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MEET OUR
PERSPECTIVE ON THE
MEDIA WORLDWIDE.

INTERNATIONAL EDITION 



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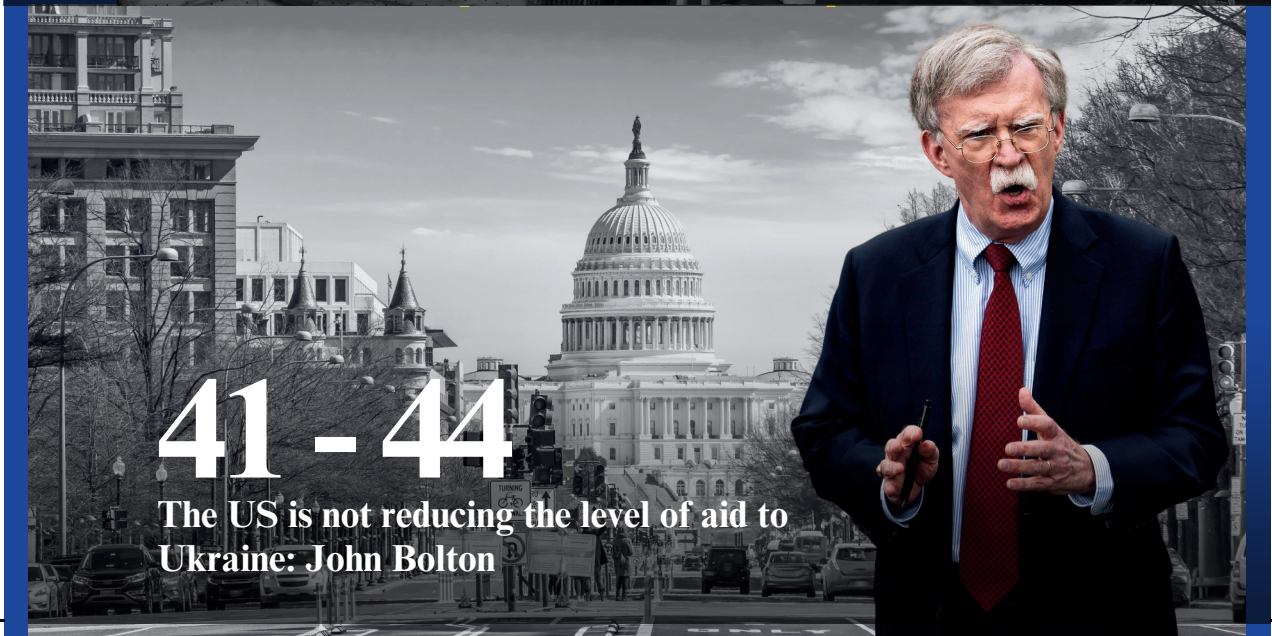
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Foreword by Volodymyr Savchenko, founder of The Ukrainian Review

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. 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. 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, 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.

**This printed edition is brought to you in association with the
Centre for Strategic Communications and Information Security**



**CENTRE FOR STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND INFORMATION
SECURITY**





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

Russia has been waging an information war against Europe for a long time. It's time to give an answer: why an international information coalition is needed

The war between Ukraine and Russia has been going on for 10 years, while Russian information aggression has been going on for decades. Unlike physical attacks, the informational one is aimed not only at Ukraine but also at Western countries. Back in the 1980s, the Soviet KGB spread rumours that AIDS was the result of secret developments by the US Army. Of course, this was untrue, but there were many similar cases of spreading lies.

Unlike in the 1980s, it is now much easier to spread disinformation because of the development of the Internet. In 2022 alone, Russia spent \$1.9 billion on media propaganda. This money was spent by propagandists.

What is the International Information Coalition?

Ukraine needs a platform to bring together politicians, communication professionals and media experts from Ukraine, the EU, the UK, the US, and other countries to discuss problems and consolidate efforts to counteract harmful information influence. The goal is to limit, at least, and ideally, to neutralise the influence of Russian information weapons.

The platform is not only a fundraising platform but also a horizontal structure: a space for conversations between partners to develop global solutions and effectively counter information weapons.

Here's how Peter Pomerantsev, Professor at the Institute of Global Affairs at the London School of Economics and journalist, commented on the importance of this event for Ukraine:

“Right now, in 2024, we really have so much evidence of how Russia, Iran, China, and other dictatorships are coordinating their information rather disinformation efforts. Both in terms of the messages they push and the technology they use.”



Both in terms of censorship and spreading disinformation. Their messages are often repeated, and they're targeted strategically at Western allies and democratic allies across the world. So the question is, how do democracies respond, whether in America, in Europe, or in Asia, when we face such a common threat? How can we collaborate in the space of strategic communication and information integrity?

I think we have to if we hope to compete with these very, very focused adversaries. And we have to work out what our model of collaboration in this space is. We know what they do. They use troll farms and conspiracy-spewing state media and hacking attacks on election systems, and all sorts of things”.

Ihor Solovey, Head of the Centre for Strategic Communications and Information Security, emphasises that Russia's information aggression against the West has long been underway:

“The entire Western world needs to understand that the Russians are already at war against you. For the Russians, information is a weapon. And they use it against Ukrainians, Europeans, Americans and the entire civilised world. If the West does not come to this war, it does not mean that the Russians will stop. Whether you like it or not, you have been declared at war and will have to participate in it. Therefore, our common interest is to unite as soon as possible and give a consolidated response on the information front.”

Ihor Solovey, Head of the Centre for Strategic Communications and Information Security



Potential directions and scheme of work

The Center for Strategic Communications proposes the following areas of work for the future international information coalition:

- **Criminalisation of Russian propaganda and information crimes**

In particular, it is proposed to introduce the concept of the crime of using information weapons at the EU level, to introduce liability for military (Russian) propaganda in international law, and to adopt new international norms based on Russia's information support in the war with Ukraine.

- **Blocking Russian disinformation platforms**

Such measures aim to limit the Kremlin's disinformation channels' ability to influence foreign society. In the EU, the relevant processes began in 2022. For example, the Union banned “Russia Today” and “Sputnik” in March. Later, other media resources were added to the list. Therefore, it is important to continue encouraging partners to limit propaganda resources promoting toxic narratives.

- **Creating alternative content and combining its media assets and communication influence to distribute it globally**

Combining the efforts of Ukrainian and foreign media, experts and politicians to defeat Russian information aggression. Ideally, this would involve the creation of one or more new resources/platforms that would actively engage the individuals mentioned above to cover relevant topics, as well as financial support for existing media outlets that are involved in such activities.

- **Encouraging social platforms (Google, Facebook, Amazon, etc.) to counter Russian disinformation on their own**

This mainly refers to the fight against Russian bot farms. This includes blocking enemy accounts and posts that spread Kremlin propaganda. However, information from such accounts should be saved to record information crimes. These platforms can also be used to monitor the accounts of the occupiers on the territory of Ukraine.

“I would really like to see us force tech platforms to register and open representative offices. It is difficult for us to do it alone. If this is a consolidated position of all EU countries and almost the entire European continent - to force tech platforms to open representative offices and detect networks [bots] using hardware and software methods – it will be much easier to do this together than for Ukraine alone,” – said Ihor Solovey.

What can Ukraine give to its coalition partners?

This expertise addresses the problem of protecting societies and minimising Russia's attempts to exploit existing vulnerabilities in social and political processes through information influence. It will include such proposals:

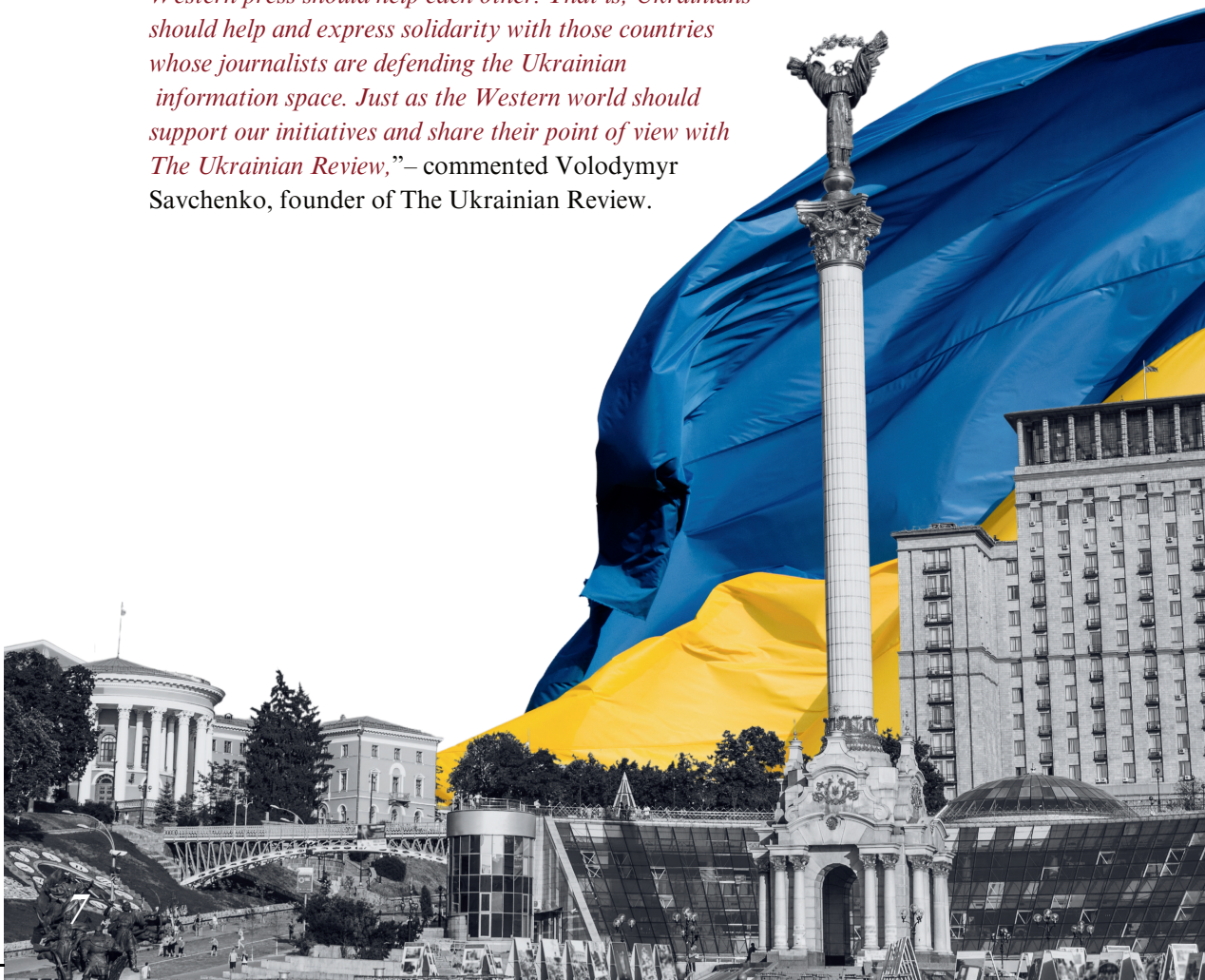
- appropriate technological solutions to counter Russian disinformation;
- analytics and synchronisation of data exchange, protocols for working with social networks;
- advising on the nature of Russian influences and operations in the context of attacking existing vulnerabilities and destabilising the situation (dividing narratives, elections, etc.);
- standardisation of approaches and protocols for countering and responding to Russian disinformation based on existing experience;
- identification and inventory of Russian special operations;
- “message box” for exchange between partner countries;
- proposals for regulatory acts in this area;
- exposing influence/destabilisation networks abroad;
- building a joint alarm model for partner countries;
- arguments for imposing sanctions against propagandists;
- educational products;
- experience of the public sector in countering fakes.


Media's view on the creation of the Coalition

From the side of the media engaged in activities that align with the principles of the Coalition, we can point out its importance for our development and, of course, for our colleagues. In particular, for the existing media, both financial support in the form of grants and competitions and assistance in the form of “human resources” are important.

“The international information coalition must first of all fight disinformation, which is now being used by the terrorist country, the alliance of evil, to split Western society. Today, the West is very relaxed, while Russia, on the contrary, is highly mobilised and uses not only missiles but also information weapons. Residents of neighbouring countries who only know about the war in Ukraine from the news are at the highest risk of falling victim to disinformation. Especially if they consume content from dubious sources. Disinformation aims to split and significantly weaken our allies.

*That is why Ukrainian media, which are now working in a time of war, and the Western press should help each other. That is, Ukrainians should help and express solidarity with those countries whose journalists are defending the Ukrainian information space. Just as the Western world should support our initiatives and share their point of view with *The Ukrainian Review*,”* – commented Volodymyr Savchenko, founder of *The Ukrainian Review*.





*One of the speakers of the
United News (telethon) during the broadcast*

Delay in financial aid from the USA: reasons and consequences for Ukraine

On February 13, 2024, the US Senate voted for an international aid package that includes funds for Ukraine. Then, the bill had to be approved by the House of Representatives. However, until April 20, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mike Johnson, refused to bring it up for a vote.

Mike Johnson then stated that he would not pass the bill allocating aid to Ukraine unless it included measures to address the migration crisis.

Why is financial aid from the US so important?

According to Ukraine war facts, as of September 2023, the United States of America was the largest donor to the Ukrainian budget, having transferred a total of \$21.75 billion during the ongoing conflict, which was more than Ukraine received from the EU (approximately \$21 billion).

James Michael Johnson is the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives



In 2022, financial aid from the United States accounted for 40% of the total international budgetary support since the beginning of Russia's full-scale armed aggression.

According to news from Ukraine, the particularity of financial aid from America is also that it comes in the form of grants, meaning it is non-repayable assistance. Ukrainians will eventually have to repay money from other partners.

Consequences for Ukraine

The Ukrainian government included approximately \$13 billion of financial support from the United States in the 2024 budget. These funds were intended to finance a significant portion of social expenditures. Finding a replacement for them will be difficult if these funds do not materialise.

"Getting additional funds from other countries is problematic because it requires lengthy negotiations. In most cases, potential sources of aid are known in advance and are studied during the budget development stage", – emphasised the Kyiv School of Economics.

According to the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, without the assistance of the United States, Ukraine will lose many lives on the front lines. Additionally, the Armed Forces will be unable to achieve new successes on the battlefield and will be forced to retreat.



Oleksandr Khmelevskiy, PhD in Economics and independent expert,

“Regarding financing the budget deficit, despite the common belief that foreign loans provide such funding, it is not entirely true. Foreign loans can only be used to repay previously obtained foreign loans and pay interest on them. In all other cases, the Ministry of Finance sells the received loans in the currency of the National Bank and receives hryvnia from it to finance military, social, and other budget expenditures. This increases the amount of money in circulation, which can lead to price increases”.

Why financial aid from the USA is delayed

On October 25, 2024, Mike Johnson assumed office. He immediately pledged to take tough action on the budget, the Mexico border, which serves as a gateway for many illegal migrants into the US, and aid to Ukraine.

Statements of support for Ukraine from Republicans, including Mike Johnson, have frequently been accompanied by the condition of resolving border issues.

During Joe Biden's three years in office, approximately 10 million illegal migrants entered the United States, a record high. In 2023 alone, their number reached around 3 million. Many Republicans argue that the country is "full" and cannot sustain a larger influx, which threatens fundamental American values.



What experts say

This was told to us by Oleksandr Khmelevskiy, a candidate of economic sciences and an independent expert:

"Among some Republicans, including Mike Johnson, there is a prevalent idea that Ukraine should make concessions and negotiate peace on Russia's terms.

Additionally, Republicans are linking the provision of aid to Ukraine to the Biden administration's decision on limiting illegal immigration. The U.S.-Mexico border is effectively open, and thousands of migrants from Latin America enter the United States daily. This creates additional burdens on the budget and leads to an increase in criminal activity. Drug cartels often exploit migrants to distribute drugs. Currently, the situation regarding aid to Ukraine has reached an impasse. We can only hope that eventually, Congress will vote to provide assistance".

Investment banker Sergiy Fursa believes:

"This is solely the result of politics and politicking in the United States ahead of the presidential election. Whatever Ukraine does, we cannot influence this."



Sergiy Fursa, Investment banker

Conclusion: USA allocated financial aid to Ukraine

Finally, on April 20, 2024, the United States House of Representatives, after over six months of blocking military and financial aid to Ukraine, approved a legislative package totalling over \$60 billion.



Just four days later, on April 24, President Joe Biden signed into law the bill providing Ukraine with a package of military and financial aid worth over \$60 billion. He stated that deliveries to Ukraine would begin within "a matter of hours."

Ukraine will receive, among other things, MANPADS (Man-Portable Air-Defense Systems), artillery shells, armored vehicles, and anti-tank weapons.

The first package will include RIM-7 and AIM-9M missiles for MANPADS, Stinger missiles for MANPADS, small arms and ammunition, including for countering drones, ammunition for HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System), 155mm and 105mm artillery shells, Bradley infantry fighting vehicles, Javelin anti-tank systems, AT-4 launchers, precision aviation ammunition, anti-personnel mines, night vision devices, and other equipment.

Anya Ostymchuk

The first steps in the social integration of veterans into society

Now, I am the coordinator of an EU project to support young veterans and IDPs. Our goal is the social rehabilitation of veterans, which is also a very important area. And on June 10, we held our first event in Lviv, where we gathered the first 40 young veterans and IDPs as part of the EU's #EU4Youth assistance package together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. The goal is to help them start their own businesses and provide microgrants for them. Experts, well-known business people, and companies joined our hackathons and helped veterans develop business plans directly. They selected a business plan for each of the 40 participants, and the top 10 will receive microgrants of €6,000 for their own businesses.

In Lviv, we held the first hackathons as part of a European Union project for the social rehabilitation of veterans. At these hackathons, the first 40 veterans were selected to meet well-known business people and business coaches, take a course and a session, and receive training on starting their own businesses. At the end of the hackathon, four participants will receive their first grants to start or continue their own businesses. Each in the amount of €6,000. Now, our team is working with these people to implement and realise these ideas.



Artem Kasparian, Head of NGO Ukrainian Veterans which implements the EU project to support young veterans and displaced persons

We are already planning to hold the next session in a month and a half, where 40 or 50 more veterans will be selected, and 4-5 more participants will receive €6,000 each for their own businesses and the necessary contacts among already established businesses.

Psychologists also work with veterans during these sessions to support their psycho-emotional state. We employ psychologists from the Odesa Regional Center for Assistance to War Veterans. These are psychologists with extensive experience who were recommended to us by Oksana Alekseeva, an advisor to the Commander of the Ukrainian Navy, Oleksiy Neizhpapa. She has a lot of experience in supporting veterans since 2014, so we really cooperate and work together on our project to support veterans in their return to social life.

Artem Kasparian

Head of NGO Ukrainian Veterans, which implements the EU project to support young veterans and displaced persons

Read more articles on our website!



The future of NATO and Western energy policy towards aggressive Russian Federation in the case of war in Ukraine today

This is a transcript of an interview with Benjamin Schmitt, a senior fellow at the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania.

Does the war in Ukraine pose a significant challenge to NATO as an organisation? Could this war lead to the disintegration of NATO as a solid organisation, or is this challenge an opportunity for transformation of the North Treaty Atlantic organisation? Now, we could hear bizarre statements from several American politicians, for example, from Donald Trump's supporters. What can we expect in this case after the US Presidential election this year?

I have to say all of those questions are some of the most fundamental questions that are facing transatlantic security when it comes to 2024. We really are in what, I would say, certainly in my lifetime and maybe in the past 50 or 60 years or so.

Here is one of the most dangerous times in the Transatlantic alliance that we've seen. We've witnessed in February of 2022 a large-scale ground invasion by the Russian Federation of a sovereign nation in

Ukraine that has unleashed the largest ground war in Europe since World War II, and that can't be understated. This is a situation in which the entire Transatlantic community is under a considerable amount of threat, both a perceived threat and an actual threat in terms of the potential for this conflict spilling outside of Ukraine's borders. And as a result, we need to meet the moment.

And we're not doing that, right?



Benjamin Schmitt, a senior fellow at the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania.



We have seen, in the early stages of the war, an admirable push in the Transatlantic community to have unity in Ukraine. We've seen sanctions on Russia to support Ukraine. And at the same time, we've also seen military equipment be sent in unprecedented numbers to Ukraine.

I was thinking of this in math terms. It's kind of an X minus one approach to what is actually needed in the sense that if X is what Ukraine needs to push back the Russian Federation on the ground right now, X minus one is what we have sent collectively, right? We started by saying that Javelins and Stingers these were once thought of as impossible to send to Ukraine. Of course, we sent them right away. Then it was the tanks and things like this, air defence, all, name, the system. And we have ultimately sent it up, too and, including cluster munitions and shorter-range ATACMS.

And we really need now to support longer-range strike capability by the Ukrainian state using long-range ATACMS and also support air policing and air defense through not only more systems like the Patriot missile system but also fighter jets like the F-16 platform. And we're seeing that that's moving forward, but it's been moving forward absolutely at a pace that is kind of just right behind where we need to go. And, of course, the same thing has happened with sanctions, where we've seen an unprecedented amount of sanctions be announced but not enforced at the level that's needed. And we're in a very peculiar spot.

We saw Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 be sabotaged in September of 2022 as well. And so all of these concerns were borne out. What didn't happen was the U.S. was not able to ever kind of orchestrate its LNG to specifically help Europe because we don't have state-owned oil and gas trading state-owned oil and gas export companies. And so all of these concerns were borne out. With Nord Stream 2 sanctioned and Nord Stream 1, they started cutting off themselves. The message was very clear that these pieces of infrastructure in Ukraine that are now fully able to be targeted by Russia, Russia would have to make a decision to target them to basically cut off their own last avenue of gas flow to Europe and revenues thereof.

And so that's why we have seen, to the large extent, that the Ukrainian gas transmission system has been spared, I think, by Russian kinetic strikes. Russia has unleashed horrific kinetic strikes against Ukrainian energy infrastructure, both hydrocarbon and electricity grids and things like this to exacerbate the humanitarian crisis that it has engineered across Ukraine. But at the same time, the future of this gas transmission system is an open one. I think that everyone in the United States and European Union that is in the energy security community really thinks about it in terms of how do we basically end Europe's dependence on Russian natural gas.



And Russia did some favours to actually start cutting off the gas pipelines themselves, the Yamal pipeline, Nord Stream 1, etc. To undermine their own market position across the European Union.

But at the same time, I think that the Ukrainian gas transmission route probably needs to go away as well at some point. And maybe if you're talking about ending Russian natural gas sales in Europe or European reliance on Russian natural gas, it's imperative that that be basically the last light to turn out. In terms of the gas dependency that Europe has. I think that in the very shortest term that will continue, the Ukrainian GTS gas transmission system will continue to operate. But I think it's going to be also going the way of the other main gas delivery routes into Europe from Russia and ending its lifetime in the coming few years as well. So, it will bear out what actually happens. But I think that's part of a larger strategy to just end and wean Europe off of its dependency on Russian gas.

Could you say that Russia is now more dependent on gas and oil prices and more dependent on India or China? European countries are not dependent. They are independent from the Russian energy system at all from 2022-2023.

I think that Europe needs to be more independent. You have situations where Europe has increased its amount of Russian LNG imports. So, whereas all of those issues I was just talking about are related to pipeline gas from Gazprom, many European countries have decided, well, we're going to still get Russian gas, but we'll get it through LNG so that there can be kind of this hopefully ramp down process of bringing Russian gas into their systems. But the Russian Federation absolutely is more dependent. It's more dependent through its ghost fleet, and it's trying to circumvent the oil price gap from getting its crude oil to places like India or China and having it refined and then sent on to third-party buyers, some of which are participants in the oil price gap, to begin with. And so that's why, again, enforcement and vigilance have to be there to make sure that we don't inadvertently buy oil products that have come from a Russian origin that are going to benefit the Russian Federation. Financially, in some way.



So, yeah, I think that is absolutely true. I think that Europe has become more independent of Russian energy. I think it's got a lot of homework to make sure that it continues and does not backtrack at all. If the war in Ukraine were to end tomorrow, I don't think it would be a good idea for Europe to return to a business-as-usual status with Russian gas and oil. And so I really think that that's got to be a permanent shift. And at the same time, I think that's going to be a permanent shift. And at the same time, for companies like Gazprom that had the pipeline gas monopoly for getting gas out of the country, and in particular, they had focused on Europe, this whole thing has been a disaster, right? Because unlike Rosneft and all of these oil companies that can get the more fungible commodities like oil, crude oil out to third-party refiners in the global south, as you said, or other places, they can't reroute their natural gas. I think that's going to be a permanent shift. Because you have to build new pipelines. And we've seen China really kind of be nonplussed about the power of the Siberia pipeline that the Russians have been pushing to expand. I think it's going to be a while before their natural gas industry really rebounds.

And I don't know that it's going to be anytime soon, and nor should it, because of their illegal acts of aggression against Ukraine and their broader malign influence in hybrid threats against the transatlantic community.

Stanislaw Kijak



*Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and
NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg*

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

Atrocities in Bucha, mass destruction in Borodianka, the devastation of Mariupol, and 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 who are now continuing to fight tirelessly 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 Solovey**, Head of the Centre for Strategic Communication and Information Security.

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;



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



Russian its commission is the basis for the international legal responsibility of the state and its leaders. But proving it in court can take years, and the evidence must be unconditional. The Centre began to collect such cases.

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 temporary 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”, “Kyiv 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**.

Analysing the programs of pro-Kremlin TV channels like those of Solovyov, Skabeyeva, etc., their social networks, and 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.



Russia is afraid of the Ukrainian children it has stolen: an interview with Kateryna Rashevskya

Long before its war started in Ukraine, Russia began a campaign to "evacuate" Ukrainian children to its own or occupied territory. For example, in October 2014, the "Train of Hope. Crimea" program was organised, bringing 7 children to Russia.

We spoke with Kateryna Rashevskya, a legal expert at the Regional Center for Human Rights, about the children illegally deported to Russia.

It's no secret that Ukrainian children in Russia are subjected to so-called "re-education." In particular, some teenagers are sent to cadet corps. What are the most popular narratives that are dictated to them? In the case of cadet corps, why is this done?

In cadet corps, there are mostly boys, but, for example, we have documented cases when the Russian Investigative Committee took girls to their educational institutions as well. So, there is no gender discrimination there. Similarly, girls run around in the "Unarmy" and other paramilitary associations of children. So, I wouldn't go into the gender aspect here.

They are trying to do two things with these classes. The first is actually to deprive Ukraine of its demographic potential. That is, when they deported these children, took them away, and then put them in such classes, the idea was to strengthen their own resources and weaken Ukrainian ones. We recorded that mostly boys aged 14-17 were given to Russian families. That is the most unattractive portrait of an orphan. Then, we recorded that they either went to military schools or joined some kind of police academy, and their academies are similar to those of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. That is, they are all somehow connected to the security forces.

Kateryna Rashevskya, a legal expert
at the Regional Center for Human Rights



They plan to replenish their reserves in the future, right?

Yes. I was laughing the other day when they released a news item as part of their fake news debunking campaign, where they said that news from Ukraine was manipulating, that they were drafting children, and that it was all a lie. They explained that from the age of 17, everyone must report to the military enlistment office and give all their information. From the age of 18, compulsory military service is available. We have not really recorded cases of children standing on the front line with guns. But we have documented cases when Russia recruited children to gather intelligence or to surrender Ukrainian positions. We have documented cases where Ukrainian children received summonses to report to Russian military commissariats and provide information about themselves at the age of 17. This meant that at the age of 18, they would receive a real call to serve. So, yes, Russia needs an army, Russia needs people, there are significant demographic problems there, and they talk about it openly.

Tetiana Stelmakh

Currently, according to the “Children of War” platform, the situation is as follows:

Deported or forcibly displaced – 19,546

Returned – 27,142

**According to Rashevskya, approximately 2,200-3,500 children have been taken to the territory of Belarus since 2016, according to various sources.*

Killed during the war – 546

Missing – 2,021



WAR IN NUMBERS:

How Ukraine and Ukrainians have changed over the past year

Military casualties 31 000.

Two years after the start of the Russian invasion, the Ukrainian president for the first time named the official number of military deaths.

"31 thousand Ukrainian soldiers died in this war," Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, adding:



Civilian casualties 11 673.

According to the Office of the Prosecutor General, a total of 11,673 people died from the beginning of the Russian invasion until the end of 2023. Of these, 2821 were killed in 2023. That is, civilian casualties in the second year of the war amount to about a quarter of the losses during the entire two years of the Great War.

The costs of war \$2.649 TRILLION

According to the Ministry of Finance, security and defense spending in 2023 amounted to UAH 2.6 trillion, or more than 40% of the country's expected GDP (final figures will be available later). This is more than a trillion hryvnias or 72% more than in 2022.



International financial aid \$42.5 BILLION

Throughout 2023, it came in rhythmically and in large volumes. In total, according to the Ministry of Finance, Ukraine received \$42.5 billion in external financing. More than a quarter of this amount was grants, which means that this money will not have to be repaid.



Destruction and damage **\$155** BILLION

According to the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE), which has been keeping track of Ukraine's economic losses since the beginning of the Russian invasion, as of January 2024, the total amount of direct damage to Ukraine's infrastructure has risen to \$155 billion.

Refugees abroad **6.479** MILLION

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as of mid-February 2024, there were 6.479 million refugees outside Ukraine's borders. The lion's share of them - more than 6 million - are in Europe, with 5.809 million Ukrainians receiving temporary protection there.



IDPs in Ukraine **3.6** MILLION

According to the government, there are almost five million internally displaced persons in Ukraine. Of these, 3.6 million fled their homes after the start of the full-scale Russian invasion, said Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories Iryna Vereshchuk.

Hryvnia, inflation, prices **5%.**

Throughout the second year of the war, the news on inflation, another indicator within the NBU's competence, was equally positive. While Ukraine ended 2022 with a price increase of more than 26%, it ended 2023 with a rate that was not possible to achieve even in peacetime - about 5%.



"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 the 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



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.



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".

She predicted that, the register and compensatory mechanism should be officially opened already in April 2024. She was right, because on April 16, 2024, the PACE hosted a “Ukrainian Day” during which parliamentarians supported a resolution to support the reconstruction of Ukraine. In particular, it provides for the establishment of an international compensation mechanism under the auspices of the Council of Europe to compensate individuals and legal entities, including the Ukrainian state, for damage caused by Russian aggression;

"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."

Therefore, on April 16, 2024, the resolution “Support for the Restoration of Ukraine” was adopted. In addition to a compensation mechanism, it called for the creation of an international trust fund to deposit all Russian state assets owned by Council of Europe member and non-member states. She concluded that the parliamentary track of diplomacy should never be underestimated.



"Plenary chamber of the Council of Europe's Palace of Europe in Strasbourg".

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.

Tetiana Stelmakh



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.



Oksana Zholnovych, Ukrainian Minister of Social Policy



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



Natalka Cmoc, Ambassador of Canada to Ukraine

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.

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.



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.



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.

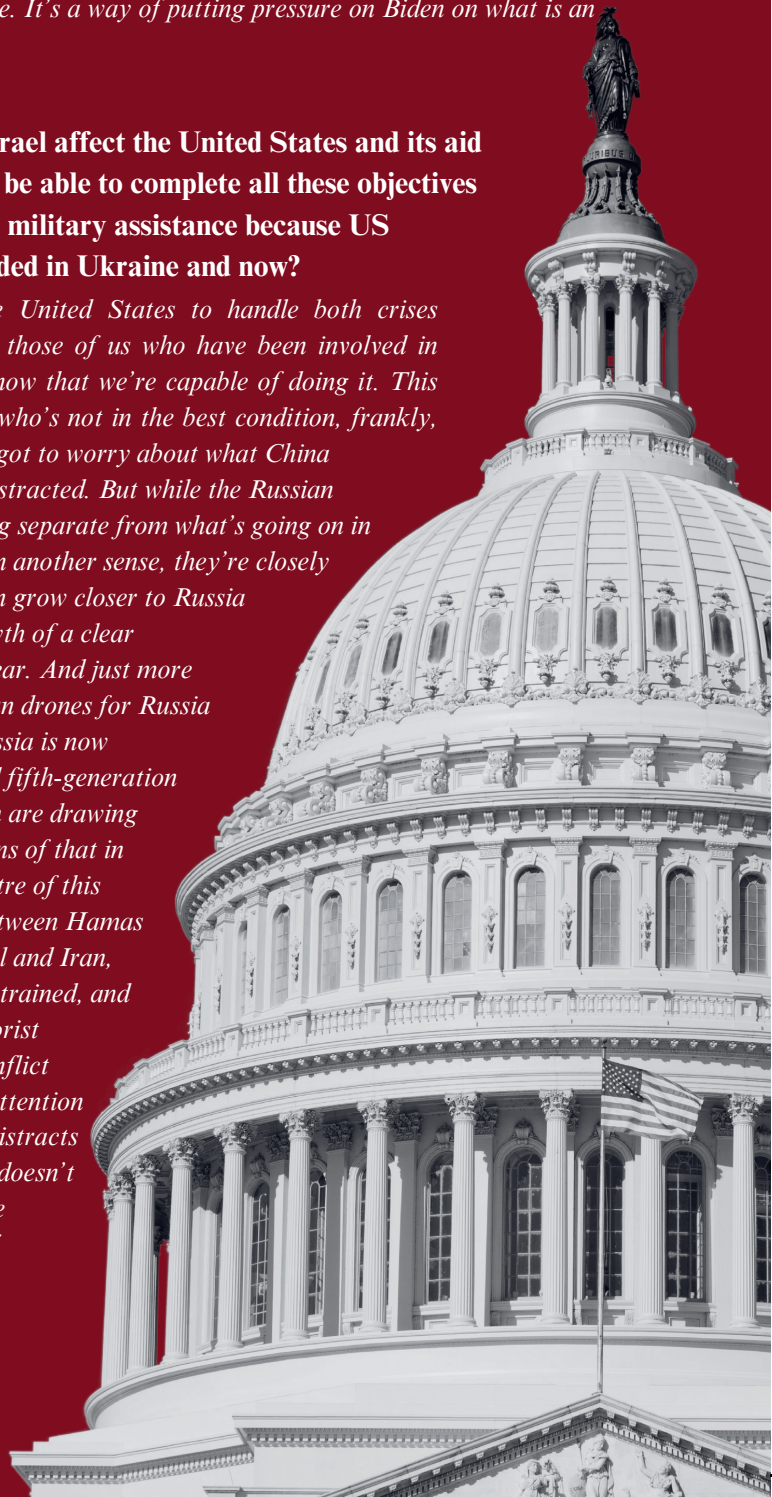


Donald Trump and his former advisor John Bolton

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.

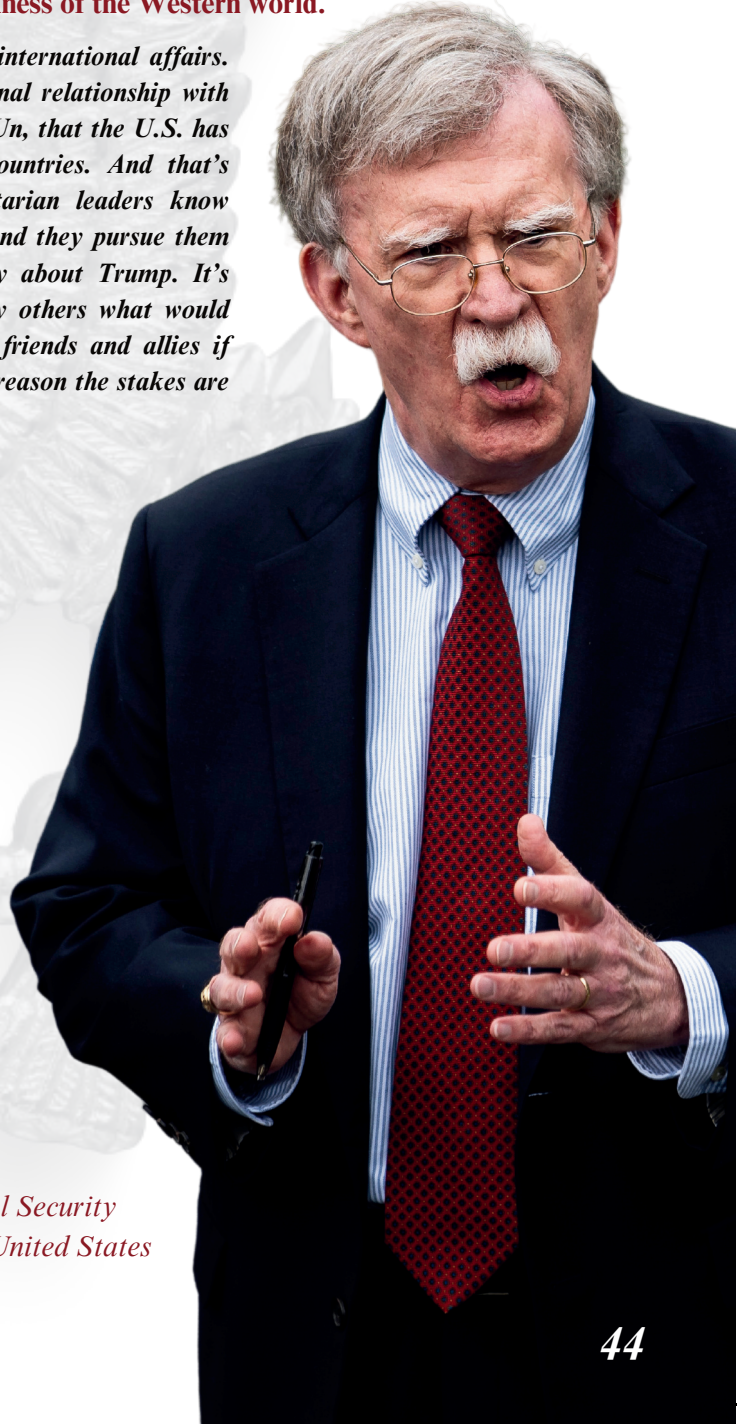
Trump doesn't really understand international affairs. He thinks if he has a good personal relationship with Putin or Xi Jinping or Kim Jong Un, that the U.S. has a good relationship with their countries. And that's obviously not true. The authoritarian leaders know what their national interests are 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.

Stanislav Kinka

Watch the interview with John Bolton on our YouTube channel



John Bolton — *Former National Security Advisor to the President of the United States*



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 travelled, 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



Russia's information and propaganda war against Ukraine: Kharkiv

WAR

Russians launched several missile strikes on Kharkiv on May 23, 2024. Only civilian infrastructure was under massive fire, said the head of the Kharkiv Regional State Administration, Oleh Syniehubov. The enemy hit the transport infrastructure and one of the divisions of a utility company that provides life support to the city. According to preliminary data, seven people were killed and 16 wounded in the attack on Kharkiv.

Following Putin's allegedly legitimate re-election as president of the Russian Federation, discussions about a potential Russian invasion of Kharkiv have resurfaced. Some purported “liberal” Russian media outlets have also addressed this issue.

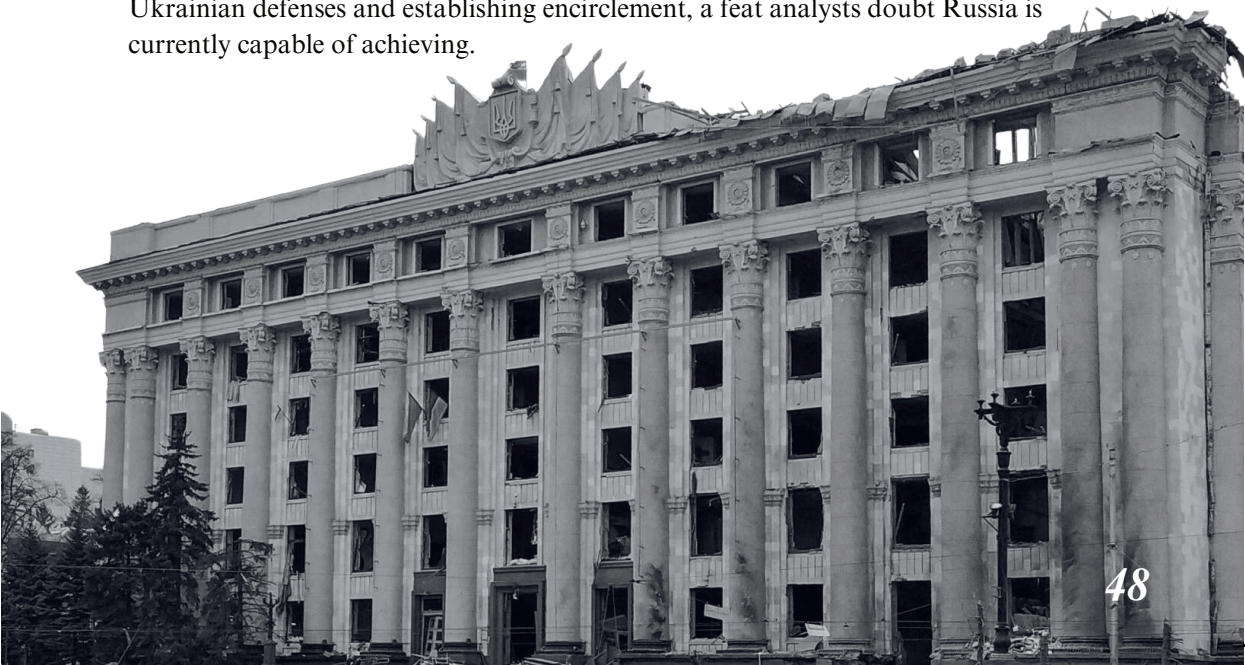


Another Russian media outlet has reported that the Kremlin is anticipating mobilizing 300,000 soldiers in the near future for the operation to capture Kharkiv. According to the outlet, the Russian authorities' plan involves deploying the mobilized soldiers to fortify the border in the Belgorod region. Subsequently, experienced soldiers who are relieved from border duty will supposedly participate in the “Kharkiv operation”.

According to a recent report by *The Economist*, Russia has decided to designate Kharkiv as a “grey zone”, rendering it inhospitable for civilians. The publication recalls that Russia intensified its bombing of Kharkiv in December, around the time when the delay in US military aid to Ukraine began to make headlines. Since then, the city has been under attack from ballistic missiles, more than at any time since the start of the full-scale invasion. Incidents involving enemy drones have also become more frequent, characterized by their increased speed, altitude, and the utilization of carbon-fibre wings, making them harder to shoot down. However, a notable shift occurred on March 27th when a pivotal event unfolded: a glider bomb, launched from an aircraft and possessing the capability to travel tens of kilometers while causing severe damage, was purportedly utilized against Kharkiv for the first time. *The Economist* highlights that military sources in Kyiv have suggested that Russia intends to transform Kharkiv into a “grey zone”, rendering it unsuitable for civilian habitation. However, Kharkiv residents and Mayor Ihor Terekhov have asserted that the city will not capitulate.

Simultaneously, the British magazine underscores that “a military operation to occupy Kharkiv would be a challenging endeavor for Russia”.

In the previous attempt in 2022, despite the city being significantly less fortified, the invaders were unsuccessful. Capturing the city would necessitate breaching Ukrainian defenses and establishing encirclement, a feat analysts doubt Russia is currently capable of achieving.

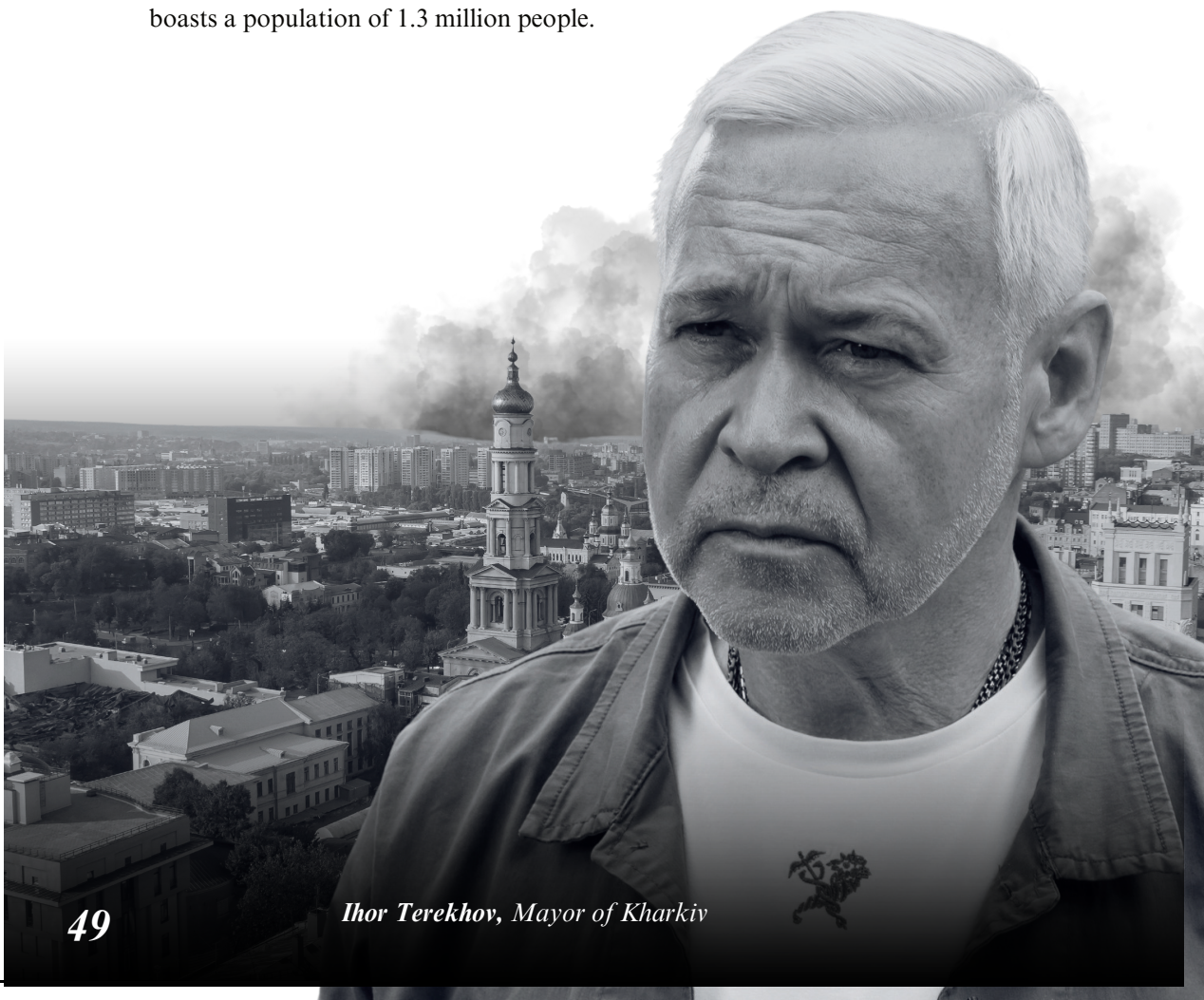


Reaction of Ukraine's top military and political leadership

In an interview with Ukrinform, Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Oleksandr Syrskyi emphasized that any incursion into Kharkiv would be a grave mistake for Russian forces. He stated that the Ukrainian military is undertaking all necessary measures to counter a potential aggressor attack on Kharkiv, including fortifying positions, erecting barriers, and strategizing responses.

The Main Intelligence Directorate has refuted rumors suggesting an imminent Russian attack on Kharkiv. According to DIU representative Andriy Yusov, these claims are merely part of Russian psychological operations (PSYOP). He stated that the enemy is attempting to instill panic within our country by spreading rumors of an "attack on Kharkiv".

Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov emphasized that there are presently no reasons to initiate a city-wide evacuation. Russian troops have not advanced any closer to the city than their current positions. Evacuation efforts persist in areas where active hostilities are underway, while individuals are relocating to Kharkiv, which boasts a population of 1.3 million people.



The enemy relies on spreading panic among the civilian population

In recent weeks, there has been a surge in Russian attacks on Kharkiv, targeting substations and thermal power plants, resulting in prolonged electricity outages in the city. Amidst the relentless shelling, Russian propaganda is trying to increase fear among the city's residents and manipulate them into forced evacuation. It is evident that the enemy is relying on spreading panic among Kharkiv residents to force them to leave the city.

For instance, one of the Russian misinformation campaigns includes the false claim:

“The State Emergency Service of Ukraine warns of an impending encirclement of Kharkiv and advises residents to evacuate.”

This is indeed fake news. Presently, there are no grounds for evacuating Kharkiv. Any dissemination of such information is part of Russia's psychological operation (PSYOP) aimed at intimidating citizens.

“In Kharkiv, local authorities are forbidding people to evacuate before the allegedly planned Russian army offensive on the regional center.”

The Centre for Strategic Communications and Information Security has emphasized that such narratives, suggesting that Kharkiv residents are deliberately being 'put under attack,' are examples of Russian cynicism. The truth is that the exit from the city remains open, and individuals who wish to leave Kharkiv are free to do so. The fake news about a Russian offensive on Kharkiv is part of a Russian information and psychological operation to sow panic among Kharkiv residents and other citizens, creating a sense of an imminent catastrophe.

“Kharkiv's authorities are allegedly preparing to flee the city. This is evidenced by the allocation of funds for road repairs in the Lyubotyn and Korotych areas.”

This claim is fake. The information about the flight of the city's administration is not true and is part of an information and psychological operation aimed at demoralizing Kharkiv residents and sowing panic. In reality, the Cabinet of Ministers has allocated funds to repair the main evacuation routes in the region.

“The missile strikes will target Kharkiv's underground schools as they are considered military targets. The underground schools will be used as command posts of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, similar to the command posts built by the Americans during the Cold War.”

This is a fake. Threats of strikes on Kharkiv's underground schools are part of the enemy's disinformation campaign of 'fear propaganda'. The enemy's goal is to create panic to force as many people as possible to leave the city.

“Here’s a clip. Kharkiv residents are leaving the city en masse due to the lack of electricity, heating and other amenities”.

This is a fake. The video distributed by the propagandists is dated the end of February 2022: the footage shows wet snow and the words of the video's author are heard: 'We will defeat you [Russians] anyway.' The Centre for Strategic Communications and Information Security says that the situation with electricity in Kharkiv is indeed difficult, but not critical for the citizens. The massive Russian shelling of energy infrastructure on 22 March caused significant damage, but the blackout lasted less than a day. Currently, power outage schedules are in place in Kharkiv and the region.

Of course, there are also fakes aimed at discrediting the Ukrainian military. We refute them too.

“Soldiers of the 113th Separate Tank Brigade in Dergachi, Kharkiv Oblast, beat a woman when she came to receive humanitarian aid. The victim is in need of medical treatment”.

This is a fake. Russians invented this story and used a photo of a disabled resident of Dergachi. It is not the first time that enemy propagandists have spread publications of this kind to discredit the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In this way, they seek to cause negative attitudes among the civilian population towards the Ukrainian military. Earlier, the enemy also spread disinformation about the poisoning of 113th Separate Artillery Brigade soldiers by a Kharkiv resident.

“Representatives of the Azov national battalion arrived in Kharkiv. The main purpose of their presence there is to carry out punitive functions and fight against pro-Russian residents.”

This is a fake. It is aimed at discrediting the military leadership and creating a negative image of Ukrainian defenders.



Kharkiv is a sore spot for Putin

Kharkiv holds both sacred and strategic significance for Putin. As one of Ukraine's largest cities, boasting a population of one million, its proximity to the Russian border amplifies its importance. However, Kharkiv still lacks adequate means of defense, making it a target of interest for strategic maneuvering.

Looking back to 2014, we can recall how the Russian authorities harbored high aspirations for Odesa and Kharkiv during the so-called “Russian Spring”. During that period, these cities witnessed a series of rallies orchestrated by Russian special services and mercenaries, advocating for the annexation of southern and eastern parts of Ukraine and their integration into Russia. These events included local referendums (not sanctioned by the Ukrainian Constitution) on restructuring Ukraine into a federal state and granting Russian the status of a second official language. The Russian government aimed to destabilise the political landscape in the southeastern regions of Ukraine and to spread the concept of the “Russian world” through the authorities in Kharkiv.

They also failed to capture Kharkiv during the prolonged fighting that followed the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops on 24 February 2022. It all ended with the Slobzhanska offensive of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The defenders of Kharkiv repelled the Russians and foiled all of Putin's plans. Kharkiv is a sore spot for Putin, as it was here that the football chant about Putin, now known worldwide, was first sung.



Fact: not a single Ukrainian major city has been taken by military force

For Russia, Kharkiv continues to represent a formidable defensive bastion of Ukraine, in addition to being a key hub of the Ukrainian economy and military-industrial complex. Therefore, it is evident that Kharkiv remains a prime target in the enemy's schemes to occupy our country.

The likelihood of Russia occupying Kharkiv in the near future is exceedingly low, but the city will continue to face attacks. These assaults mirror the terrorist tactics employed by the enemy during the spring and summer of 2022. The shelling typically occurs in two waves, with the second wave targeting the same areas as the first to impede rescue efforts. Therefore, if you find yourself near the impact zone, another round of shelling may follow shortly thereafter. It is imperative not to remain on the streets near the affected area, as doing so could save your life. In the coming months, the Russian Federation aims to use Kharkiv as a catalyst for a humanitarian crisis. Putin's narrative regarding a 'sanitary zone' will be employed to justify these atrocities to the West.

Authored by a group of experts from the Centre for Strategic Communications and Information Security and the Institute of Public Communications.

Volodymyr Khodakivskyi
Bohdana Korniichuk
Lesia Chervinska





One of Kharkov's war-ravaged courtyards



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.”



Tetiana Stelmakh
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 Manager & Literary Editor

“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
Head of NGO Ukrainians Veterans which implements the EU project to support young veterans and displaced persons

“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!

Editor-in-chief:

Tetiana Stelmakh

CEO The Ukrainian Review

Volodymyr Savchenko

Web Site:

<https://theukrainianreview.info>

You can contact us: +38 (093) 316-40-33 (WhatsApp)

Email:

theukrainianreview@gmail.com

Registration code for individual media:

R40-01344

Address:

Odesa, Lanzheronivska Street 3.

