



## INFORMATION SERIES

Issue No. 612

January 13, 2025

### **Geopolitical Consequences of Ukraine's Defeat**

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Russia's economic and societal adaptation for a long war is leaving Ukraine outgunned and outmanned, and its allies are left to scramble for ammunition around the world.<sup>1</sup> The bravery and dedication of the Ukrainians fighting for their loved ones and their country will become a part of future case studies on maintaining resilience, innovation, and morale against significant odds. Nevertheless, the worrisome trends, including a disadvantage in manpower, ammunition production and long-range weapons, leave a Ukrainian defeat a possibility, especially without U.S. help.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps just as worrisome are societal trends and what appears to be somewhat diminished support for aid to Ukraine.<sup>3</sup>

The United States has significant interests in Europe that are worth defending. The United States and the European Union (EU) plus the United Kingdom account for almost half of the world economy.<sup>4</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states in Europe are America's largest export market.<sup>5</sup> Ukraine is a part of Europe. What would be the geopolitical consequences of Ukraine's defeat? In other words, why is it essential for the West, including the United States, to continue to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia's unjustified, illegal, and brutal invasion?

### **Russia's Threat to U.S. Interests in Europe Would Increase**

Ukraine's defeat would bring Russia geopolitically closer to Europe, including toward allies that used to be a part of the Warsaw Pact but joined the Alliance after the end of the Cold War.<sup>6</sup> It would be a humanitarian disaster for millions of Ukrainians who would be subjected to



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forced russification and brutalized by Russia. Putin would like to erase Ukraine as an independent state and Russia's installed puppet regime would be organized to suppress Ukrainian language and culture.<sup>7</sup> Russia's imperialism would not end with the conquest of Ukraine, and could be turned toward Moldova, Georgia, or even NATO countries that joined the Alliance since the end of the Cold War.

Russia's leaders have always been offended by Russia's diminished political influence in the former Warsaw Pact areas as a consequence of these states' integration into Western political and military structures. That is also why various Russia's "peace" proposals include what would effectively mean the restoration of Russia's sphere of influence on former Warsaw Pact territories, including some current NATO member states.<sup>8</sup>

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is already a challenge to alliance cohesion because the perception of Russia as a threat to NATO differs within the Alliance, with countries closer to Russia's border being generally more concerned about Russia's imperialist designs and capabilities than countries farther away. Ukraine's potential subjugation would be just the beginning of Russia's post-Cold War aggression.

If Russia were able to conquer Ukraine and establish a more robust and permanent political and military presence there, its new geopolitical center of gravity would open further opportunities for Moscow's hostile activities against targets in Europe, which could be conducted through proxies. Ukraine borders Hungary and Slovakia, both countries currently under governments that are sympathetic to Russia's interests. It is conceivable that Russia could use geographical proximity to further infiltrate the European Union (EU) because Slovakia and Hungary are a part of the Schengen area and their governments are currently friendly with Moscow, unlike, for example, the Finnish government that can be trusted to protect its borders.<sup>9</sup> Europe is already concerned about Russia's sabotage, and enabling additional opportunities for Russia to infiltrate it is likely to worsen the matter.<sup>10</sup> Russia has subjected NATO countries to cyber attacks, energy blackmail, and even killed citizens of NATO member countries.<sup>11</sup> These types of activities could lead to the destabilization of governments in targeted countries, the undermining of NATO and the EU, and, accompanied by Russia's propaganda, an increase in anti-Americanism.<sup>12</sup>

Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty states that "an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all."<sup>13</sup> Should Russia win in Ukraine, Moscow could call into question the integrity of NATO members' commitment to Article V, even though Ukraine is not a NATO member state and its members are not pledged to come to its defense. Expressing the sentiment, Marko Mihkelson, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Estonian Parliament, asked in an aftermath of a particularly brutal attacks against Ukrainian civilians "If the great powers of the free world allow Russia to destroy a democratic European power before our eyes with impunity, what makes Russia believe that we will strike back if they attack a NATO country?"<sup>14</sup> If Russia defeats Ukraine, the United States would lose credibility as a guarantor of today's global security architecture; an architecture that has allowed billions of people to prosper beyond any comparable time in humankind's history. In fact, former Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen



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said with regard to deterring China from a cross-strait attack that “A Ukrainian victory will serve as the most effective deterrent to future aggression.”<sup>15</sup> Taiwan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Joseph Wu argued that if the United States abandons Ukraine, China would “take it as a hint” that the United States and its allies would “back off” in the case of China’s sustained action against Taiwan.<sup>16</sup> The consequence would be a less prosperous world order that is less safe for the Americans, their allies, and the Free World’s interests.

### **Strain on U.S. Alliances Would Increase**

NATO countries that are close to Russia’s borders like Estonia or Lithuania are already concerned about Russia’s long-term military potential because of Moscow’s economic war mobilization. These countries on average provide more assistance to Ukraine than the rest of NATO as a percentage of their GDP,<sup>17</sup> and have significantly increased their defense budgets.<sup>18</sup> In some cases, the effort to recapitalize and modernize their militaries started well before Russia’s full-scale invasion.<sup>19</sup>

Russia’s victory could add Ukraine’s resources to strengthen Moscow’s military power – and with an increase in military power would come an increase in Russia’s belligerence and imperial ambitions. Russia would seek to utilize Ukraine’s resources, including rare earths, steel, and technical expertise, to augment its own economy, currently focused on war production. Prior to war, Ukraine was the seventh largest global wheat producer with a majority of its exports going to Egypt and Indonesia.<sup>20</sup> Russia’s invasion of Ukraine caused a two to three percent spike in wheat prices.<sup>21</sup> Russia is already plundering the territories it occupies in Ukraine, including forcing conscription and mobilization of the population in occupied southeastern Ukraine.<sup>22</sup> Russia’s future imperial ambitions would likely be centered around NATO countries, particularly those that were in the Soviet sphere of influence or a part of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>23</sup>

European NATO countries already face a near- to medium-term requirement to reinvigorate their militaries and defense sectors and increase defense spending. So far, the pace of most NATO countries doing so has been disappointing given the magnitude of the threat. In the future, NATO will either have to contend with a geopolitically closer, more aggressive, and emboldened Russia that wants to build on its success in Ukraine, or it will have to step up its support for Ukraine so that Ukraine can decisively defeat Russia,<sup>24</sup> and then rearm to deter any possible future Russian attack. Increasing European NATO members’ defense spending would also have the benefit of demonstrating that NATO Europe is taking its own security seriously and would help counter the “Europe is free loading” narrative that is becoming more prevalent within the U.S. political discourse.

The fiscal cost of helping Ukraine defeat Russia is arguably less than the United States would have to spend to reassure allies of America’s commitment to their security in the wake of Ukraine’s defeat. The United States would also have to bolster its military to deter, and if necessary, defeat Russia – and other states, e.g. China, that would be emboldened in the wake of Ukraine’s defeat.



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Russia's goals are not just regional, the subjugation of Ukraine, but are a symptom of Moscow's broader desire for a confrontation with the West and for replacing the U.S.-led global security order with one led by authoritarian dictatorships, including Russia.<sup>25</sup> China would be the leader of this new China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea alliance, and the challenge they would present to the U.S.-led alliance structure and prosperity is serious.

### **Emboldened China, North Korea, and Iran**

China and North Korea decided to strategically align themselves with Russia. This means that a path to disrupting this looming alliance and their revisionist designs in the Indo-Pacific region runs through Russia's defeat in Ukraine. The argument that the United States ought to prioritize the Indo-Pacific theater over the European theater is problematic.<sup>26</sup> With the exception of the Patriot air defense systems and some air-to-air missiles, the types of weapons the United States has provided Ukraine are different from those it would need to defeat a Chinese invasion of Taiwan, and the overall stimulation of the U.S. defense sector prior to contingencies with China starting is beneficial for the United States.

Most security assistance to Ukraine is appropriated separately from the Department of Defense's base budget, meaning it is not funding that the Department of Defense or the U.S. defense industrial base otherwise would have. Over the past almost three years of conflict, the United States has committed a little over \$21 billion a year on average in security assistance to Ukraine.<sup>27</sup> In an almost \$30 trillion economy, the amount that the United States has spent supporting Ukraine is well worth exhausting Russia and states that support it, in addition to supporting U.S. jobs in many congressional districts.

The West's collective reticence to decidedly support Ukraine to enable it to win is negatively impacting relations with other nations. Former NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg described aid to Ukraine as "significant, but, at the end of the day, insufficient military support—enough to survive but not enough to bring the war to an end on favourable terms."<sup>28</sup> At a conference in Estonia, Samir Saran, the head of the Observer Research Foundation, an Indian think tank, "almost mocked" the West's inability to organize Russia's battlefield defeat, despite Russia's economy being twenty times smaller than the West's.<sup>29</sup> In a stark indictment of the West's lack of strategic vision and support for a Ukrainian victory, Saran went on to say:

There is one actor that has reorganised its strategic engagement to fight a war and the other has not. One side is not participating in the battle. You have hosted conferences supporting Ukraine and then do nothing more. But when it comes to action, Russia 2.0 is grinding forward. It tells countries like us that if something like this were to happen in the Indo-Pacific, you have no chance against China. If you cannot defeat a \$2tn [trillion] nation, don't think you are deterring China. China is taking hope from your abysmal and dismal performance against a much smaller adversary.<sup>30</sup>



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Should Ukraine fail to decisively defeat Russia's aggression, China and North Korea will likely be emboldened to pursue their more belligerent designs against U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific and elsewhere, and other countries will be less likely to resist them; they will be less certain of U.S. backing. In the words of Adm. Rob Bauer, the Dutch chairman of NATO's Military Committee, North Korea went from "the most isolated country in the world" to "a player."<sup>31</sup> He went on to ask "If you allow a nation like Russia to win, to come out of this as the victor, then what does it mean for other autocratic states in the world where the U.S. has also interests?"<sup>32</sup>

When the United States and its allies decided to align themselves with Ukraine, and China and North Korea decided to align themselves with Russia, the conflict took on much greater meaning than "just" Russia's invasion of Ukraine. No degree of denial on Washington's (and the West's) part can help it escape that reality. Therefore, in perceptions, Ukraine's defeat would inevitably become the West's defeat (and America's), exacerbating U.S. geopolitical challenges globally.

### **Potentially Destabilizing Immigration Flows to Europe**

Prior to Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, Ukraine was a nation of about 41 million. Its population has fallen by about 10 million since then given a combination of emigration, forced displacements on territories conquered by Russia, and war deaths.<sup>33</sup> According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "an estimated 3.7 million people have been driven from their homes and are internally displaced and nearly 6.5 million people have crossed into neighboring countries in the region including Poland, Hungary, Moldova or other countries globally."<sup>34</sup> Most of those who resettled abroad are planning on returning to Ukraine eventually, with the liberation of territories from where they come from significantly increasing their likelihood of return.<sup>35</sup> Ukraine's victory would lessen societal frictions and expenses associated with the diaspora of Ukrainians displaced by war. Needless to say, the International Monetary Fund estimates the net fiscal long-term effect as positive for host countries as Ukrainians integrate into the labor market.<sup>36</sup>

In contrast, should the rest of Ukraine fall to Russia's aggression, the displacement and refugee challenge would become much worse for European countries, particularly for those that host an already large number of Ukrainians, including Poland and Germany. The German Federal Civil Protection Agency reportedly estimates that 10 million more Ukrainians would flee if the country falls in the next six months with about 2 million coming to Germany.<sup>37</sup> The unofficial estimates are reportedly almost double these numbers.<sup>38</sup> Even though the publics in European states remain generally supportive of giving sanctuary to displaced Ukrainians,<sup>39</sup> a recent survey in Poland indicated a decline in positive sentiment toward Ukrainian refugees.<sup>40</sup>

While people in European countries are more welcoming toward displaced Ukrainians as opposed to refugees of other ethnicities,<sup>41</sup> the immigration issue has caused polarization within many European countries. The governments' inability to address the challenge successfully is one of the drivers for the rise of political parties that until recently were on the fringe of the



political spectrum, such as the Alternative für Deutschland in Germany.<sup>42</sup> The issue of displaced Ukrainians and associated costs to the economy is already becoming a topic of Russian disinformation operations designed to undermine a host country public's support for a government's pro-Ukraine policies.<sup>43</sup> Russian-sponsored propaganda seeks to exacerbate pre-existing tensions within the host countries, presenting a challenge to U.S. and European governments.<sup>44</sup> More Ukrainian displaced persons with limited prospects of return would increase tensions and polarization within host countries.

### **Significant Increases in Defense Spending Would Be Required**

NATO countries, particularly Poland and the Baltic states, would be more at risk of direct Russian attack should Ukraine fall into Russia's hands. Russia is planning to increase its military spending by 25 percent between 2024 and 2025 and the military budget will consume 32 percent of total expenditures and about eight percent of Russia's gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>45</sup> That is a sign that Russia is preparing for a long war – and has transitioned to a war economy. Russia has been able to circumvent Western sanctions, keep its military relatively well supplied, and even increase its military production capacity in the period between February 2023 and February 2024.<sup>46</sup> Russia reportedly produces three times as many artillery shells than the United States and European countries combined.<sup>47</sup> The United States is falling short of its goal to produce 80,000 shells of 155-millimeter artillery ammunition a month (the current production rate is about 55,000 shells a month).<sup>48</sup> Russia builds about 250,000 artillery munitions a month.<sup>49</sup>

Meanwhile, a number of European NATO members are still failing to meet the political commitment made prior to Russia's 2008 invasion of Georgia and codified at the Wales Summit in 2014 to spend two percent of GDP on defense. While more NATO nations have stepped up to the two percent plate recently, circumstances have changed so much since then that two percent is likely insufficient to deter potential Russian aggression against NATO. NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte has recently said that member states must spend "a lot more than two percent."<sup>50</sup>

Ukraine commands many resources that Russia would plunder to supplement its own already significant defense spending. Historically, Ukraine has been a source of talent and natural resources for the Soviet Union's most advanced military programs, including intercontinental-range ballistic missiles.<sup>51</sup> By the virtue of necessity, Ukraine's defense sector has been at the forefront of defense innovation and its defense industrial base is now reportedly capable of producing \$20 billion worth of weapons and equipment annually.<sup>52</sup> Ukraine's military is now one of the most experienced fighting forces in the world in the kind of warfare that the United States could plausibly fight with its adversaries in the future. So far, the West has benefited from battle-testing technologies, but so has Russia – and Moscow is likely sharing its knowledge with U.S. adversaries like China, Iran, and North Korea in exchange for their material support of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.<sup>53</sup>



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The United States alone has provided Ukraine with over \$61 billion in military assistance since February 2022.<sup>54</sup> This assistance includes munitions, unmanned aerial systems, air defense systems, tanks, Javelin anti-armor systems, and many other items. Other European countries made their own military contributions. Ukraine is using these systems for its valiant defense. Should Ukraine fall, some of these systems could end up in Russia's hands – or in the hands of other U.S. adversaries. There is some risk that U.S. adversaries have obtained some Western-provided weapons already, although not in significant quantities.<sup>55</sup>

With Russia demonstrating its aggressive designs for a restructured post-Cold War security architecture in Europe, it is essential that NATO countries remain strong enough to deter and, if necessary, defeat Russian aggression. This likely requires spending above two percent of GDP. For example, Poland and Estonia, now two NATO leaders in defense spending, were respectively contributing an estimated 4.12 and 3.43 percent of GDP on defense in 2024.<sup>56</sup> Even these costs are minuscule relative to the resources that would be required should Russia invade a NATO state. For example, about a half of Ukraine's total budget is now dedicated to defense.<sup>57</sup>

### **The Risk of Further Undermining U.S. Nonproliferation Policy**

The effectiveness of U.S. deterrence strategies rests on U.S. credibility, and that credibility is already on the line in Ukraine because Washington was one of the signatories to the 1994 Budapest Memorandum guaranteeing Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity in exchange for Ukraine's decision to denuclearize.<sup>58</sup> According to some Ukrainian experts, Russia's invasion constitutes "formal grounds for withdrawal from the NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty] and moral reasons for reconsideration of the non-nuclear choice made in early 1994."<sup>59</sup>

During the Clinton Administration, the United States spearheaded Ukraine's denuclearization in its effort to prioritize relations with Moscow "over all else" and "ridiculed" Ukrainian concerns over their security, even insinuating that U.S. officials knew Ukraine's interests better than the Ukrainians themselves.<sup>60</sup> Clinton has since expressed regret over pressuring the Ukrainians to give up nuclear weapons on its territory.<sup>61</sup> Quite understandably, Ukrainians feel similarly.<sup>62</sup> Recently, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy stated that "Either Ukraine will have nuclear weapons and that will be our protection or we should have some sort of alliance. Apart from NATO, today we do not know any effective alliances."<sup>63</sup> Yet, the chance that Ukraine will be accepted into NATO while hostilities with Russia are ongoing and while Russia is occupying almost fifth of Ukraine's territory is near zero due to political divisions within NATO itself.

Ukraine reportedly possesses the technological know-how and material to build a rudimentary nuclear device within months.<sup>64</sup> But for now, it does not have near-term options to build it in a way that would advance rather than hamper its security interests – in addition to operational problems of delivering a rudimentary device to its intended target.<sup>65</sup>

Ukraine's cautionary tale of getting invaded after it gave up nuclear weapons will hardly be lost on U.S. allies – and adversaries. If the United States fails to decisively support Ukraine against its righteous fight against the Russian invaders, it will lose the credibility on which U.S.



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assurance to allies depends. The implications could be far-reaching: from allies geopolitically aligning with U.S. adversaries to developing their own independent nuclear weapon capabilities.

Russia's nuclear coercion and escalation threats have shaped its full-scale invasion from the beginning. These threats have been aimed at undermining Western unity in supporting Ukraine and have been successful to a degree. Until November 2024, the United States had not authorized Ukraine to use U.S.-provided long-range weapons to strike targets on Russia's territory. The West's rhetoric aimed at preventing escalation of the conflict has likely had the opposite effect by encouraging Vladimir Putin's continuing aggression.<sup>66</sup>

Russia's coercive use of nuclear weapons has helped to create space in which states perceive they can rewrite the rules of the post-Cold War security order. This will embolden U.S. nuclear-armed adversaries and make it more difficult for the United States and its allies to preserve the status quo—and the pressing problem of nuclear proliferation would become even worse should Ukraine lose.

## Conclusion

The geopolitical consequences of Ukraine's defeat would reverberate across the global system in disastrous ways for U.S. security. They include having to contend with a stronger and more belligerent Russia and its allies China and North Korea, a weakening of the U.S. alliance system, increasing demands on the already overstretched U.S. defense industrial base, and greater global impetus for nuclear proliferation. The United States, as a status quo power and leader of the free world, has an essential interest in seeing Russia decisively defeated in Ukraine, and so do U.S. allies, including in the Indo-Pacific. While comprehensive recommendations to prevent this worst outcome from coming to pass are beyond the scope of this *Information Series*,<sup>67</sup> Americans and their political leaders ought to have a proper understanding of the likely consequences of a Ukrainian defeat in order to make better informed decisions regarding U.S. measures to prevent that outcome.

<sup>1</sup> Jason Hovet and Jan Lopatka, "Czech Republic to seek more Ukraine ammunition contributions, minister says," *Reuters*, May 31, 2024, available at <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/czech-republic-seek-more-ukraine-ammunition-drive-minister-says-2024-05-31/>.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this intellectual exercise, it is not important *how* Ukraine got defeated; defeat is understood as Ukraine not surviving as a state and not being capable of conducting significant government-led military operations against Russia.

<sup>3</sup> Jennifer Agiesta, "CNN Poll: Majority of Americans oppose more US aid for Ukraine in war with Russia," *CNN Politics*, August 4, 2023, available at <https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/04/politics/cnn-poll-ukraine/index.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Luke Coffey, "The North Atlantic Treaty Organization at 75: Reflecting on Past Successes and Planning for the Future," *Prepared Testimony before the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation, United States House of Representatives*, July 2024.





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*States Senate*, January 29, 2024, available at [https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/5ce607f1-c805-d98c-d58f-143a4fe4dfe4/013124\\_Coffey\\_Testimony.pdf](https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/5ce607f1-c805-d98c-d58f-143a4fe4dfe4/013124_Coffey_Testimony.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> In this context, defeat means a situation in which Russia thinks of itself as a victor and is perceived as such by NATO's governments. In practice, this likely means Russia possessing a significant part if not all of Ukraine's territory and a defacto control of Ukraine's government.

<sup>7</sup> Vazha Tavberidze, "Interview: Putin Has Not Given Up On Erasing Ukraine 'As A State, A Concept, And A People,'" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, May 13, 2024, available at <https://www.rferl.org/a/nataliya-bugayova-institute-for-the-study-of-war-interview-ukraine-russia/32944531.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Roth, "Russia issues list of demands it says must be met to lower tensions in Europe," *The Guardian*, December 17, 2021, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/dec/17/russia-issues-list-demands-tensions-europe-ukraine-nato>; and Gabrielle Tétrault-Farber and Tom Balmforth, "Russia demands NATO roll back from East Europe and stay out of Ukraine," *Reuters*, December 17, 2021, available at <https://www.reuters.com/world/russia-unveils-security-guarantees-says-western-response-not-encouraging-2021-12-17/>.

<sup>9</sup> This means that moving across a state's border to another state within the Schengen area does not require further passport checks.

<sup>10</sup> Lisa O'Carroll, "Europe on high alert after suspected Moscow-linked arson and sabotage," *The Guardian*, May 30, 2024, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/may/30/europe-on-high-alert-after-suspected-moscow-linked-arson-and-sabotage>.

<sup>11</sup> Marek Menkiszak, "Winning the War with Russia (Is Still Possible). The West's Counter-Strategy towards Moscow," *OSW Report*, October 2024, pp. 89-92, available at [https://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/OSW-Report\\_Winning%20the%20war%20with%20Russia%20is%20still%20possible\\_net.pdf](https://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/OSW-Report_Winning%20the%20war%20with%20Russia%20is%20still%20possible_net.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>13</sup> *The North Atlantic Treaty*, April 4, 1949, available at [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm).

<sup>14</sup> Marko Mihkelson [@markomihkelson], "If the great powers of the free world allow Russia to destroy a democratic European power before our eyes with impunity, what makes Russia believe that we will strike back if they attack a NATO country?" [Twitter], 2:27 AM, September 4, 2024, available at <https://twitter.com/markomihkelson/status/1831225102819570067>.

<sup>15</sup> Jack Detsch, "Taiwan's former president says Ukraine needs US weapons more urgently than Taipei," *Politico*, November 23, 2024, available at <https://www.politico.com/news/2024/11/23/taiwans-former-president-says-ukraine-needs-u-s-weapons-more-urgently-than-taipei-00191400>.

<sup>16</sup> Wu Tse-yu, "Arms supply suspension would embolden China," *Taipei Times*, March 31, 2024, available at <https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2024/03/31/2003815730>.

<sup>17</sup> Anthony Zurcher, "How Norway outstrips US on Ukraine spending," *BBC*, September 21, 2023, available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/66870559>.

<sup>18</sup> *Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2014-2023)*, March 14, 2024, available at [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/2024/3/pdf/240314-def-exp-2023-en.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2024/3/pdf/240314-def-exp-2023-en.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> Eero Epner, "'Human Life Has No Value There': Baltic Counterintelligence Officers Speak Candidly About Russian Cruelty," *Eesti Ekspress*, October 16, 2022, available at <https://ekspress.delfi.ee/artikkel/120083694/human-life-has-no-value-there-baltic-counterintelligence-officers-speak-candidly-about-russian-cruelty>.



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<sup>20</sup> Ines Eisele, "Five facts on grain and the war in Ukraine," *DW*, November 1, 2022, available at <https://www.dw.com/en/five-facts-on-grain-and-the-war-in-ukraine/a-62601467>.

<sup>21</sup> Stephen Devadoss and William Ridley, "Impacts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on the global wheat market," *World Development* Vol. 173 (January 2024), available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0305750X23002140>.

<sup>22</sup> Andrzej Szabaciuk, "Russian mobilisation in occupied areas of Ukraine," *IEŚ Commentaries* No. 984, October 25, 2023, available at <https://ies.lublin.pl/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ies-commentaries-984-232-2023.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> Menkiszak, "Winning the War with Russia (Is Still Possible). The West's Counter-Strategy towards Moscow," op. cit., pp. 12-16.

<sup>24</sup> A decisive defeat is a defeat recognized as such by Russia's leadership and a majority of the Russians.

<sup>25</sup> Menkiszak, "Winning the War with Russia (Is Still Possible). The West's Counter-Strategy towards Moscow," op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>26</sup> For an example of this thinking, see Elbridge Colby, "America must face reality and prioritise China over Europe," *Financial Times*, May 23, 2024, available at <https://www.ft.com/content/b423aa65-b9cb-4ba5-9c7d-f67dc289a18f>.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with Ukraine," *Factsheet*, October 21, 2024, available at <https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-ukraine/>.

<sup>28</sup> Jens Stoltenberg, "The reality of Europe's fears about Trump depends more on us than him," *The Financial Times*, November 9, 2024, available at <https://www.ft.com/content/48e18527-b102-4f2c-8684-f690c18cb450>.

<sup>29</sup> Patrick Wintour, "'We're in 1938 now': Putin's war in Ukraine and lessons from history," *The Guardian*, June 8, 2024, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jun/08/putin-war-ukraine-forgotten-lessons-of-history-europe>.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Lara Jakes, "Trump Should Not Let Putin Claim Victory in Ukraine, Says NATO Official," *The New York Times*, November 9, 2024, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/09/world/europe/trump-nato-putin-ukraine.html>.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Escritt, "Ukraine's population has fallen by 10 million since Russia's invasion, UN says," *Reuters*, October 22, 2024, available at <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraines-population-has-fallen-by-10-million-since-russias-invasion-un-says-2024-10-22/>.

<sup>34</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Ukraine Emergency*, 2024, available at <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/ukraine/>.

<sup>35</sup> Cevat Giray Aksoy, "Most Ukrainians displaced by the war plan to return home when it is safe, research shows," *King's College London News Centre*, June 19, 2024, available at <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/most-ukrainians-displaced-by-the-war-plan-to-return-home-when-it-is-safe-research-shows>.

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