questions about Ukraine have been tabled at every session. It is difficult to single out the most important, but special attention should be paid to those calling for the deportation of Ukrainian children by the Russian Federation as genocide of the Ukrainian people and to those calling for the recognition of Putin's regime as a dictatorship and, accordingly, Putin as an illegitimate president; and those strongly supporting the creation of a special international criminal tribunal to investigate the crime of aggression against Ukraine," – he said.

The last resolution regarding Ukraine was adopted on January 25, 2024 - "Position of Ukrainian children." In it, the Assembly stated:

- to adopt at the level of national parliaments statements and/or resolutions recognising deportations, forced displacements, and unjustified delays in the repatriation of Ukrainian children as a crime of genocide;
- to inform the competent authorities of Ukraine about the crossing of the border by citizens of Russia who illegally adopted or established guardianship over a Ukrainian child;
- introduce and ensure further compliance with sanctions against Russia and Belarus, as well as include in the sanctions lists persons involved in the deportation of Ukrainian children;
- to assess the participation of mass media representatives in propaganda campaigns organised by Russia and Belarus regarding deported Ukrainian children and to apply appropriate measures, for example, regarding refusal of accreditation and admission to public events.



Oleksiy Goncharenko, a member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, a member of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE, and the head of the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees, and Displaced Persons to highlight the most important of the adopted resolutions.



In this resolution, special attention was focused on the participation of Belarus in the criminal actions of Russia, in particular, in the removal of our children to the territory of the occupier. We asked Oleksiy Goncharenko whether this could be a reason to open a case at the ICC or the future Special Tribunal against this country. He answered:

"Indeed, greater publicity can contribute to the quick opening of cases. But it is worth noting that Belarus is currently under the occupation of the regime of self-proclaimed President Lukashenko, which authorises the deployment of Russian troops on its territory, who are directly engaged in this removal, so all representatives of this regime involved in the deportation of Ukrainian children should be held accountable and punished adequately.

By the way, I spoke about the involvement of the Lukashenko's regime in war crimes in April last year when we were considering the resolution regarding the deportation of Ukrainian children, it was my initiative to approve the amendments to the resolution that, together with the Russian Federation, mentioned Belarus as being involved in this crime As well as about the fact that Ukraine needs to break diplomatic relations with this occupied state."

"Hope for Ukraine": how Maria Mezentseva fights for Ukraine in PACE

Maria Mezentseva, Head of the Subcommittee on Approximation of Ukrainian Legislation to EU Legislation, Head of the Permanent Delegation to PACE, also shared her experience with The Ukrainian Review. She emphasised that the last two years were the most successful for Ukraine and the organisation.

She said that her team is focused on a single work plan – 10 points of President Zelenskyy's Peace Plan. The Ministry of Justice also helped with fair compensation. That is, to first create a register of losses when the prosecutor's office of Ukraine transfers all registered war crimes, and now there are more than 123 thousand of them.

"This includes destruction, damage to property, loss of close relatives, relatives in general, loss of their quality of being in temporary captivity, search for relatives, search for prisoners of war, deported children, crimes, rape, where the youngest child affected is four years old, and so on. That is, Ukrainians must receive compensation for all of this, for every war crime. Therefore, it is important to register them. By the way, this war, which is now experienced not only by Ukraine but also by the entire modern world, is the most documented war ever seen in history. And these documents and evidence mustn't disappear".

In her opinion, the register and compensatory mechanism will be officially opened already in April 2024.

"We had to convene an international conference at the level of presidents, prime ministers, parliamentarians of the Council of Europe and beyond. It happened in Iceland in May 2023. We talked about the ecocide that Russia is committing, and about the European integration processes, and mostly, of course, additionally about the tribunal and the new idea of the register of damages and the compensation mechanism."

She reminded that the next meeting in April will discuss and vote on the resolution, which is called "Restoration of Ukraine and Frozen Russian Assets".

She concluded that the parliamentary track of diplomacy should never be underestimated. Many PACE decisions were copied in the NATO parliamentary assemblies, the OSCE parliamentary assemblies, the European Parliament, and even the UN. By the way, Ukraine voted a separate resolution on the reform of the UN, and so far, we are the only ones who speak about it at the international level.

Spring 2024 session of the PACE: what to expect next?

During the PACE winter session from January 22 to 26, 2024, in Strasbourg, the adoption of the resolution "Position of Ukrainian Children" was not the only significant event.

"In the current conditions of the constant emergence of new conflicts, it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep the Russian-Ukrainian war in the focus of the international community's attention.

This winter session did not focus on our war. Still, the resolution "Globalisation in times of crisis and war: the role of the OECD after the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine" approved my amendments that called attention to the Kakhovka tragedy and the deliberate use of food supplies and the sale of energy resources by the Russian Federation as a weapon against the security of Ukraine and the world," – explained Goncharenko.

On January 22, 2024, Oleksiy Goncharenko was appointed Chairman of the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees, and Displaced Persons. Previously, he held the position of Vice President of the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons. We asked what his first actions would be in his new position.

Tetiana Stelmakh



Council of Europe Conference room



“Genocidal Rhetoric” or How Russia Is Trying to Publicly Justify Its Gravest Crimes

Atrocities in Bucha, mass destruction in Borodianka, devastation of Mariupol, torture centers in Izium. These cities, once little known outside Ukraine, are now associated by foreigners with numerous war crimes committed by Russia during the full-scale aggression. All this is the result of not just the Kremlin dictator's ambitious attempts to quench his territorial thirst and assert himself in the international arena, but a real genocidal war against Ukrainians, who did not obey the invaders in 2014 and tirelessly fought for their freedom and statehood.

The list of barbaric crimes of Russia in the modern democratic world contains numerous horror stories every day, but, unfortunately, we know little about them due to the inaccessibility of the territories invaded by Russia. But such a number of recorded crimes can hardly be called

an accident or a miscalculation on the part of Putin's regime. These are signs of the real goal of this aggression against Ukraine - genocide, says **Ihor Solovei**. The concept of the crime of “genocide” appeared in the general list of international crimes after World War II, and it is the most severe one against humanity; its commission is the basis for the international legal responsibility of the state and its leaders. But proving it in court can take



Ihor Solovei, Head of the Centre for Strategic Communication and Information Security.

The Centre for Strategic Communication and Information Security conducted and published a study entitled Genocidal rhetoric of the

Russian Regime, and it turned out that even Russian legislation contains a number of provisions aimed at discriminating against both Russian citizens of Ukrainian ethnicity and Ukrainians in the temporarily occupied territories. The Russian authorities, of course, with the help of pro-Kremlin propaganda, actively convince their insufficiently educated population, that is, distant regions of the Russian Federation, about the existence of the so-called “fascists - Banderites,” “Kiev junta,” and the alleged need to free those citizens of Ukraine who want to live with the “fraternal peoples of Russia and Belarus.”



The local education system, or rather what they call it, has cultivated a superior and negative attitude towards Ukrainians for decades. In other words, this is a purposeful policy of the Kremlin, which was developed long before 2014, before the annexation of Crimea and the offensive on the Donbas.

As far as the components of the crime of genocide are concerned, it is not only the murder of representatives of a certain national, ethnic, or religious group, but also psychological pressure, forced passportization, and deliberate deportation, especially, of children - the future of the nation, the gene pool. According to official data alone, the Russian regime displaced about 20,000 children from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, which can be called **an attempt to destroy their national identity**.

Analyzing the programs of pro-Kremlin TV channels like those of Solovyov, Skabeyeva, etc., their social networks, channels on Telegram - the company whose connection with the Russian Federation is also too close, the Centre's specialists have found a lot of materials that not only spread propaganda and disinformation, but also call for and even explain the genocide of Ukrainians and contain specific recommendations on how to carry it out.

Russian textbooks distort history and contribute to the formation of a superior and negative attitude towards Ukrainians as a nation, which does not exist and has never existed separately from the "empire" and does not have its own way of becoming a single nation. Supporters of independence and the European vector of Ukraine's development are presented only as traitors. The cases of burning Ukrainian literature in Mariupol as an act of public extermination were reported.

Therefore, the analysis, with arguments and statements, is a major study that will help bring the criminals to justice and will become an auxiliary document of the Prosecutor General's Office in the evidence base when bringing the perpetrators of the crime of genocide to justice before an international court.

No one involved will go unpunished.

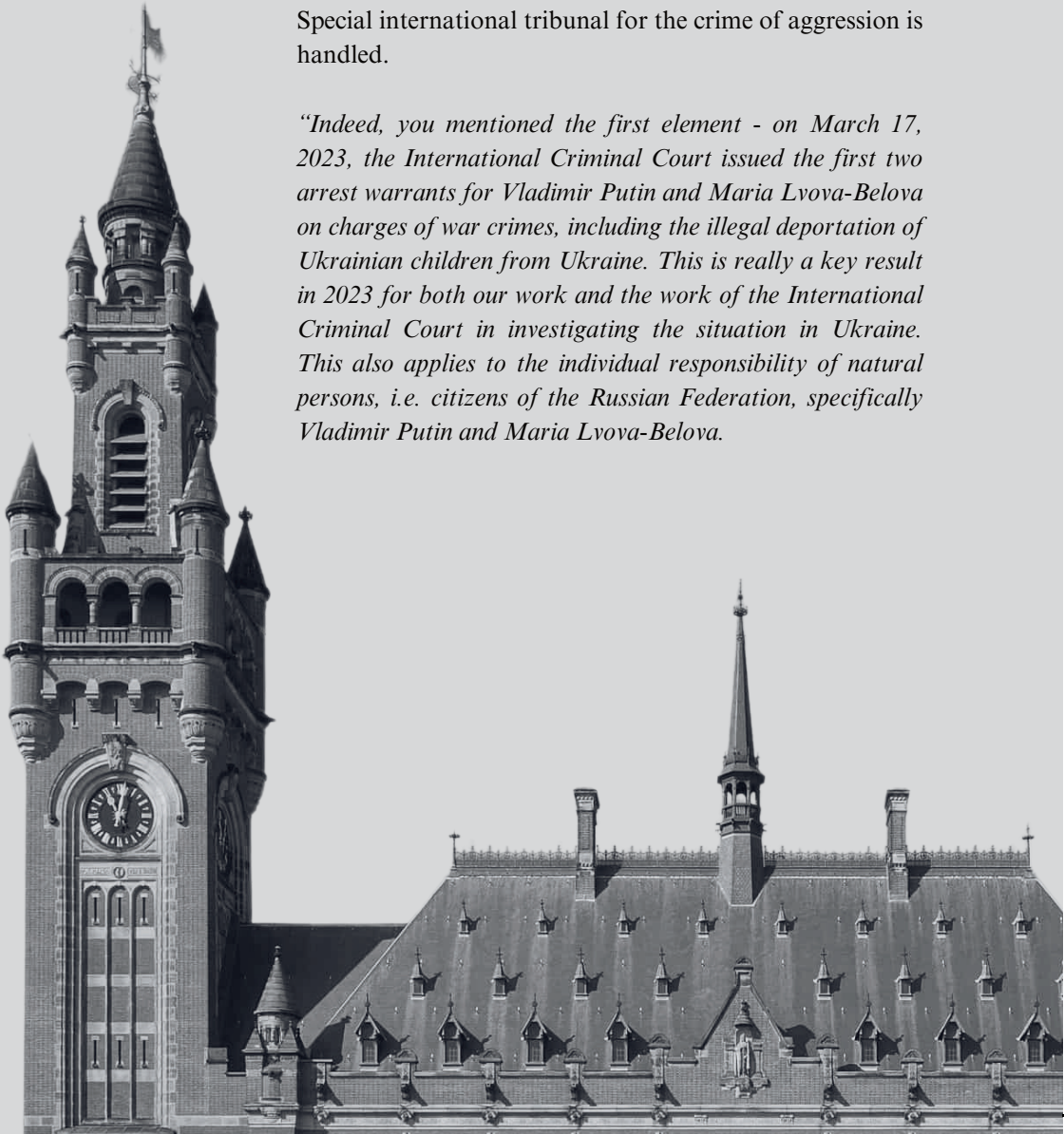


First, the trial on the merits, then the reparations: Anton Korynevych from Hague on how we are suing Russia

On February 26, 2022, Ukraine filed a lawsuit with the UN International Court of Justice, which is located in The Hague, regarding Russia's violation of the International Convention on Genocide. Even before the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Russian leadership repeatedly accused Ukraine of genocide in the east of its own country and used these false narratives to attack.

Anton Korynevych, Ambassador-at-Large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told in an interview for *The Ukrainian Review* how he represents Ukraine in the international arena, what our next steps are and how the creation of the Special international tribunal for the crime of aggression is handled.

“Indeed, you mentioned the first element - on March 17, 2023, the International Criminal Court issued the first two arrest warrants for Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova on charges of war crimes, including the illegal deportation of Ukrainian children from Ukraine. This is really a key result in 2023 for both our work and the work of the International Criminal Court in investigating the situation in Ukraine. This also applies to the individual responsibility of natural persons, i.e. citizens of the Russian Federation, specifically Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova.”



There is also the UN International Court of Justice in The Hague, where in June 2023, the first hearings on the merits of the interstate case "Ukraine vs. Russian Federation" took place. Ukraine filed a lawsuit against it in 2017, concerning the Russian Federation's violation of two international conventions: the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism . This is a very important fact, because these are the first hearings on the merits of the case in general in all international judicial bodies currently considering the case of Ukraine against the Russian Federation.. I hope we can expect a decision on the merits of this case from the UN International Court of Justice”, - said Anton Korynevych.

He added that these hearings were very important, because in addition to Ukraine, delegations from 32 countries participated in them, expressing their support for Ukraine's position. This is an unprecedented case in the history of the UN International Court of Justice, because never before in the history of the International Court of Justice has there been such a large number of states that joined.

“But apart from that, we are also talking about reparations from the very beginning of this case. If the International Court of Justice of the United Nations decides that Russia violates the Genocide Convention, then the Russian Federation must compensate for the damage caused and provoked by its aggression against Ukraine and also full-scale invasion.



Anton Korynevych, Ambassador-at-Large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine



He explained that there are several models of Special international tribunal for the crime of aggression being discussed: creation of an international tribunal based on Ukraine's agreement with the UN, creation based on a multilateral international treaty between states. But these issues are debatable, they are discussed, so there is no definite strategy yet.

Now we expect that quite soon we will hear that the International Court of Justice of the United Nations will be ready to issue a decision, in fact, in the case of violation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Also, the decision on jurisprudence in the case of accusations of genocide. But we cannot know when it is going to happen, the International Court of Justice will definitely inform the sides about it.

Tetiana Stelmakh



*Meeting of the International Court of Justice - The United Nations
and the Rule of law*

The case will take more than one year: the results for Ukraine of the European Council on 14-15 December 2023

Results of the European Council

Hungary blocked the allocation of an additional €50 billion financial aid package for Ukraine. These funds were supposed to go to Ukraine within the framework of the special mechanism Ukraine Facility during the years 2024-2027, but of course only after the vote by EU countries.

The decision on the allocation of funds had to be made by the council itself, with a unanimous «yes» vote. However, Hungary vetoed this decision, preventing it from getting the 27 votes it needed.

«We have various tools to ensure that Ukraine can count on our support. There is a strong political will of 26 leaders to adopt this mega package. And this is the signal we want to send to Ukraine» — said Charles Michel, President of the European Council.



*Oleksiy Goncharenko - President of the
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*

«It has already been stated that if Hungary does block the decision on €50 billion of aid, and there can be no doubt that Orbán will definitely do it, the EU has a plan to provide this aid anyway. It is nonsense for one country to constantly paralyse the

work of the entire European Union.

Given the fact that our economy is now completely dependent on the money of our Western partners, blocking any solution will have a bad effect on Ukraine. But we must finally understand that this help will not last forever. Our partners expect, and the Americans and Europeans have already stated this openly, that they will gradually reduce aid in order for Ukraine to become more independent, so that Ukraine can carry out reforms and changes in the state and become less dependent on partners. We must understand this and start thinking strategically about how to build the economy in the conditions of a full-scale war», — Oleksiy Goncharenko, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, a member of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE, and Vice-President of the PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons. Another truly historic decision was the decision to start negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova on joining the European Union. 26 European leaders voted for this decision, while Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban left the hall during the voting and his vote was counted as an «abstention».

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine reported that this decision is truly historic for Ukraine and wrote: «The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine welcomes the historic decision of the European Council, taken in Brussels, to open negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the European Union. Ukraine's membership in the EU means security and prosperity for the whole of Europe. Nothing will stop our country on its way to joining the European Union. We are grateful to our partners who contributed to this important decision», — Dmytro Kuleba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

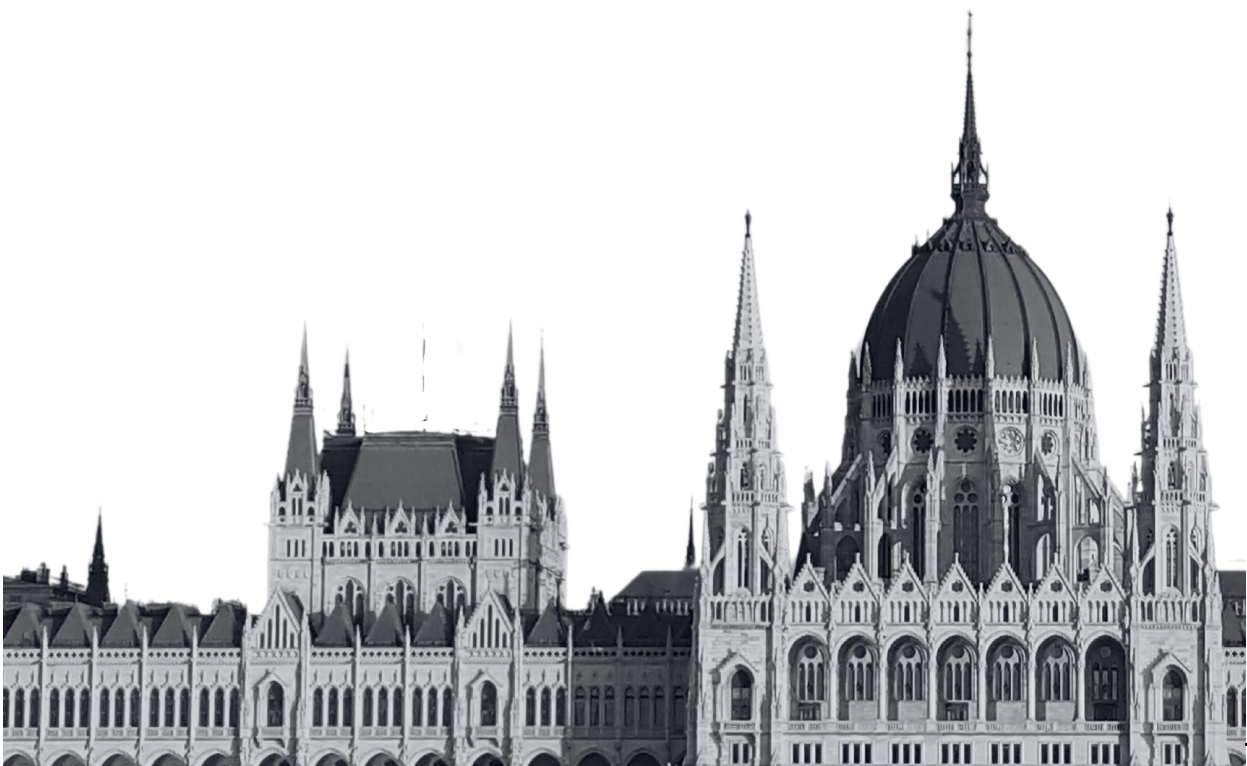
Oleksiy Goncharenko emphasised that this is a very important event for Ukraine, but the negotiations may last for years. The country has to implement many changes to achieve the desired result.

Is Hungary a Russian puppet or an independent player?

Why did Hungary block the decision to provide Ukraine with an additional financial package?

«Hungary receives a lot of economic profit not as a state, but as a way of earning money for Orbán and his entourage in the energy sector. By pipeline delivery of Russian oil and gas, they get good opportunities to really make a very good profit on this marginality and on the further processing of the corresponding energy carriers. But this is no longer about Hungary as a country, but it is about Orbán's immediate entourage, who have simply turned Hungary into a corporation to make profits», - Igor Chalenko, head of the Center for Analysis and Strategies (CAST).

Igor Chalenko believes that Hungary is going through a very unpleasant phase , but at the same time there is an effort today to restore stable contact at the level of leaders. There was a conversation between Andrii Yermak and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sijarto, regarding the need to organise a meeting between Zelenskyy and Orban. Of course, they met at the inauguration in Argentina and had the opportunity to exchange a few words, but it is obvious that this is not enough. Now we need a stable relationship with Hungary, because Ukraine in no way takes the negative steps of which we are accused by official Budapest.



«We have no problems with the Hungarian national community, which has about 156 000 Ukrainian citizens, 153 000 of whom live in Transcarpathia. On the contrary, the Verkhovna Rada recently adopted changes to the language and educational laws, which strengthened the rights of the national communities of the EU countries and, apparently, Hungary. I would like to note that Ukrainian Hungarians tell Orbán directly that there are no problems here, but it is clear that for Orbán this issue is one of the conceptually ideological ones on which his internal Hungarian mythology rests. There are enemies everywhere, but only he protects the country» — and his enemies are the USA, Soros, Brussels, Ukraine and many others. Orbán has close contacts with the US Republican Party, that is, his pragmatism and cynicism in politics goes everywhere»*.

*It is worth noting that Orbán has good relations with the Trumpists. In late 2022, John Mearsheimer, the author of the theory of offensive realism, which describes the interaction of great powers as driven primarily by the rational desire to achieve regional hegemony in an anarchic international system, gave a lecture in Budapest. In 2023, the controversial journalist and former Fox News host Tucker Carlson made a public visit to Hungary — ed.

The results of the European Council turned out to be quite favourable for Ukraine. The historic decision to start negotiations on joining the EU reminded the enemy that most of the world is on the side of Ukraine and expressed its unconditional support. Hungary is still a grey player, which negatively affects its reputation and questions its political authority. The most predictable thing is that the 12th package of sanctions will not be the last and Moscow will suffer even greater losses in the future.

Tetiana Stelmakh



Propaganda, economy, immigration and restoration of Ukraine — key ideas from the Ukraine Talk podcast

In the first episode of the Ukraine Talk podcast, Ivan Tarn, a veteran of the Russo-Ukrainian war discusses a wide range of issues with Isaac Young, Chief Operating Officer of the Inertia Network, an unconventional travel agency and co-founder of the «Bird of Light Ukraine».

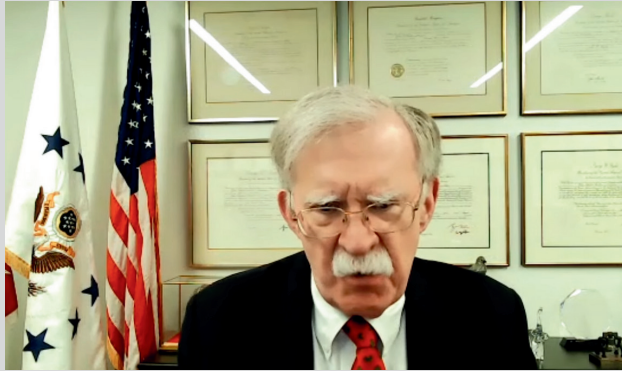
Podcast Key Ideas:

- On realism as a political phenomenon.
- On information warfare and its partial success on the part of authoritarian states.
- On corruption in Ukraine, its origins and the fight against it.
- The differences between Ukraine and Russia.
- What changes does Ukraine have to implement in order to win?
- What will Ukraine be like after the victory?
- Migration issues: what will Ukraine and the world be like in the context of globalisation?

Your opinion and feedback are important to us, so if you liked the content or want to become the hero of the podcast, then write to the editor using the contact details provided.



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The US is not reducing the level of assistance to Ukraine — John Bolton

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Interview with Per Nyholm about war, values, and Ukrainian victory



Interview with Sally Helgesen: about success, life, and women at war



SCAN ME

"Ukraine has already proven its right to be in the EU and NATO": an interview with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Yevhen Perebyinis

Ukraine is not just fighting a war on the front line. The war is also being fought in a diplomatic format. What have been the successes and challenges for Ukrainian diplomacy during the war years and what are the prospects for the development of multilateral and bilateral relations between Ukraine and the countries of the EU, NATO and the Global South? We discussed this with the Ukrainian diplomat, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Yevhen Perebyinis.

Could you please tell us about the results of the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the track of Euro-Atlantic integration?

If we talk about both 2022 and 2023, the task of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains the same: the victory of Ukraine.

The first task is to strengthen Ukraine so it can win this war. There are many different aspects to this task. First of all this is strengthening of our military. Using all possible levers and tools to get modern weapons and military equipment so that they can defeat aggressors. But it's also strengthening of Ukraine politically. Here we are talking about our membership in the European Union and NATO, as this is also part of our victory and our success.

And the second task is to weaken Russia. Here all our efforts aimed to isolate Russia as much as possible in the world, to apply the toughest possible sanctions against Russia. So that ultimately, Russia can't wage this war, which means, it can't produce weapons or get the financial resources.

I would like to focus primarily on our relations with the European Union, with NATO, as well as with European countries, since they are our priority partners today. 2023 was a breakthrough year in our relations with the European Union. After we received the status of a candidate for EU membership in 2022, we had to go a certain distance to move from a mere candidate to a country that has started accession negotiations with the European Union. This task was extremely large-scale. We managed to do it in just over a year.

The historic decision, taken by the European Council in December 2023 to start negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the EU, was the step we were all waiting for. And on which we have all worked. And not just the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or our embassies, but the whole state. Since joining the EU is not even a foreign policy task, it is a national task. Everyone knows that there were reservations from Hungary. But Ukraine demonstrated a constructive approach. Especially on the issue of national minorities.

*And that legislative package, which was approved at the end of 2023, played its role. It was highly appreciated by our EU partners. In combination with the support of all other 26 states, it also made it possible to find a way around Hungary's veto. Today, we have started the path towards the accession negotiations. The process of reviewing for compliance with the EU *acquis* has begun.*

As for our membership in NATO, this is the second component of our foreign policy strategy. In this area, the year 2023 was marked by extremely important decisions that were taken at the NATO Summit in Vilnius in July 2023. We can say that after this summit, Ukraine took an extremely important and huge step towards membership.

First, NATO member states decided that Ukraine would not need a Membership Action Plan. This significantly shortens our path. That means we are now one step away from membership. Although this step may take a long time, there will be no more intermediate steps like the Membership Action Plan.

Second, in the six months following the decisions of the Summit in Vilnius, we have moved far in the direction of practical cooperation with NATO. In particular, it is said that the NATO-Ukraine Commission was transformed into the NATO-Ukraine Council, and this is not just a name change. We have gone from being a partner country to being an equal partner. During these six months, the NATO-Ukraine Council has proved to be extremely effective. Several meetings were held at different levels. We are moving toward greater interoperability with NATO in the military sphere. De facto, Ukraine is already a member of NATO, because we are very deeply integrated into this structure. Today, Ukraine is a country that fights with NATO weapons, we use NATO intelligence, and we reform our army according to NATO standards, and all of this is provided for by the mechanisms that were approved at the Summit in Vilnius.

How does Ukraine promote its issues on the international agenda, and what tools does it use?

Our foreign policy priorities, which we are promoting at the level of the European Union, in addition to obtaining full membership, include ensuring Ukraine's defence needs and implementing President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula. The formation of a multi-level system of guaranteeing the security of Ukraine, increasing international pressure on Russia, in particular, through sanctions, holding Russia accountable. These issues are on the agenda of all, without exception, international meetings, both in bilateral and multilateral formats. It is a priority in practically all the President's meetings and contacts with heads of state and government. To achieve these goals, we involve all our partners. President Zelenskyy's Peace Formula is the mechanism that today receives the support of an extremely large number of countries. And the number of countries supporting the implementation of The Peace Formula is growing every day. Of course, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs uses many other tools at its disposal. For example, tools of cultural diplomacy. We need to work not only with governments and parliaments but also with societies. Because it is the societies that determine what governments will be like, what parliaments will be like, and ultimately what policy and support towards Ukraine will be like. I would also like to mention such an important tool, again on the EU line, as for the first time in the history of the European Union, the meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council was held in a third country. It was an extremely symbolic gesture when all the EU ministers of foreign affairs came to Kyiv to see with their own eyes how the state that is fighting against Russia lives today.



Yevhen Perebyinis - Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine

In addition to successes, there are also problems. Including with neighbouring countries of Ukraine. How does the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine influence the resolution of issues that arise with its neighbours?

You are right that relations with neighbours are one of the priorities of any state's foreign policy. With our western neighbours, Ukraine is trying to develop as close relations as possible. We have a lot in common with them. As in the past, and I am convinced, in the future. But as with any neighbour, both in everyday life and in foreign policy, some things are developing positively, but there are also problematic issues. The wisdom of foreign policy is that these problems do not affect the general course of relations with these states. Today, with individual states, I would name Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary, there were, including in 2023, problems related to the fact that they unilaterally introduced export restrictions on Ukrainian agricultural products. This led to significant losses for the economy not only of Ukraine but also of the European Union itself. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with other governmental institutions, looked for answers on how to get out of this situation. In particular, the government developed an appropriate mechanism for the verification of Ukrainian agricultural exports, which made it possible to reduce the severity of this issue.

On the part of Poland and other countries, there were periodic blockades at the border. It was a very complex issue that required a whole series of negotiations, consultations, and coordination mechanisms involving various ministries and agencies.

I would like to note that even in such difficult relations as with Hungary, we manage to find a common language. A week ago [29 January 2024 — S.K.J. in Uzhhorod, a meeting was held between the head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, where there was quite a substantial dialogue on the whole range of issues. We managed to reach certain agreements. I hope that they will pave the way for a meeting at the highest level between representatives of Ukraine and Hungary.

I would also like to mention our neighbour Romania. Today, Romania plays an exceptionally important role in cross-border cooperation and Ukrainian exports abroad, especially agricultural products. At a time when the borders of some neighbouring countries were blocked, Romania demonstrated an extremely flexible approach. Thanks to the meetings of the Prime Minister of Ukraine and the President of Ukraine with their Romanian colleagues, it was possible to establish highly constructive interaction with Romania. Today, this is the country through which a significant part of our products goes to the European Union. Our border infrastructure is being developed; new checkpoints are being prepared for construction.

Mr. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, as a person with extensive diplomatic experience, do you see Ukraine in the EU and NATO, for example, in 10 years?

I am personally convinced that in 10 years Ukraine will be in the EU and NATO. We cannot say when exactly this will happen, but we have to do everything now so that it happens quickly after our victory. That is why we are working on it now. I think it could have happened earlier than in 10 years. Of course, not everything depends on us. The European Union is a very complicated mechanism. There are 27 countries, and each country has the same right to vote. And if there is no consensus, then in principle no decision can be made. In particular with regard to the accession of another state. Therefore, in addition to working with the European Union as a whole, we also work with each member state to ensure that they provide this support. The EU itself is now going through a period of transformation. The EU has realised that if a number of new countries join, including Ukraine, Moldova and the Western Balkans, the current decision-making system will not be able to work as efficiently and quickly as it would like. Therefore, the European Union is currently preparing a certain reform and this may slow down our movement to some extent. But we insist that these two processes — enlargement and reform — should take place in parallel. It is not a case of reform first and then enlargement, because reform can take years. And this is where certain problems can arise. But I'm sure we will overcome them because our European partners also understand the need to avoid any artificial obstacles in this process.

What about relations with non-EU countries? Ukraine, for example, has already signed an agreement with Great Britain. How would you characterise this vector? The bilateral cooperation with various countries can strengthen Ukraine's defence capabilities. How can these countries, for example, the USA, Great Britain, and Japan, work together with Ukraine to tackle the threats of the 21st century?

The countries you mentioned are of great importance for Ukraine. First of all, we are talking about the countries of G7 the most influential, the most developed countries. Their help for Ukraine is crucial. Today we are working in parallel on many tracks, including with these states, to ensure their long-term support for Ukraine. This includes financial resources, weapons, and military equipment, as well as appropriate security guarantees for Ukraine until it becomes a member of NATO.

Work on such agreements continues today. That is why we want to achieve such a situation when we have the unequivocal support of all the important countries in the world. And I am not just talking about the G7 countries. It is also important for us, for example, to develop relations with the countries of the Global South. Our diplomacy is working on ensuring that as many countries as it possible will participate in the forthcoming Global Peace Summit, which is currently being prepared on the initiative of the President of Ukraine.

Why should EU and NATO countries need to support Ukraine? What would you say to our readers in the EU, the USA and Canada?

I think that the support of Ukraine is of fundamental importance for the preservation of the rules-based world order and the preservation of security in Europe and the world since the future fate of the world is being decided in Ukraine right now. If we prove that aggression against another state must be punished and the aggressor must be defeated, then the values, on which Western civilization is based today, will be much stronger.

Also Ukraine's membership in NATO will undoubtedly strengthen NATO's military potential since the Ukrainian army is the only one today that has invaluable experience of fighting with NATO's main enemy. I am sure that Ukraine, as a new member of NATO, will be a reliable pillar of NATO's eastern flank.

It is important to support Ukraine now, at this moment, to defeat Russia here, otherwise these countries will be forced to fight later on their territory.

Interview by Stanislav Kinka



A day in the life of Odesa

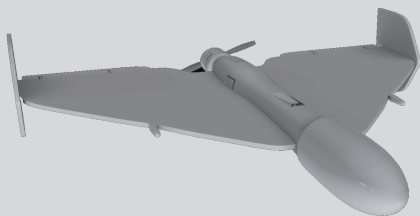
Russia killed 5 children in Odesa strike: total number of victims is 12

Ukraine grieves for the 12 innocent victims, among them 5 children, who lost their lives in Odesa as a result of a drone attack by Russia.

Three-year-old Mark and his Father

One of the victims was three-year-old Mark, whose body was pulled from under the rubble by rescuers. His father, Vitaliy, also lost his life in the devastating Russian attack, while his mother, Anastasia, is currently in intensive care with several serious injuries. Tatiana Yurchik, Anastasia's aunt, wrote on Instagram that she has regained consciousness but remains in intensive care. She is known to have another child with her ex-husband.

March 02.24 (Saturday)



Russia launches
20 Shaked-136
attack UAVs

The attack damaged a residential building and claimed the lives of 12 people including 5 children.

5

Five children
were killed



Four-month-old Tymofiy and his mother Hanna

Another victim was a four-month-old boy who was found lying beside his mother, Hanna. Hanna's husband and their daughter managed to escape as they were in another room at the time of the attack. Tymofiy's aunt said they were in a corner room when the drone hit the building.

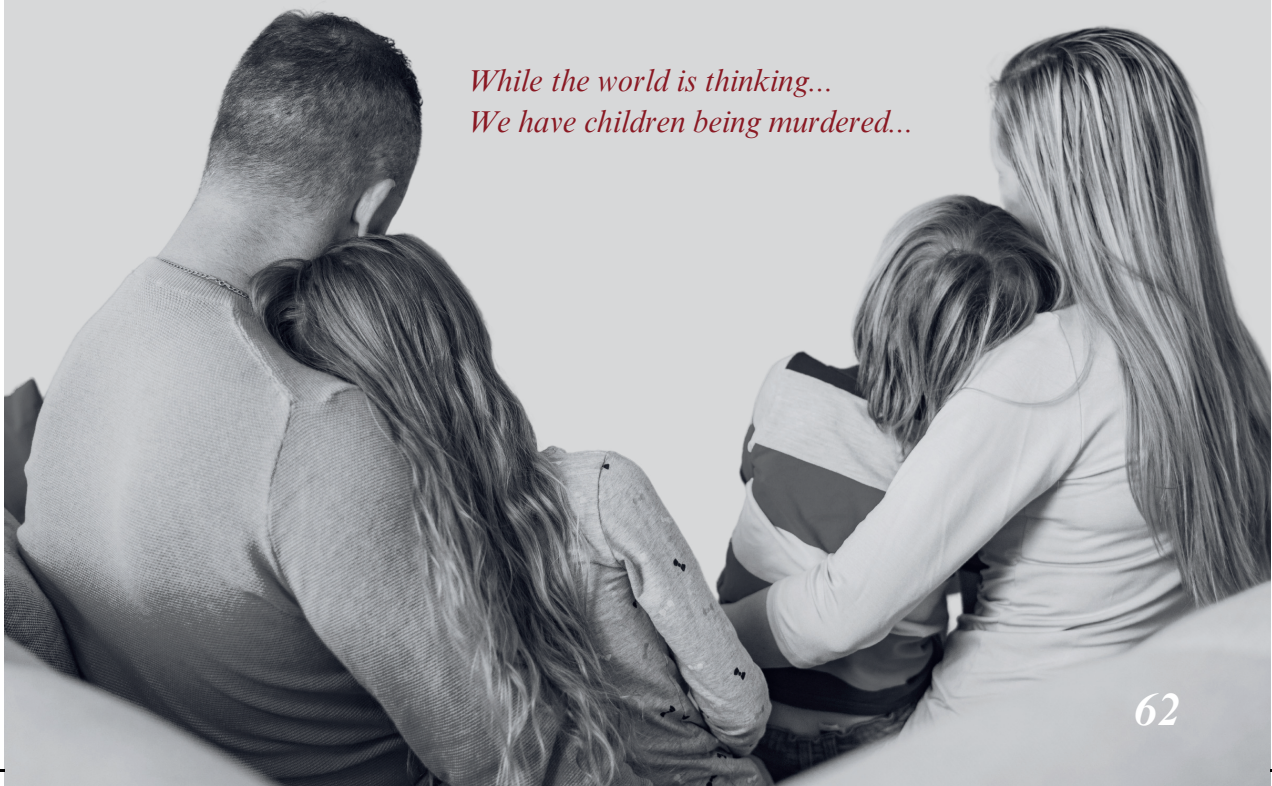
According to the Odesa Regional Association of Baptist Churches, Hanna was the daughter of a pastor at the Odesa Peresypska Church.

One more family was annihilated by UAV-attack

The tragedy also claimed the lives of seven-month-old Liza, her father, Oleh, and her mother, Tetyana Kravets, they were a large military family. The bodies of Oleh and Tetyana Kravets and their seven-month-old daughter Liza were found under the rubble. Tetyana had three more children from a previous marriage and two with Oleh.

The body of another child from the Kravets family, ten-year-old Serhiy, was found under the rubble, regional governor Oleh Kiper announced around 7 PM. Shortly after, he said they found Serhiy's eight-year-old sister, Zlata, beside him. Tetyana resigned from military service to take care of newborn baby Liza. Her husband, Serhiy, used to serve in the military.

Colonel Oleh Kravets previously served as the deputy commander for morale and psychological support of the 56th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade in Mariupol. Tetyana served in the same brigade until recently.



*While the world is thinking...
We have children being murdered...*

How a successful IT specialist became defender of Ukraine: Eugene Lata about a year of life on the front line and motivation

Eugene is a combat medic in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, head of marketing in IT, a mountaineer, traveller, and constant adventurer.

We talked to Eugene Lata, a senior combat medic with a fire support company, about volunteering in 2014, preparing for an invasion, and about what motivates and keeps him in the hottest spots for over a year.



You can read the full version of the article by clicking on the qr code!

Hello, Eugene. Thanks for taking the time to talk to us. While preparing to speak with you, I came across an interview from 2014. Back then, you were a volunteer who returned from the UK as a successful National Geographic TV cameraman. Nine years have passed, and I would be glad to know how things went for you and what happened during this time.

“When I returned from the ATO, I moved to Tanzania. It was a psychological retreat, a break from everything. For some time, I lived among the tribes, then worked as a guide on Kilimanjaro. Only a year later, I realised that I could safely return to Ukraine and got a job in an IT company. For six years I worked as a head of marketing in IT in various companies. I traveled, worked in IT and played sports”.

Where was it that the war caught up with you in the year 2022?

“It so happened that my wife and I went to Georgia in January 2022. We were thinking about whether we should return because we realised that I definitely could not stay away, I would join the army. We came back just a week before the war started. On February 24 (2022), she packed her things, took the dog and left, and I went to the military registration and enlistment office and was drafted in the evening”.

You have already seen war, how did you not fear going again? What is your motivation?

“I am much better prepared psychologically for this war. Living on the front line, makes you an animal with basic needs and instincts. I try to fight my psychological problems and switch to additional points. For example, to read books, try to plan something, and sometimes do some exercise. It helps. Last week was a year since my unit went to the Mykolaiv region. We took part in the Kherson Company, in the liberated Kherson region, and now we are in the active phase of forcing the Dnipro. And we haven't gone home in a year. We had a 10-day vacation, and that was it”.

Interviewed by Viktoriia Rieпка





Polish farmers once again block the border with Ukraine: causes and consequences

The blockade of the Ukrainian border by Polish farmers and transporters, also joined by Hungarian, Romanian, and Slovak farmers, has been ongoing since November 2023. Although Polish protesters had initially agreed not to block Ukrainian crossing points until March 1, they resumed the blockade on February 9, 2024. As of February 12, 2024 Polish protesters are blocking the movement of freight vehicles towards the Yagodyn and Rava-Ruska border crossing points.

The Ukrainian Review provides more details on the reasons and consequences behind this blockade.

We interviewed Michal Potocki, a journalist from the Polish Dziennik Gazeta Prawna media, to discuss the reasons behind the border blockade by farmers and carriers:

“The Polish government agreed in 2022, following the full-scale invasion, to open the EU market to Ukrainian products and transporters. However, no one anticipated that the war would last so long. Everyone hoped that it would end quite quickly and not have such a significant impact on the internal EU market. It turned out differently.

Farmers primarily cited that they had agreed that Ukrainian grain should transit through Poland to other countries. However, a large portion of that grain was getting lost somewhere along the way in Poland.

The farmers' market in Poland is sufficiently fragmented, whereas large farming holdings dominate the Ukrainian market. Therefore, losing 10% of the market for a large holding is one thing, but for a small farmer from the region, it could be devastating (in an economic sense).

Regarding transporters, the first reason is competition. The second reason is the "eQueue" system, through which Polish transporters cannot quickly bring goods into Ukraine. The third reason is that they have lost a part of the Ukrainian market.

In addition, politicians from the pro-Russian far-right party Confederation have also become involved in this situation, finding a very successful moment, from their point of view, where they can gain ratings”.

Reasons for the Blockade

Tetiana Popovych, the head of the marketing department of the wholesale agricultural products market Shuvar in Lviv, may provide valuable insights into the consequences of the blockade. From her point of view, blockade leads to several consequences:

*"1. Economic Consequences for the Agricultural Sector:
For Ukraine: Ukraine is one of the world's largest grain and sunflower oil exporters. Blocking the export of these goods can lead to significant financial losses for Ukrainian farmers, who may already be facing internal challenges such as military conflict or economic difficulties.*

For the EU: Dependence on Ukrainian agricultural exports means that the blockade can result in a shortage of certain products in EU countries, leading to price increases and possible disruptions in supply chains.

2. Humanitarian Consequences:

Food Shortage: If the blockade continues for an extended period, it could lead to food safety issues in some regions of the EU, especially those heavily reliant on imports from Ukraine.

Impact on Consumers: Rising prices for essential food products can significantly affect household budgets in the EU.

3. Impact on the Global Market:

Global Consequences: Ukraine is a significant player in the global agricultural market, so blocking its exports may have consequences far beyond Europe, affecting global prices and supplies."



Tetiana Popovych, the head of the marketing department of the wholesale agricultural products market Shuvar in Lviv.



What is being done to end the blockade

The newly appointed Minister of Agriculture of Poland, Cheslav Sękowski, signed an agreement with Polish farmers. The agreement introduced financial demands of the protesters, including the initiation of subsidies for corn production, maintaining agricultural taxes at the 2023 level, and increasing preferential loans for liquidity. However, it did not include restrictions on imports from Ukraine.

Despite lifting the blockade, protesting farmers stated that the "most important" demand now is to "restrict the inflow of goods from Ukraine."

"The Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine constantly communicates with Polish counterparts. Several meetings have already taken place with Poland and representatives of the European Commission to find compromise solutions.



Stepan Cherniavskiy, People's Deputy of Ukraine, Deputy Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Agriculture and Land Policies.



The newly appointed Minister of Agriculture of Poland, Cheslav Sękowski, signed an agreement with Polish farmers. The agreement introduced financial demands of the protesters, including the initiation of subsidies for corn production, maintaining agricultural taxes at the 2023 level, and increasing preferential loans for liquidity. However, it did not include restrictions on imports from Ukraine.

Despite lifting the blockade, protesting farmers stated that the "most important" demand now is to "restrict the inflow of goods from Ukraine."

"The Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine constantly communicates with Polish counterparts. Several meetings have already taken place with Poland and representatives of the European Commission to find compromise solutions.

What is being done to end the blockade

"Thus, the issue of agrarian protests goes far beyond the topic of the Ukrainian border's blockade by Polish protesters. Political and economic factors are involved, affecting a large category of voters in most EU countries. On the one hand, European farmers' protests aim to address the increasingly stringent technical and environmental requirements for growing crops and animals for the EU market. The 'Green Deal' leads to higher production costs and, consequently, price non-competitiveness in the market, especially for small farms that dominate Poland."

In this case, Ukraine becomes a supplier whose participation allows EU governments to partially ignore the demands of their voters, as Ukrainian producers do not receive subsidies or privileges and do not require them from the EU (Ukraine is not yet a member of the EU). Thus, the EU does not face a deficit in agricultural products and does not spend extra money on stimulating or supporting the industry.

It should be understood that the primary demand of the protesters — to stop duty-free imports of grain from Ukraine until 2025 — will not have the desired effect as demanded by farmers in the EU. If EU legislation is not violated and agricultural producers from Ukraine and the EU are placed on equal terms, Ukrainian products will remain at the same level of competitiveness, and the situation will not change. Blocking Ukrainian exports to the EU in the short term may impact the EU market by increasing prices for processed agricultural products for the end consumer, inflation, and increasing government spending to cover the economic consequences of the protests. From the political point of view, these protests may affect the electoral field of certain countries as a bargaining chip ahead of the upcoming elections, but only in the short term. However, these protests will not change the market in the long term but may change the geopolitical situation.

Agricultural exports currently constitute the lion's share of Ukraine's budget revenue from exports, so blocking the border is consciously or unconsciously playing along with the aggressor. Politicians in the EU need to decide what is more important for Europe: short-term political gains or a new direct border with Russia that is several thousand kilometers long. Let's consider that Russia has territorial claims to certain EU countries and will not stop at Ukraine. And what do we conclude: that farmers' protests and the ban on agricultural export from Ukraine will negatively impact the security situation in EU countries, especially those with direct borders with Ukraine," - Viktor Shatov, International Lawyer and entrepreneur.

NB! All data in the article is accurate as of February 16, 2024.

Anya Ostymchuk



Viktor Shatov, International Lawyer and entrepreneur.





Polish truckers hold a 24-hour blockade of the fourth Ukrainian border crossing.

F-16: a real game changer in the Russo-Ukrainian war?

In 2023, the allied states decided to provide Ukraine with a modern F-16 multirole fighter. In total, Ukraine may receive up to 100 aircraft from Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Norway.

Against the background of rumours that F-16s are already in Ukraine, which began to spread as early as December 2023, the spokesman of the Air Force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Yuriy Ignat, denied the start of deliveries of these aircraft.

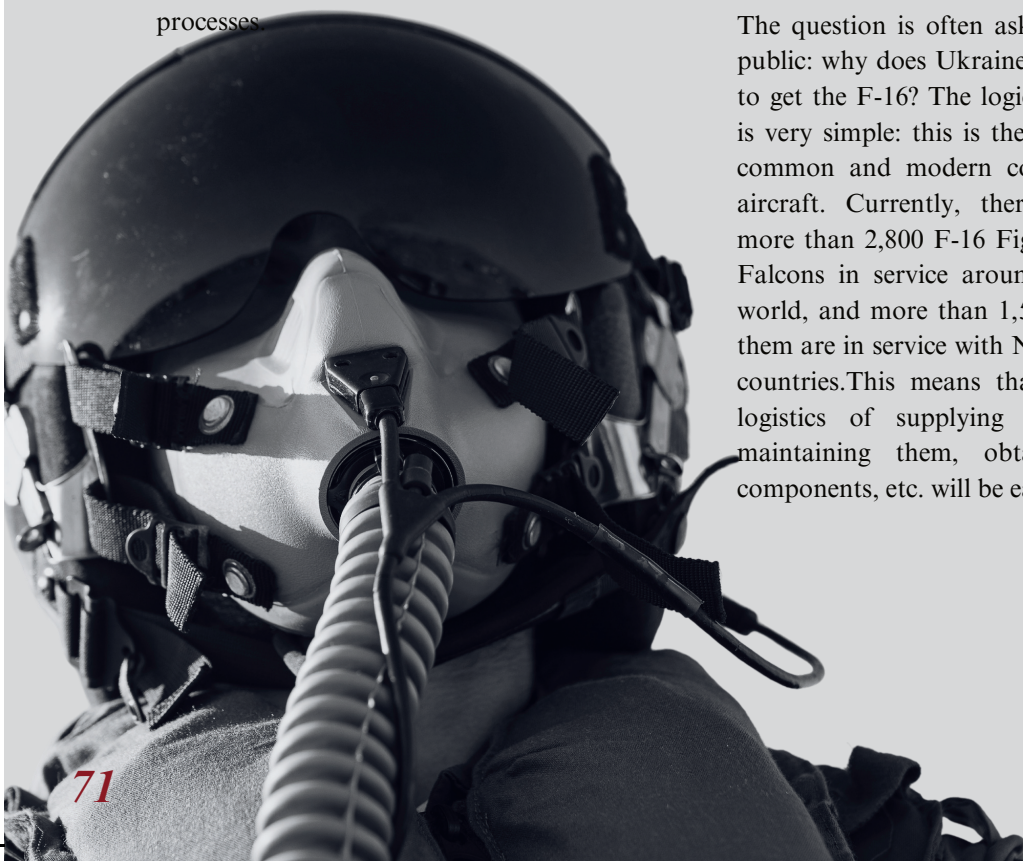
In February 2024, similar rumours appeared again. So, when Ukraine will receive the mentioned fighters, and to what extent modern aviation can influence the course of the war — we gather the opinions of experts and the military and analyze the situation.

Why exactly F-16 and how many does Ukraine need?

Yuriy Ignat believes that Ukraine needs at least five F-16 brigades, which is approximately 180 aircraft. Considering the fact that we are talking about protecting the airspace of the largest country in Europe in the conditions of a major war, this number is quite adequate. However, there is one big "but". The planes will arrive in Ukraine gradually, and it is difficult to predict how long this process will take. The only thing that is known is that the transfer of F-16s to Ukraine will be largely related to their replacement in NATO countries by more modern fifth-generation F-35 aircraft.

That is, the renewals of the Ukrainian and NATO military aircraft fleets are parallel processes.

The question is often asked in public: why does Ukraine want to get the F-16? The logic here is very simple: this is the most common and modern combat aircraft. Currently, there are more than 2,800 F-16 Fighting Falcons in service around the world, and more than 1,500 of them are in service with NATO countries. This means that the logistics of supplying them, maintaining them, obtaining components, etc. will be easier.



Pilots training

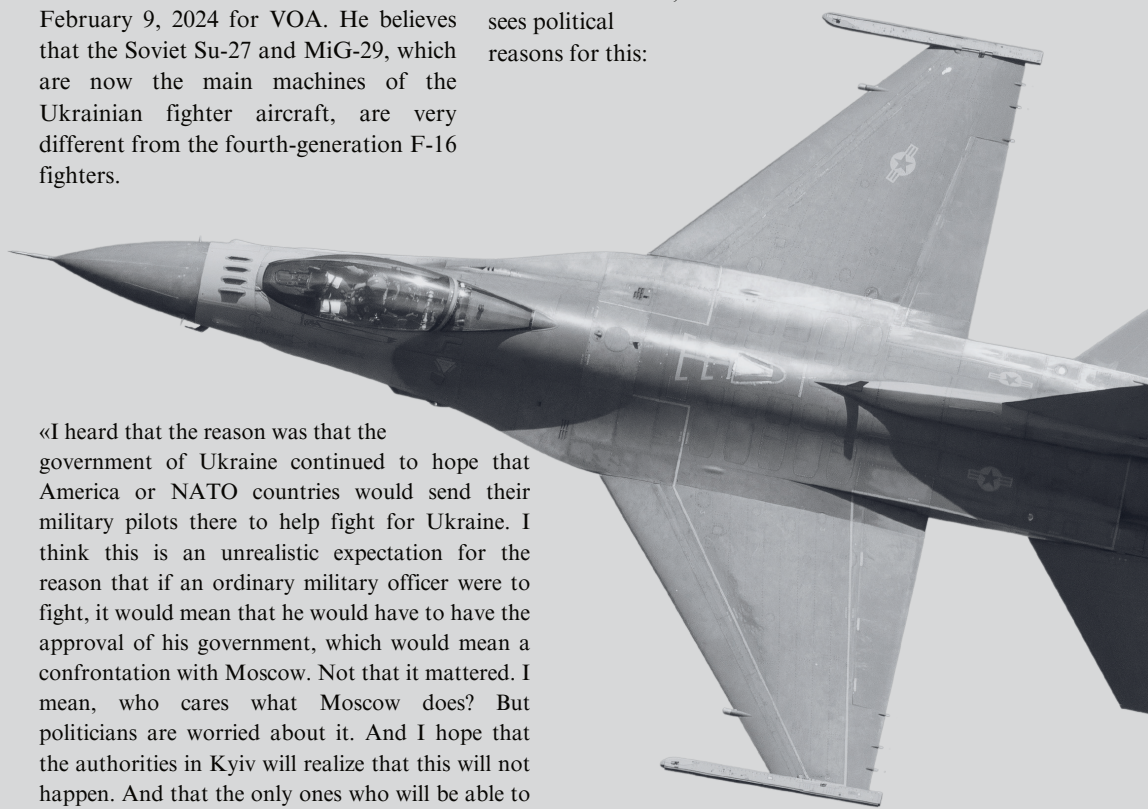
Pilots are another pressing issue. This was discussed last year. No one will put a person who is not fully prepared at the controls, because it is a big risk to lose both the military pilot himself and a valuable aircraft. Operating the F-16 requires specific skills, and their acquisition requires a long training time. Even last year, deadlines were announced at the highest level: about a year for active Ukrainian combat pilots to master the modern fighter.

A military pilot of the Air Force of the Ukrainian Armed Forces with the nickname Phantom spoke about certain aspects of the training of Ukrainian pilots in the USA and EU countries. An interview with him was recorded on February 9, 2024 for VOA. He believes that the Soviet Su-27 and MiG-29, which are now the main machines of the Ukrainian fighter aircraft, are very different from the fourth-generation F-16 fighters.

Despite the professionalism of Ukrainian pilots and previous online training, it is extremely difficult to learn to skillfully fly American aircraft in combat conditions. And this training system will continue to give us ready-made personnel with those aircraft that will be transferred. Of course, we would like to have more, but it is worth mentioning that we have problems not only with training, but also with the number of training places that our partners have», — Phantom.

One way out of the situation is to hire Western pilots with F-16 piloting experience. However, despite the apparent public willingness of the Ukrainian Air Force to take such a step, the issue has been in the air for over a year. Dan Hampton, American pilot, and retired lieutenant colonel, in an interview with VOA sees political reasons for this:

«I heard that the reason was that the government of Ukraine continued to hope that America or NATO countries would send their military pilots there to help fight for Ukraine. I think this is an unrealistic expectation for the reason that if an ordinary military officer were to fight, it would mean that he would have to have the approval of his government, which would mean a confrontation with Moscow. Not that it mattered. I mean, who cares what Moscow does? But politicians are worried about it. And I hope that the authorities in Kyiv will realize that this will not happen. And that the only ones who will be able to fly these planes will be your pilots, or people like me, whom they will bring in advance to fly them».



The influence of modern fighters on the warfare - the opinion of experts

Dan Hampton also share his vision of the prospects for the use of the F-16 in the Russo-Ukrainian war. According to the American pilot, equipping the Air Force of the Armed Forces with modern aircraft could significantly change the picture of this war, including significantly expanding the capabilities of the offensive potential:

«In my opinion, that's where the F-16 should start. This will «sweep» Russian aircraft out of the sky. When that is done, then all the Russians will be able to do is drop cruise missiles and cheap drones from North Korea and Iran into Ukraine's airspace, which don't work very well anyway, because they won't be able to get their planes and their helicopters into your airspace. When this is done, then, with the cover of these fighters, the Ukrainian army on the ground will be able to do what is needed. Of course, F-16s can do all of these things, but the priority is to gain control of the air, which means taking out Russian aircraft, and also taking out surface-to-air missiles, which is what the F-16 does best»



Chris Sampson, Editor of National Security Media, USA:

«Air support is always crucial but is always part of a larger collective application of resources including ground support. Ukraine has a very different situation without the overlapping types of equipment normally desired for air support. But, the presence of F-16s can certainly make Russia uncomfortable enough to reduce putting a bomber in the air. Valerii Zaluzhnyi spelled it out in his essay on Nov 1st [2023], the one falsely accused of «stalemate» language when it was quite the opposite. I wrote about this. He spelled out that even Russia doesn't want to put planes in the air because SAMs could knock them down. UA has been very successful at keeping RU planes afraid».

Conclusions

The aviation component is an extremely important factor in changing the battlefield. This is true both for the security aspect and for the expansion of the offensive potential. Modern aviation will allow the ground forces to perform their military tasks much more effectively and will significantly reduce the number of casualties among the Ukrainian infantry.

Today, we are talking exclusively about the F-16 as the most common modern fighter in the world. At the same time, for the effective use of these aircraft, they must be put into service with the Air Force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the required number (ideally, up to 180 units). This process will take a long time. To what extent is it difficult to say now? This will depend on some factors, in particular, the re-equipment of military aircraft of NATO countries with more modern F-35s. Ukraine should receive the first F-16 fighter jets in the coming months: Ukrainian pilots are finishing their training, and in parallel the necessary infrastructure for aircraft maintenance is being prepared.

Kostyantyn Grechany



F-16 on a mission

Switzerland: helping Ukrainian refugees and maintaining a policy of neutrality

What is Switzerland's attitude towards Ukraine today compared to 24 February 2022? And how do the people of Switzerland resist the threat that hangs over Ukraine and the whole Europe?

Before the war people didn't know much about Ukraine. It was a relatively unknown country and nobody thought much about Ukrainians or Ukraine. As soon as the war broke out, Switzerland like everybody else was caught up with this sympathy for Ukrainians. Extreme sympathy. And they put into place very quickly as everybody else in Europe like Poland, Germany, they put into place a very good aid program to welcome the refugees into Switzerland. They created a humanitarian visa which is valid for everybody, until the end of the war, however long that may be: one, two, three years, and they welcomed everyone. They put together a system where you could arrive at the airport even without a passport and just being Ukrainian was enough to get help and assistance. This has not yet changed. Now Ukraine is no longer in the news but I think there's still quite a high level of sympathy. People don't talk about it as much in the media and, you know, there are other priorities now, like Gaza. I looked at the newspapers in Switzerland and there are indeed fewer and fewer mentions but there are some articles but as many as there used to be. But that doesn't mean there isn't that level of sympathy and support from the population and I would say from the government as well.

Switzerland banned the re-export of some cannon shells and equipment made in Switzerland from third countries. Such a decision was made because the Swiss legislation said that it's forbidden to sell or re-export this military equipment?

Switzerland cannot give weapons because it has been neutral since 1648! Germany wanted to buy some old Leopard tanks that they didn't use, and also the munitions for the IFV Marder: anti-drone munitions, called Cloudburst that exploded in the air. But that was not possible, so Germany started to produce them themselves in Germany, so that they could supply Ukraine directly. Switzerland is not a member of NATO. If Switzerland would help Ukraine, just imagine, and this is my personal opinion, Putin could theoretically attack Switzerland and send missiles, there's no defence. Do you know what I mean? We are not formally part of NATO. We are in between everybody. We are quite vulnerable. It's not so realistic. So we make sure we stay out of conflicts, and that we are useful to all sides, for example, we often mediate or host negotiations. Also, our army is very strong because it has conscripts, who then are incorporated into the reserve army and train every two years until they are 35 or so. At the exit of the Cold War, the Swiss army was the fifth largest army in the world. The first was China, the second was the Soviet Union, the third was the USA, number four was Iran, and number five — was Switzerland.



You can imagine, half a million soldiers that could be deployed in 48 hours. 48 hours!Everybody is ready to go. They have arms and uniforms as well and they have collection points. Everybody has a military booklet with a collection point where they need to go and they need to take food for 3 days with them. They even have ammunition with them. They can be immediately ready. They will receive the company and battalion weapons, their trucks and tanks and whatever, and go to the front line. Now it's less, only 140 000 or so, but it's still an impressive army for a small country.

The European authorities and US authorities froze about 300 billion euros and dollars. Almost two years have passed and they have no legal grounds to use this money. Is the issue of frozen Russian funds in banks being discussed in Switzerland?

It could be a discussion at the level of the parliament or diplomatic circles, for sure. I would say the general population doesn't think about this too much. I do know that Switzerland complies with the sanctions. That's for sure, even though they are not part of the EU or whatever, they do comply with the sanctions they usually do with all sanctions and certainly with those relating to Russia.

From your point of view, when will Ukraine be interesting for Swiss companies?

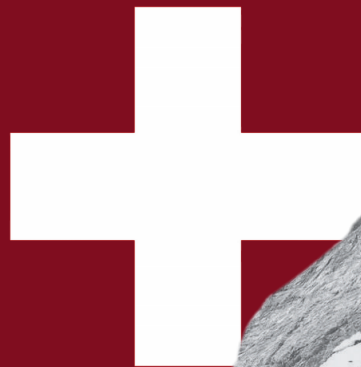
The attitude is very much to encourage investment in Ukraine and to facilitate investment. It's not a question, even with the war. It's a question of each company in Switzerland, whether they want to invest or whether they find common ground or something of interest and so on to invest. But what I can say is that last year 100 million Swiss francs was given by the parliament of Switzerland for humanitarian aid.

There was another 100 million that was given to the multilateral institutions to support the infrastructure in Ukraine, for example, the electricity system which was attacked by the Russians last year, and also to repair the train tracks.

These power plants, I know that it wasn't even a question of giving favourable contracts to Swiss companies or whatever, it was just whoever can supply the best quality at the best price the most quickly.

And this year, in addition to humanitarian aid, Switzerland has allocated 100 million Swiss francs to Ukraine specifically for demining, so you can see that the support continues.

Interviewed by Stanislav Kinka



Corruption and the fight against corruption in Ukraine: two opinions

The problem of corruption and the fight against it is one of the most acute in Ukraine. Ukraine is often criticised in this context. We decided to ask our speakers about corruption and the conditions for reducing it: a People's Deputy of Ukraine and a Lithuanian lawyer, a long-term expert with extensive practical experience in Ukraine. (The effectiveness of anti-corruption authorities in Ukraine) Anti-corruption bodies and departments have been created at various levels in Ukraine, and the fight against corruption has a direct impact on national security at all these levels.



Roman Ivanisov - People's Deputy of Ukraine, from the 153rd electoral district (Rivne district), member of the Ukrainian Parliament Committee on Anti-Corruption Policy, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Anti-Corruption Policy in the Economic Sphere.



Over the past 5 years, Ukraine has made a breakthrough in the field of electronic and digital services, which minimised domestic corruption: these are "Diya", "Helsi", and other applications. Thanks to Prozorro, it is possible to prevent a large number of dubious tenders from which certain officials try to make money every day.

Anti-corruption bodies: structure, work, achievements, etc.

The Anti-Corruption Committee's control over

anti-corruption bodies and promotion of their effective work. Since 2019, since the beginning of our parliamentary term, The Anti-Corruption Committee of the Verkhovna Rada has adopted dozens of profile bills that in one way or another improve the work of anti-corruption bodies in Ukraine. As for the National Agency on Corruption Prevention, we most often saw representatives of this declaration is the first step in the prevention of corruption in the state. Since the full-scale invasion, 4 key laws have been passed to improve the fight against corruption, in particular, the restoration of electronic reporting, the lifting of the restriction on the National Agency on Corruption Prevention to verify reports, the requirements for the head of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and the increase in the number of detectives of the National Anti - Corruption Bureau of Ukraine. Regarding the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of

Ukraine and Specialized Anti-corruption

Prosecution. Despite the war, during the

last year we saw good results of their joint

work.

НАБУ

In 11 months of 2023, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office notified 254 persons of suspicion, including people's deputies, judges, current and former high-ranking officials. This is the highest figure in the entire history of anti-corruption bodies! And the latest suspicions from the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office allow us to draw cautiously positive conclusions that the era of untouchables for anti-corruption bodies is behind us.



One of the meetings of The Anti-Corruption Committee of the Verkhovna Rada

At the end of last year, the Verkhovna Rada also adopted Law 3509-IX on the separation of the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office from the General's Prosecutor's Office. According to it, the head of the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office is now authorised to appoint and dismiss prosecutors and other employees within his department and to approve the budget. An independent external evaluation will be conducted every two years with the participation of international experts. Also, according to the document, international experts will be part of the competitive commission for the election of prosecutors to the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office staff.

Separated by the Asset Recovery and Management Agency, The Agency for The Search and Management of Seized Assets was established in 2015 as a powerful anti-corruption body, but in the last eight years, the country has not seen the effectiveness of the agency's work.

A new head was elected last year - Olena Duma. She has been in office since July 2023, and so far the results of the work of the Asset Recovery and Management Agency under her leadership inspire cautious hope. As far as I know, since July 2023, the staff of the Agency has been gradually updated by more than 30%, the register of seized assets has been opened, the volume of military bonds purchased by ARMA has increased, and the budget revenues from the effective management of seized assets have increased by 1.5 times times, many assets of sanctioned persons were searched and so on.

The High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine - the pros and cons of its activity

About The High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine. Despite the fact that the law on The High Anti-Corruption Court came into force in 2018, it actually started its activities in the second half of 2019.

In my opinion, the advantages of the High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine are: specialisation, professionally formed team, selection of judges with the participation of international experts, and transparency.

Among the disadvantages: a huge workload, which means the court physically has no time to consider cases.

Decentralisation reform as part of the fight against corruption in Ukraine

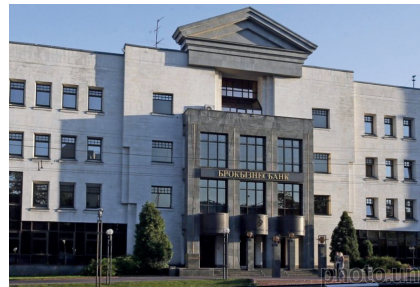
In my opinion, the decentralisation reform is one of the most successful ever carried out in Ukraine.

Its completion coincided with the beginning of our parliamentary term. I have something to compare with, so I can say that people really have the opportunity to influence and control community funds.

But less so, as long as there is a war, money for the army should be a priority. And here I believe there is a real opportunity in the communities to control the expenditure of funds for the specific needs of the military. There is a request, there is allocation of funds, procurement, sending to the front or to a military unit.

Today, in every community in my electoral district, I see enough active residents who are able to fight for their rights. There are local deputies and officials who do not always make decisions in the interests of the residents. Therefore, it is a good idea to form a supervisory board from the community's own assets to monitor these deputies, officials and elders and prevent them from overstepping their authority or making wrong decisions.

In any case, anti-corruption bodies are working, a lot of facts are being investigated, but only after a fair court decision is made in the case and the corrupt person is brought to justice, a precedent will be set. In my opinion, at the end of the day, everything rests in court, and Ukraine still has to work on this.



Symbolism and head quarters of The High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine

Dovydas Vitkauskas, director of the NGO SOS Ukraine, for a number of years served as the Coordinator of the EU project “Support to Justice Reforms in Ukraine” and other EU-funded projects.

National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine: problems of functioning

According to the world's most influential index of corruption, Transparency International CPI 2022, Ukraine ranks an "honourable" 116th place in the world, shared with the Philippines and Zambia. By comparison, Belarus ranks better than Ukraine at 91, and Russia ranks lower at 137*.

*According to 2023 data, Ukraine ranks 104th in the Corruption Perceptions Index list.

Looking at the history of more complex NABU investigations, almost all of them fail sooner or later either during the investigation or in court. The reasons are varied.

First, NABU does not have the ability to conduct surveillance or secretly monitor its targets without the help of the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU).

Second, NABU often gets involved in technical disputes with other Ukrainian criminal investigation institutions (there are as many as 10 in the country) over who owns a particular case.

Third, the prosecutor's work in proving in court is substandard, despite the fact that a special autonomous structure - SAP (Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office) - has been created to investigate NABU cases.

Fourth, Ukrainian courts have not developed a standardised notion about the admissibility of evidence or its qualification in more complex crimes.

Fifth, law enforcement and justice institutions, that are supposed to play the role of corruption guards, are, at the first glance, procedurally "independent" from each other.



Measures for Economic Growth with the Highest Anti-Corruption Effect

First, corruption is not a sign of society's moral or legal backwardness, let alone a lack of bureaucratic institutions. It is a sign of a country's economic backwardness. Corruption is reduced by stimulating economic growth and technological progress. Foreign partners, in advising or dictating policy to the Ukrainian authorities, have so far mistakenly focused the main emphasis on measures that encourage responsibility, rather than motivate society to reduce corruption. This motivation arises when economic activity becomes more profitable when the rules are followed, and unprofitable when the rules are broken.

Second, an extremely important feature of Ukrainian society is short-termism in both political and economic systems. At every election, new parties are formed to lead the coalition. Business is often conducted in the same way - as a short-term project that has to pay off quickly, and can then be closed.

In such a context, there is no need to develop traditional Western "left-right" political ideology, or to care about a long-term business reputation. In my opinion, it's usually not a deluge, but a new political or business project. Such rapid cyclicity does not inspire confidence in politicians or big business among voters, business partners, creditors, or investors.

Third, a critically important feature of Ukraine that is often ignored by international partners is the excessive role of the state and government in the economic system. When the government gets involved in business, it forgets its main "responsibility" in a market economy - regulation. Land in the country is still not privatised, and the process has been in its infancy since 2021. There are 3,500 state enterprises in Ukraine, and more than 17,000 if municipal enterprises are included. Compare this to 39 in Lithuania. State-owned companies in Ukraine are the most common source of insolvency, pressure on politicians, or courts. As long as land and other key economic resources are distributed not by private hands or bank financing, but by official decisions, the motivation for corruption will outweigh any efforts to fight it. Therefore, both Ukraine's growth and its anti-corruption environment would best be influenced by the full privatisation of land and state enterprises, the elimination of dysfunctional and anti-competitive economic entities. Fourth, the full empowerment of competition should become the main challenge and task for both the Ukrainian authorities and international partners. EU antitrust rules can serve as best practice if Brussels does not turn a blind eye to applying them to Ukraine's progress. All sectors of the country's economy must be demonopolized.

Anti-corruption policy needs to change the way it governs institutions, people, and processes

First, criminal prosecution as an anti-corruption mechanism to instill a culture of accountability does not function properly because the burden of proof in criminal proceedings is always on the defendant. . Therefore, a comprehensive set of civil and administrative liability measures is needed. An efficiently functioning tax system is the most effective anti-corruption tool. Civil confiscation of unaccounted for assets is another effective way to achieve law enforcement goals without punitive measures.

Second, in any society or institution, ethical rules complement legal means, by creating positive standards of behaviour for politicians and officials, while also setting precedents for the future.

Third, the era of "independent" institutions, judges, or investigations is over. The idea of "independence", not only in Ukraine, but also in many EU countries, has often been distorted in courts and similar structures and has become a symbol of impunity, secrecy, and corporatism. The "independence" of justice and law enforcement systems is not an end in itself, but a means to ensure their accountability to people and businesses. In general, government institutions should primarily be "dependent" - on common strategic goals, on a clear mission to achieve results, on the budget, and most importantly, on common sense.

Fourth, the selection of the "most honest" and "most professional" judges, investigators, and government officials in Ukraine through competitions did not justify itself. Competitions are more likely to select students and theorists, not professionals suitable for practice. "Soft" skills, such as negotiation, management, communication, leadership, and others often go unnoticed or are undervalued in competitions

Fifth, Ukraine's international partners naively and immeasurably imposed on the country the obligation to organise competitions or auctions for almost all public procurements. Many competitions or auctions, especially for smaller expenditures, cost the budget more resources in time and money than they bring benefits in terms of transparency. To achieve effective public procurement, attention should be focused not on the procurement process, but on the main decision-making criterion - "economic benefit".

Sixth, it is not people who make institutions, but institutions that make people. Higher public sector salaries are another myth that has been shattered by Ukraine's anti-corruption policy. True leaders are most motivated by the desire to serve the public interest and gain management experience, which can later be monetized in the private sector. However, the application of bonus systems in the public sector for the achievement of clearly outlined results and indicators (KPIs) should not be discarded.

However, this does not mean that a high-ranking politician or the lowest-ranking official can manage their business effectively while working in the public sector.

Finally, in order for institutions to strengthen and move forward, they need leaders. Leaders in the public sector ensure respect for the institution's mission and values, motivate the workforce, but do not just serve the convenience of employees. To be effective, a leader must have a certain degree of discretion. Seeing threats everywhere is a feature of bureaucracy, not leadership. The pursuit of transparency should not tie the leader's hands when it comes to making effective decisions. And often this means - making risky decisions from an ethical or even legal perspective.

The US is not reducing the level of aid to Ukraine, but there are internal features of US policy — John Bolton

What is your first impression of the visit of Volodymyr Zelenskyy [11, December, 2023], to the United States of America? The US promised Ukraine \$200 million, but the result of this visit is so small when compared with the previous visit in 2022.

I think it was important that President Zelenskyy come and speak to Congress. The holdup in congressional approval of the aid is not a function of lack of support for Ukraine. It's because of American politics, because of the dispute. It's a dispute between Republicans and Democrats over President Biden's handling of the southern border issue. Look, in a perfect world, you'd vote on the Ukraine question separately from the Israel question, separately from the Taiwan question, and separately from the southern border question. But politics is politics, and so everything's tied together.

To what extent does the issue of aid to Ukraine depend on the election of the new Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mick Johnson? Why do Republicans want to tie aid to Ukraine and now to Israel with the situation on the border with Mexico? Could you please explain why the situation on the Mexico-US border is so important for the United States right now.

I think the new speaker, Mike Johnson, actually does support aid to Ukraine. Some people were surprised at that. They thought he would be opposed to it. But in fact, he does support it. The argument is it's a political argument because of Republican opposition to Biden's failure on the southern border. The people who hold that view say, why do we care so much about Ukraine's border with Russia when our border with Mexico is not being protected? And what it's not being protected from is significant numbers of illegal immigrants coming across the border, and the risk that foreign adversaries, be it Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, terrorist groups around the world, are also coming across the southern border.

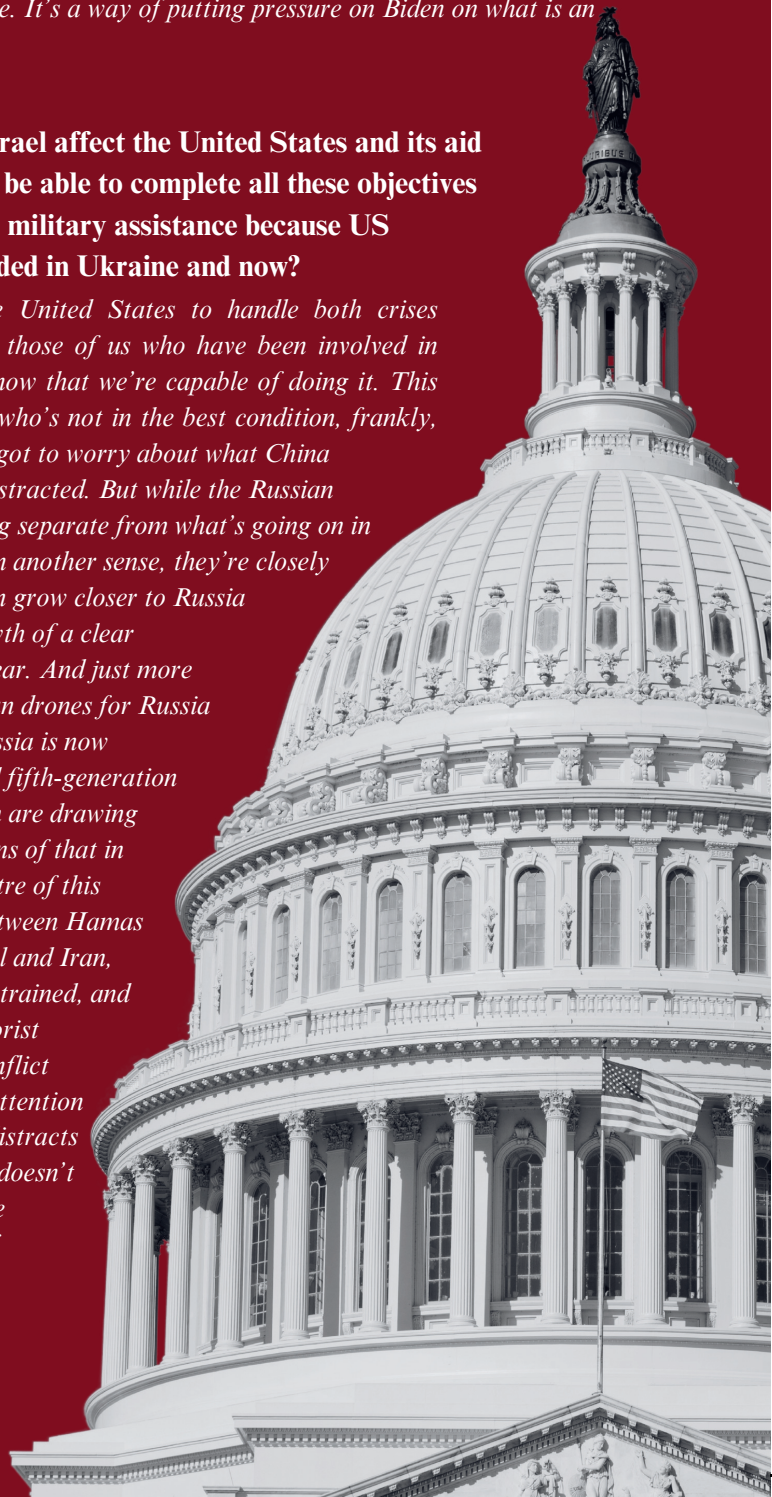
It is true. It's a non-secretary to say, well, we should deal with both together.



They're unrelated. We should deal with both of them separately. But it is a point of political vulnerability for the President, and he opened himself up in this case by putting money for the southern border in the same supplemental bill with Ukraine, Taiwan, and Israel. So, in effect, Biden made the tactical mistake that opened the door for this. But I say again, it's a good way for Republicans to criticise Biden. It's not over opposition to aid to Ukraine. It's a way of putting pressure on Biden on what is an unrelated but politically important issue.

How does the situation in Israel affect the United States and its aid to Ukraine? Will Israel not be able to complete all these objectives of the operation without US military assistance because US military assistance is so needed in Ukraine and now?

I think it's incumbent on the United States to handle both crises simultaneously. And certainly, those of us who have been involved in national security for a while know that we're capable of doing it. This administration has a president who's not in the best condition, frankly, to handle a lot of crises. We've got to worry about what China may do while our attention is distracted. But while the Russian invasion of Ukraine is something separate from what's going on in the Middle East, in one sense, in another sense, they're closely related. Because we've seen Iran grow closer to Russia and China. We've seen the growth of a clear Sino-Russian axis in the past year. And just more concretely, Iran has sold Russian drones for Russia to use against Ukraine, and Russia is now selling Iran highly sophisticated fifth-generation fighter jets. So, Russia and Iran are drawing closer, there are other indications of that in the Middle East, and at the centre of this conflict, which looks like it's between Hamas and Israel, at the centre is Israel and Iran, which has armed equipped, and trained, and financed Hamas and other terrorist groups in the region. So, the conflict is something that has received attention in Washington and Europe. It distracts somewhat from Ukraine, but it doesn't change the vital interest that the United States has in the case of Ukraine of seeing the Russian aggression defeated.

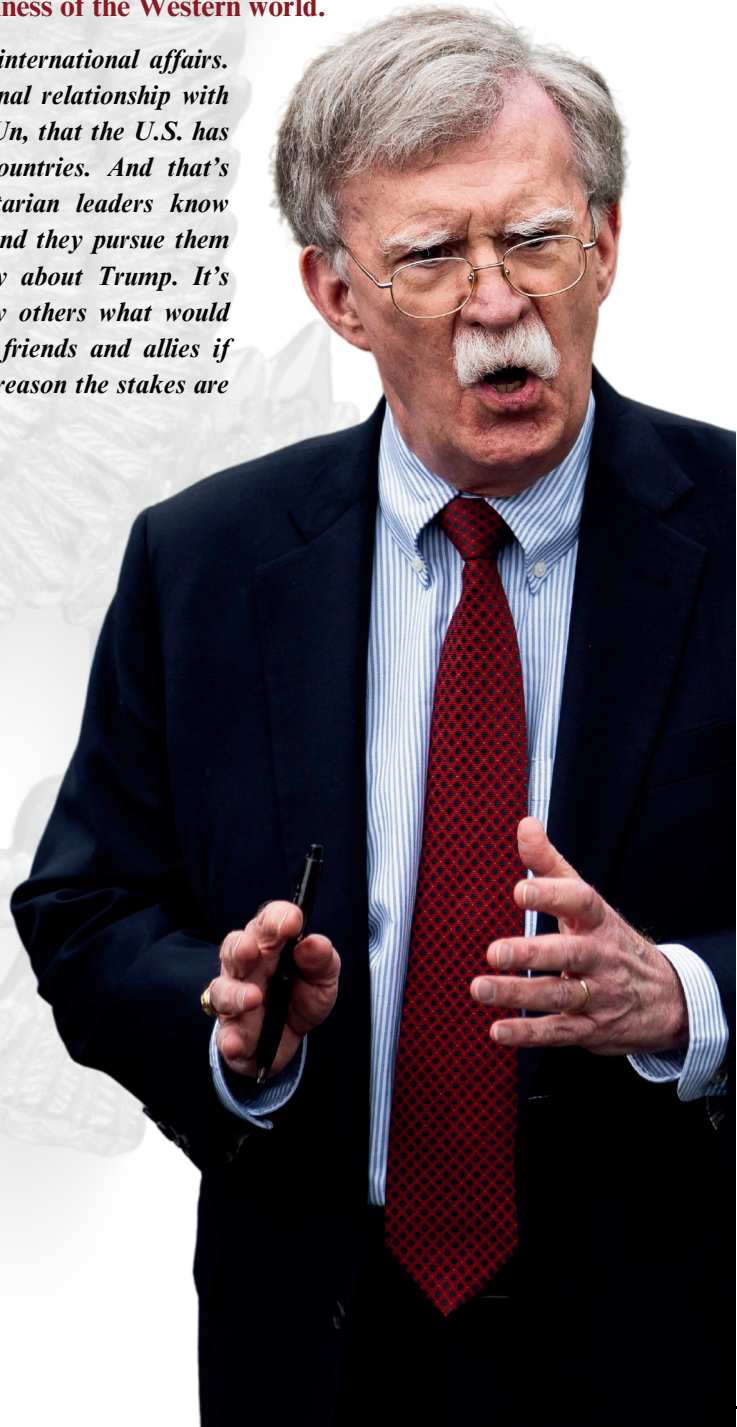


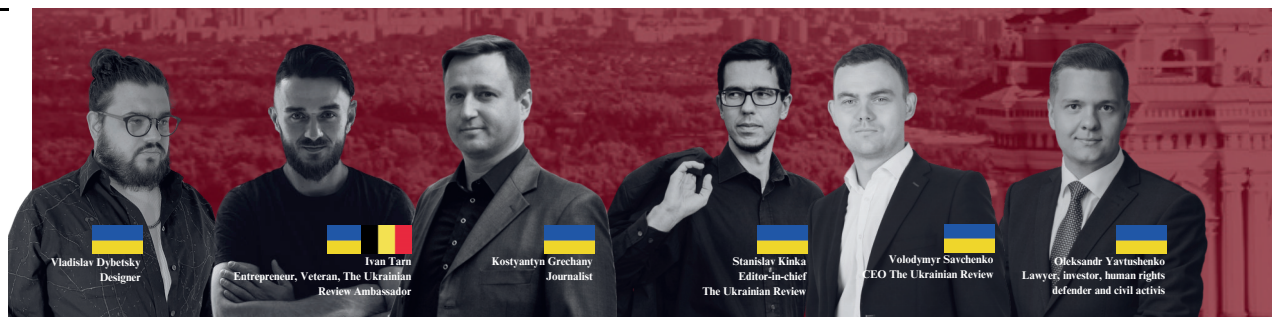
How do you see the coming year, which will be marked by many elections? For example, in the United States of America, an election in Russia will take place, and the election of the European Parliament in the summer of 2024. Will the change of the current president mean a reduction in aid to Ukraine? And how do you assess Donald Trump's chances in the upcoming presidential election? Does he still have the chance despite all the lawsuits around him?

The only outcome we know in any of those three elections is in Russia. We know who's going to win. Vladimir Putin will be reelected with an overwhelming majority. In the U.S. right at the moment, you'd have to say it will be a race between Trump and Biden. And it's unpredictable at this point which of the two of them will win, even though 70% of voters surveyed say they don't want to see a rematch in 2020. They don't want to see Trump run against Biden again. But that's unfortunately the direction we're headed in. I'm very worried if Trump gets the Republican nomination, he could win in November of next year. And I think that would be very bad for the United States for a whole lot of reasons, but one significant reason would be I'm very worried about what he would do concerning the Russian invasion. He said he would get Zelenskyy and Putin in a room together and solve the problem in 24 hours. That's ridiculous. Zelenskyy basically already said that. And I worry that Putin thinks he knows how to handle Trump and that the result would not be good. And I'm also worried that Trump would try and withdraw from NATO, which would be a disaster if we did. I still, it looks very difficult, but I'm still hoping that we can find a way not to have him get the Republican nomination.

Could we say that Donald Trump is not a traditional politician and because he wanted to make a deal instead of a political process? That he is not a politician who uses some balance of powers, rule of law, and so on. And does it make a threat to the whole world, to other countries, to other continents, that the authoritarian leaders can see in Trump such a green way to some actions in different parts of the world? Because some of the authoritarian states feel strong enough and see the weakness of the Western world.

Trump doesn't really understand international affairs. He thinks if he has a good personal relationship with Putin or Xi Jinping or Kim Jong Un, that the U.S. has a good relationship with their countries. And that's obviously not true. The authoritarian leaders know what their national interests are and they pursue them unhesitatingly. Trump thinks only about Trump. It's very concerning for me and many others what would happen around the world to our friends and allies if Trump became president. It's one reason the stakes are so high in this election.





About us



Volodymyr Savchenko
CEO The Ukrainian Review

“For me, this project is an opportunity to convey the importance of Ukraine to the world. Thirty years after gaining independence, we have become truly independent. We are fighting for our right to exist in the family of European nations. This magazine is our small contribution to Ukraine's social struggle. Read, share and join us.”



Stanislav Kinka
Editor-in-chief The Ukrainian Review

“Information is a weapon. And it can be used in different ways. Our mission is to bring the voice of Ukraine abroad. It is a balanced, meaningful and constructive voice. This magazine is our attempt to show how Ukraine lives two years after the start of Russia's large-scale war against Ukraine.”



Iryna Kovalenko
Communication and Partnerships Manager

“The true power of the Ukrainian nation lies in its unity. Ukrainians are scattered around the world, each proudly representing our country uniquely. We truly value and appreciate every single effort made to support Ukraine. The Ukrainian Review assists those seeking truth, providing expert insights and commentary to combat misinformation and ensure accurate reporting.”



Artem Kasparian
Main partner of The Ukrainian Review

“Information is a powerful weapon, our state was under an information attack for many years, and then the war began. Today, as in a war, we initially defended ourselves, and now we are moving into an information offensive so that the world will hear the Ukrainian review, which will help create a new security system in the democratic world!”



The Ukrainian Review, based in Ukraine, was created in 2022. The initiative and then online platform was founded by Volodymyr Savchenko, who continues to lead it to this day.

The Ukrainian Review as a project appeared as a response to a large number of false publications in the media about the situation in Ukraine. We respond to publications and provide our own vision based on official sources, expert commentary, statistics, and fact-checking.

Currently, the project brings together experts and journalists from Ukraine, Denmark, the USA, Canada and other countries.

We write about Ukraine and events that relate to Ukraine. Our analytical articles are based on adequate, complete, balanced, and verified information.

Our key speakers are experts in military affairs and politics, economists and active military personnel, investors and media personalities.

The resource is designed to provide objective and complete information about Ukrainian politics, economy, and international relations, as well as forecasts for the future of Ukraine as part of the Western world.

Our team has implemented many important projects for Ukrainian society for over ten years. These are human rights activities, anti-corruption, environmental protection, environmental safety, and the urban development of Ukrainian cities. We believe that we make the world a better place to live in.

Contact:

If you want to support our project go to our website!

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